
Last Day
Events

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COVER PICTURE:

The cover picture was taken in north-western Portugal in the summer of 1990 when a terrible drought had the land in its deadly grip. The grass was tinder dry, the streams had dried up, grass and forest fires were blazing out of control, and the sun unmasked by clouds, burned with destructive power. Fortunately relief finally came when rain eventually arrived.

The conditions existent where and when this picture was taken provide us with an accurate preview of the much, much worse situation which will develop during the fourth plague, one of the last day events. Then the sun will scorch men with great heat, the sky will be black with smoke, there will be no water, and man and beast will die in immense numbers.

The entire progression of last day events will be from bad to worst, except in the camp of the saints, although even there, conditions will not be entirely comfortable.

Sound indeed is the message from on high to come out of Babylon so that we escape from suffering her plagues, the most dreadful scourges ever to have been known to mortals. Those who put forth the effort to thoroughly understand the last day events will know for themselves that: "There is a very earnest, solemn question before us. The time has come when every soul should understand that he has a soul to save or a soul to lose, a heaven to win and a hell to shun. We need to understand what we shall do to be saved. . . ." The Upward Look, 56.

Contents

Introduction 1
1. The Image of the Beast 9
2. The Rise of the Beast 19
3. The Rise of the Image 30
4. The Role of Spiritualism 42
5. The Four Angels 58
6. The Marriage Prophecy 68
7. The Marriage Prophecy-Part II 80
8. Babylon the Great 97
9. The Message Swells 106
10. A Worldwide Union 115
11. The Great, Final Test 124
12. The Timing of the Judgment of the Living 137
13. Two Entirely Different Separations 152
14. In the Sanctuary Service 163
15. The Shut Door 177
16. The Sealing Work 188
17. The First Seal 199
18. The Former and Latter Rain 209
19. The Second Seal 220
20. The Loud Cry Begins 231
21. The Loud Cry Develops 240
22. The Final Shaking 254
23. Tried to the Uttermost 265
24. Joshua and the Angel 277
25. The Duration of Jacob's Trouble 287
26. Plagues, and Last Plagues 296
27. The Unknown Hour 305
28. The First Four Plagues 316
29. The Fifth Plague 325
30. The Hour of Deliverance 335
31. The River Euphrates 344
32. The Sixth Plague 354
33. Jacob's Trouble 363
34. A Sinless People 372
35. Cleansing from Earthliness 383
36. The Seventh Plague 394
37. The Special Resurrection 405
38. Last Hours of the Wicked 414

39. Jesus Comes Again 422
40. The Scapegoat Transaction 431
41. The Millennium 440
42. The Great Judgment Day 450
Appendix: One's Own Image of the Beast 462
Scripture Index 467
Spirit of Prophecy Index 469
Bibliography 471

Unless otherwise stated, all Scripture references are from the *New King James Version* of the Bible.

Introduction

A certain wise man remarked that one secret of being a successful politician is to be able to accurately predict what would happen in a year's time, and then be able to explain why, when the time came, his prediction did not eventuate.

This is the predicament in which the least to the greatest of those who are not the children of God, find themselves. The future is the great, dark, uncertain, fear-inspiring unknown for them, but this is not so for the humble, God-fearing child of the Most High who, according to God's instructions, searches the Scriptures to know what is coming upon the world.

"But you, brethren, are not in darkness, so that this day should overtake you as a thief.

"You are all sons of light and sons of the day. We are not of the night nor of darkness.

"Therefore let us not sleep, as others do, but let us watch and be sober." *1 Thessalonians* 5:4-6.

"And so we have the prophetic word confirmed, which you do well to heed as a light that shines in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts." *2 Peter* 1:19.

Nor is this all, for we have the Word of God to us also that says, "Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

This does not say that He will always reveal just when He will fulfill His prophetic word, but it does make the wonderful assertion that He will do nothing, which is to say, not one single thing, but first He reveals it to His servants the prophets. Sometimes that also includes the announcement of the day in which the prophesied event will take place such as the time prophecies of *Daniel* and *Revelation.*

Although so many subscribe to a different opinion, the prophecies are not difficult to understand. The Word of God describes them as being a light which is shining in a dark place dispelling that which in the darkness ahead, is mysterious and uncertain. The very wording of Scripture indicates that there is no mystery about these things. True, the prophecies are written in a code language where symbols are used to identify righteous and evil forces. This device is employed in order to deprive the dedicated enemies of the gospel of information which would assist them in their warfare against the truth. To His enlightened ones, God supplies the key to the code together

with the wonderful guidance of that great and marvellous Teacher, the Holy Spirit. No one need be in the least doubt or uncertainty as to what these messages mean to them.

"The Bible was designed to be a guide to all who wish to become acquainted with the will of their Maker. God gave to men the sure word of prophecy; angels and even Christ Himself came to make known to Daniel and John the things that must shortly come to pass. Those important matters that concern our salvation were not left involved in mystery. They were not revealed in such a way as to perplex and mislead the honest seeker after truth. Said the Lord by the prophet Habakkuk: 'Write the vision, and make it plain, . . . that he may run that readeth it.' *Habakkuk* 2:2. The word of God is plain to all who study it with a prayerful heart. Every truly honest soul will come to the light of truth. 'Light is sown for the righteous.' *Psalm* 97:11. And no church can advance in holiness unless its members are earnestly seeking for truth as for hid treasure." *Great Controversy*,521, 522.

It is a great comfort for the child of faith to receive the assurance that the symbolic prophecies can be readily understood provided there is diligent, faithful study of the living word under the guidance and inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Let none rest content in the notion that they have grasped all that there is to be learned of these great subjects, or that a casual, superficial understanding will suffice to see us through the dark days of our immediate future. Rather, all must push back the frontiers of Scriptural knowledge, ever comprehending the truth more and more deeply until they know for and within themselves, the nature of the struggle looming ahead. All must engage in this vital work with an urgency befitting the deadly seriousness of the crisis which will take the world by surprise.

It is a very important principle of revelation that the unfolding of truth is progressive, so that, to any generation there is available all the accumulated light given to previous generations plus their own gift of present truth.

This statement does not ignore the fact that during those long periods when the church had sunk into the deep darkness of terrible apostasy, much of that which had been previously revealed was lost, but it was only for a time. When revival and reformation formed a fresh movement, its founding fathers laid the foundations and built the structure with the truths given to their forebears. Once they had grasped those mighty revelations from the past, the Holy Spirit led them forward into fresh vistas of powerful knowledge. Thus they experienced the truth of the Scripture: "But the path of the just is like the shining sun, that shines ever brighter unto the perfect day." Proverbs 4:18.

As surely as the unfolding of saving truth is progressive, so it must be that more light is available to us today than there ever has been in the past. This is both a wonderful blessing and an awesome, increased responsibility.

"In these last days we have the accumulated light that has been shining through all the ages, and we shall be held correspondingly responsible." *Review and Herald,* November 25,1884.

"If those who believed in God during the old dispensation were enjoined to arise and shine, how much greater is the obligation today to arise and shine, when our light is brighter, and shines with *clearer* and more steady rays. Our obligation to shed forth light is as much greater than was the obligation of the people of ancient times, as our light is more clear and definite." *Signs of the Times,* October 1,1895.

This can only mean that much more light on the prophetic word is to shine upon us as we near the end of time. Therefore, there is no way by which this book can be the final revelation on the order of last day events. All it can do is to record the extent of that which the Heavenly Teacher has been able to make known to us up to the point when the book is written. Yet, the book will never become valueless in its role as a bridge spanning the past and the present, and reaching beyond the present into the future. Well would it be if we had a realistic evaluation of how little we know and how much we need to know. We would then never be guilty of assuming that we had received all the light there is to be received. There were some in Sister White's day who subscribed to this limited view:

"Some have asked me if I thought there was any more light for the people of God. Our minds have become so narrow that we do not seem to understand that the Lord has a mighty work to do for us. Increasing light is to shine upon us; for 'the path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day.' " *Review and Herald,* June 18,1889.

On another occasion, her reply to the same question was even more emphatic:

"The question has been asked me, 'Do you think the Lord has any more light for us as a people?' I answer that He has light that is new to us, and yet it is precious old light that is to shine forth from the word of truth. We have only the glimmerings of the rays of light that is yet to come to us. We are not making the most of the light which the Lord has already given us, and thus we fail to *receive* the increased light; we do not walk in light already shed upon us." *Review and Herald, June* 3, 1890.

"A living Christian is one who lives a life of continual prayer. The path of the just is as a shining light, that shineth more and more

unto the perfect day.' The Christian's life is one of progression. He goes forward from strength to strength, from grace to grace, and from glory to glory, receiving from Heaven the light which Christ, at infinite cost to Himself, made it possible for man to obtain." *Bible Echo and Signs of the Times,* February 1,1893.

Despite the fact that the prophecies are not difficult to understand, their meaning remains hidden from everybody whether he be friend or foe until the time comes for them to be present truth. This even includes the prophets through whom the light was transmitted in the first case.

"Even the prophets who were favored with the special illumination of the spirit did not fully comprehend the import of the revelations committed to them. The meaning was to be unfolded from age to age, as the people of God should need the instruction therein contained." *Great Controversy,* 344.

One has but to study the history of prophetic interpretation to see that, as each generation of Christ's followers came upon the scene, they understood the prophecies which were the guidelines for their own day while those that were to be fulfilled in a far future generation were not opened to them fully by the Holy Spirit. They were opened to them to an extent but not in the fullness of the light with which they were revealed to the later generation whom they more directly concerned.

Thus, for instance, it is clear that in the days of the early Christians the image of *Daniel* 2, and the four beasts of Chapter seven were clearly understood to symbolize the four great world empires of Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome, but they did not understand the meaning of the little horn, nor of the three to be plucked up by the roots. They had no light on the time, times, and half a time, the 2300 days, the image of the beast, the battle of Armageddon, and so forth.

But when the Middle Ages arrived with apostasy at its darkest depths, the children of God were able to identify the little horn power as the dreaded oppressor, the papacy. Even so, the meaning of "a time and times and half a time", remained hidden from them until the period of the 1260 years which they symbolized, was almost ended. Then the light on that time period broke so clearly on their minds that leading students of Bible prophecy were able to predict 1798 as the year when the deadly wounding of the papacy would break her awful power. The event occurred in the very year their study of Bible prophecy had led them to expect it.

Up till 1798, little if any thought was given to *Daniel* 8, and especially not to the vital verse 14, but once 1798 had come and gone, there was a forward shift of interest on both sides of the Atlantic to

Daniel 8:14. This took place under the tutelage of the Holy Spirit, for there was no other mastermind who could have coordinated this advance from *Daniel 7* to *Daniel* 8, without the students being aware they were all moving in the same direction at the same time.

This newly undertaken area of study gave birth to the great second advent movement, the main Scriptural inspiration for which was *Daniel* 8 & 9, and *Revelation* 14:6-12. Today, as we face the looming storm clouds of the final effort on the part of the beast and his image to establish his claims, the areas of understanding now have gone beyond what the advent pioneers understood. The whole of *Daniel* and *Revelation* is now open to our understanding.

This is not to say that we understand all that is contained in those two books. We are far from that, for, it remains the truth that "we have only the glimmerings of the rays of light that is yet to come to us." But none of these two books are closed to us, for we have sound, basic understandings of the whole of both of these remarkable revelations of prophetic truth.

The study of this unfolding of prophetic understanding is a fascinating and illuminating search indeed and is dealt with very fully in the four volume research report by L. E. Froom, entitled *The Prophetic Faith of Our Fathers,* Review and Herald Publishing Association, Takoma Park, Washington, D.C., USA.

Those who shall be alive and in God's army when the final battle shall be fought must have a deep comprehension of the heights, depths, and breadths of the mighty conquering truths that the Lord has revealed and will yet make known. None can afford to come short on a single point. No one understands our desperate need better than Jesus Christ, the mighty General of the Lord's army. He knows as no other can, how great is our need, and we can be certain that He will abundantly supply that need.

We are to be assured then that "Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness will illuminate the whole." *Evangelism,* 198

We know that this promise is being fulfilled to us today. There has come much in the way of clear and precise understanding of the prophetic word in regard to the events of the last days, and it is this light that we wish to discuss in the pages ahead.

The subjects under consideration will be the setting up of the image of the beast, the fall of great Babylon, the Latter rain, the harvest, the judgment of the living, the sealing, the close of probation, the marriage, the shakings, the plagues, and so on. In other words, it will be the study of last day events.

From the outset, it is important that every student of the study of

last day events, be fully aware of what Bible prophecy is, and is not. Firstly, it is not a survey in advance of political events from which the children of God will be detached as mere spectators of the battle.

It must be understood that the-rise and fall of certain nations is recorded only because those kingdoms are the source of power for the malignant forces which would war against God and His people. Satan, whose kingdom is Babylon, depends on people-power and money-power to build his empire. Let these be dried up, and his fall is certain. Down through history, world dominions have given their mighty powers to the service of Satan, and, accordingly, these are identified, and their history foretold in Bible prophecy.

None can identify our enemies so expertly as the Omniscient One who never makes a misjudgment. His eye penetrates the visible facade behind which our crafty foes parade and deceive so many, and exposes to view the real character hidden within.

Thus, when ancient Babylon ruled the world, most men only saw a powerful nation, a golden rich economy, and a highly developed culture. But God saw all that as being nothing more than the people-power and the money-power by which the real Babylon was able to operate. God correctly identified the great system of utterly rebellious, defiant iniquity called by Him, "The Abomination of Desolation", as being in truth the real city on the Euphrates.

When that mighty river was dried up, the Chaldean army defeated, the proud buildings razed to earth, the king and his people slaughtered, and the divine decree had gone into effect that it should never again be built or inhabited, Babylon, the Antichrist, and mystery of iniquity, did not cease to exist, but simply re-established its base of operations in a new location.

That powerful confederacy of evil is even now rising to its last and mightiest manifestation of defiance against God. The whole world shall give their money-power and their personal power to support her candidacy for the position of supreme ruler of this planet. Billions of deceived humans will align themselves under her banner, and will commit themselves to total warfare against God on her behalf.

God will meet this threat to the eternal peace and everlasting life which is found only under His righteous and just government, by committing His troops to the field. Fearful will be the ensuing conflict, terrible the sacrifices which will be made, but all-glorious the victory when the very spirit of Antichrist will be swept away, never to rise again.

The development of the forces both of good and evil for the "battle of that great day of God Almighty", is the subject matter of the study of last day events. It will not be an investigation into politics,

for the Christian has a much greater need than to be informed on this subject.

The great subject of Bible prophecy is righteousness and its ultimate triumph over iniquity and the last enemy—death. We will see that God's cause triumphs, not because He has omnipotent physical power, by which He can instantly obliterate all the rebels against Him, but because it is righteousness in itself. Even though evil appears to be overwhelmingly in the commanding position, it must fall, never to rise again, for it carries within itself the seeds of its own destruction. The more vigorously evil seeks to establish itself, the more speedily and totally it comes to its eternal ending, even though, in the meantime, it will appear that the right must perish and the cause of truth be forever lost. But, in the end, when it seems that nothing more can be done to halt the assumption of all power by the forces of darkness, it will be seen that truth is indestructible, that it is everlasting and immortal. It will be revealed that those who possess that truth as a living principle of life and light within themselves, cannot in the end perish, but have everlasting life.

But if you would gain the best from this series of studies, you must already have an understanding of that which has been revealed in the unfolding of the scroll. The better versed we all are on the great basic prophecies of *Daniel* 2, 7, 8, 9, 11, & 12, and the corresponding chapters of *Revelation,* the better we shall be able to understand and appreciate the truths in this book.

There are some things that will be taken for granted as basic knowledge as we progress, else this series would never be finished. The Bible principle is that God gives more light to those alone who have taken all that their opportunities have permitted of the light already revealed.

With what diligence then we should study the great prophetic word. Note the words of counsel in this quotation: "Yet while it was not given to the prophets to understand fully the things revealed to them, they earnestly sought to obtain all the light which God had been pleased to make manifest. They 'inquired and searched diligently,' 'searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify.' What a lesson to the people of God in the Christian age, for whose benefit these prophecies were given to His servants! 'Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister.' Witness those holy men of God as they 'inquired and searched diligently' concerning revelations given them for generations that were yet unborn. Contrast their holy zeal with the listless unconcern with which the favored ones of later ages treat this gift of heaven. What a rebuke to the ease-loving, world-loving in-

difference which is content to declare that the prophecies cannot be understood!" *Great Controversy,* 344.

The only book in all the Bible which contains a specific blessing in both its introduction and its conclusion, is the book of *Revelation,* the great book of prophecy in the New Testament. Note the words of these verses in the first chapter. "The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,

"who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.

"Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near." *Revelation* 1:1-3.

Now compare this with the same equally wonderful promise in the last chapter: "Then he said to me, These words are faithful and true.' And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent His angel to show his servants the things which must shortly take place.

"Behold, I am coming quickly! Blessed is he who keeps the words of the prophecy of this book." *Revelation* 22:6, 7.

Revelation is much more than an interesting, informative, and fascinating field of learning. In addition to all that, it imparts a blessing the value and power of which are beyond computation. Those who are now faced with participation on God's side in the closing battle with the forces of darkness, need every promised blessing which is available to them. Let all pray the Lord that He will open our hearts, minds, and lives so that He can pour into us a veritable flood of the promised blessing after which, revived and strengthened, we can successfully endure the coming time of trouble, and triumph gloriously.

There is a great deal more that could be said by way of introduction but it is more important that we get on with the actual study of these great events and the themes that they in their turn and in their order unfold. As we enter upon this investigation, let us remember that we are not the children of the darkness but of the light, for we have also that more sure word of prophecy whereunto we do well to take heed as a light shining in the dark place of the otherwise unknown future. Let us remember that this is no mystery to the child of God who has the Holy Spirit for his Teacher. Let us remember that it is to be a study that the Lord declares to be essential and that there is to be a great blessing to those who do embark on this inspiring, blessed journey into the future.

Chapter 1

The Image of the Beast

In the determination of the correct sequence of last day events, it is necessary at the outset to correctly locate the dominant landmarks. Once these are secured in their rightful positions, it becomes a fairly simple matter to fill in the finer details. This organized approach to the subject under the inspired tutelage of that Master-Teacher, the Holy Spirit, is guaranteed to build an accurate structure of truth.

So, we look for the event which stands out as the one up to and beyond which the lines of sequence can be drawn, which event we find to be the setting up of the image of the beast as described in *Revelation* 13:11-18.

"Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

"And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

"He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

"And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived.

"He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed.

"He causes all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and slave, to *receive* a mark on their right hand or on their foreheads,

"and that no one may buy or sell except one who has the mark or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

"Here is wisdom. Let him who has understanding calculate the number of the beast, for it is the number of a man: His number is 666."

As stated in the introduction to this book, it is assumed that the readers will have a sound and basic understanding of the prophecies of *Daniel* and the *Revelation,* and will therefore know that the first beast referred to in this passage and as set forth in the first ten verses of the chapter, is none other than the papal power which ruled supreme over the world for the 1,260 years from 538-1798 A.D. It will also be understood that the lamblike beast who rises to power after the temporary demise of the first beast, is none other than the power of Apostate Protestantism especially as cradled in the United States of America.

Before locating the setting up of the image, it is necessary to understand just what this symbol portrays. A correct and accurate identification of this power is essential at this stage, for, without it, we would start down the wrong road.

So, what is an image?

It is a likeness or a reproduction of that which was there before; the same thing all over again.

Normally, we think of an image as being a piece of carved stone in the form of a person, animal, or something else, whom other men wish to honor. It may also be cast in concrete, bronze, or a precious metal such as gold or silver. Though the making of a graven image is expressly forbidden in the second commandment, there are certain professedly Christian churches which have installed in their houses of worship, from a few up to considerable numbers of images of what they imagine Christ and His mother looked like. They believe that in those "works of art", they have reproduced an accurate likeness of the originals, and that the Lord looks upon their "devotion" with unqualified approval.

But none of these images qualify to be the special case before us—the image of the beast.

In the first case, the images of stone, concrete, bronze, gold, and silver are all inanimate, whereas the image for which we are looking, is both living and intelligent; having the power to speak and to enforce its will under penalty of death. These capacities are plainly revealed in these words:

"He was granted power to give breath to the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak and cause as many as would not worship the image of the beast to be killed." *Revelation* 13:15.

This certainly is no inanimate carving or casting, but is a living force determined to obtain submission to his will no matter what the cost to others might be. It is the lamblike beast, which later speaks with the voice of the dragon himself, that will give breath to the image. To put breath into the image is to impart life to it so that it be-

comes a living power. Thus it is that the image of the beast "speaks". He demands that he, the image of the beast, should be worshipped, and decrees that those who refuse to render him homage shall suffer the death *decree.*

It is highly significant and of great value to us that he is declared to be the "image of the beast", for this alerts us to the fact that he is but a reappearance of a power which has already run its course in history. What the former did previously, his image is certain to do again, which means that the better we understand the spirit, character, policies, and operations of the unrighteous beast, the better we will know what to expect from his iniquitous image.

So then, who was the beast whose image is given life in these last days?

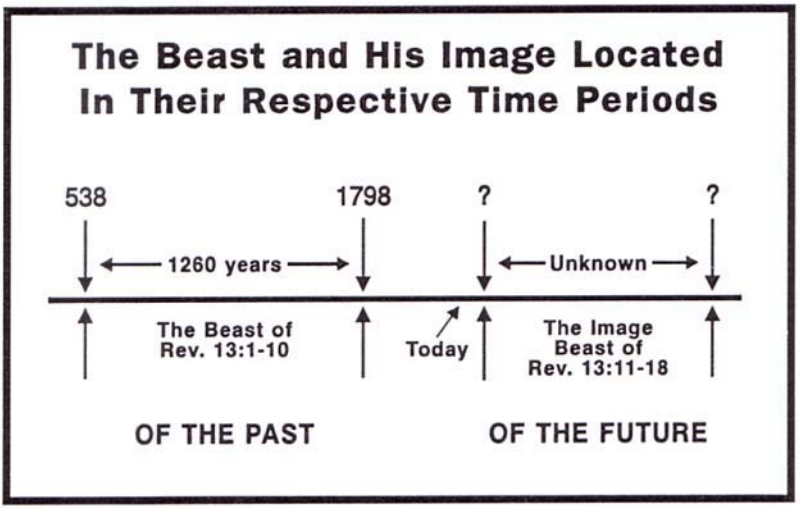
Here, in the inspired Word, is the answer:

"By this first beast is represented the Roman Church, an ecclesiastical body clothed with civil power, having authority to punish all dissenters. The image to the beast represents another religious body clothed with similar powers." Story *of Redemption,* 381.

The question as to who was the first beast is clearly answered. It is the papacy who, with the authority and might of the civil powers, held the world in bondage from 538-1798. Its use of these forces to arbitrarily enforce her will upon all earth dwellers, is a readily identifiable characteristic of its existence, for it is the nature of the beast in question here to operate thus.

When another church organization which, on a worldwide scale, acquires the authority of the state and uses that to enforce its own worship, then there has been created a reproduction or image of the first. The beast belongs to the past and has come and gone although its spirit and teachings live boldly on, while the image is still in the future. When it comes, it will be far more powerful than the Roman Church of the Middle Ages, and every bit as ruthless and remorseless. Terrible indeed is the struggle through which God's people are soon to pass. It will require the faith of Jesus to conquer the image of the beast.

This all indicates that there will be remarkable and extensive changes away from the blessed freedom to worship God according to our own personal convictions, or if we choose, not to worship Him at all. Let us make the most of our precious opportunities which we now enjoy, for they are not here to stay. All too soon, religious oppression and fearful persecution are to be the weapons by which the image of the beast will seek to establish its undisputed supremacy. Today, we long for the latter rain to fall and pray most earnestly for the reception of that wonderful blessing without realizing the awful nature and extent of the image's response to this challenge to its



claims, and the incredible exposure of its true character. When that unparalleled time of trouble bursts upon us, some will be wishing for the return of our present, peaceful freedom. That this will be so is stated in these words: ". . . when the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim: 'Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace.' " *Great Controversy,* 609.

I have met those who, cherishing the idea that modern man has left the ignorance and superstitious fears of the Dark Ages far behind, cannot believe that such utter denials of religious freedom could ever happen again, especially in the freedom-loving United States of America. But, the Word of the Living God has declared it will be so, and so it will be. The image of the beast will be set up and the same relentless persecutions practised by the beast will be repeated by the image.

It is now time to ask several questions:

At what point of time will the image be set up?

What act upon the part of men will establish it?

And, what is involved in this?

These questions are answered by inspiration with indisputable clarity. Here are those answers:

"When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Ro-

man hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result." *Great Controversy,* 445.

"The 'image to the beast' represents that form of apostate Protestantism which will be developed when the Protestant churches shall seek the aid of the civil power for the enforcement of their dogmas." *Great Controversy,* 445.

"'Romanists declare that "the observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic! Church." '—Mgr. Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today,* page 213. The enforcement of Sunday keeping on the part of Protestant churches is an enforcement of the worship of the papacy—of the beast. Those who, understanding the claims of the fourth commandment, choose to observe the false instead of the true Sabbath, are thereby paying homage to that power by which alone it is commanded. But in the very act of enforcing a religious duty by secular power, the churches would themselves form an image to the beast; hence the enforcement of Sundaykeeping in the United States would be an enforcement of the worship of the beast and his image." *Great Controversy,* 448, 449.

Thus is answered the question, "At what point of time will the image of the beast be set up?" It will be set up when the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as they hold in common, shall obtain the power of the civil authorities to enforce as law the decrees and injunctions of the Church itself especially in regard to Sunday legislation.

Signs that this terrible state of vile apostasy is soon to be enacted are appearing with increasing rapidity. Already the movement for church unity is well advanced and strides have been made in this direction that would not have been thought possible but a few short years ago. Many see in this unity a great blessing for the world and it is true that the prayer of Christ is for the unity of His people. But, let us never forget that the unity for which Jesus prayed, is not the root, but the fruit. Firstly, each member of Christ's body becomes a member by virtue of the establishment of the life and truth of Jesus within him. Perfect unity is then found in each believer's having the same common bond of Jesus' life, love, and truth in his inward spiritual nature. No one can be a part of the unity for which Christ prayed, unless he actually experiences that miraculous change by which the old evil sin master is eradicated, and replaced by the seed of Christ.

Those who are not familiar with these truths, should diligently study those publications from Destiny Press which clearly explain this aspect of the message. I refer to books such as *From Bondage to Freedom, Acceptable Confession, Revival and Reformation,* and *The Living and the Dead.*

The unity for which the churches of the world are working does not involve a transformation of nature, but only a change of allegiance. This principle is powerfully illustrated in the behavior patterns which were exhibited at the time of the French Revolution when there was a tremendous change in the people of France. Up until the masses rose against the priests and the nobility, they were devout Roman Catholics, but with the coming of the national insurrection, they suddenly changed into atheists. This realignment of their allegiance required no change of character whatsoever. The hatred and spirit of revenge so violently manifested once the revolution had begun, was but the revelation of what was resident, but restrained, within them prior to the outbreak of anarchy. There was no change of character in those who either instigated or carried forward the abandoned fury which all but destroyed France.

The same principle was in operation when the collapse of Communism took place in eastern Europe in 1989. There the change was in the opposite direction from that in the French Revolution where it had been from Catholicism to atheism. In the fall of Communism, it was from atheism back to freedom of religion, but still without change of character.

For an atheist, an apostate Protestant, a Roman Catholic, a Moslem, a Hindu, or a heathen to become a member of the body of Christ requires an actual transformation of his inner nature from the state of sinfulness to that of holiness or righteousness. Without that, there can be none of the unity for which the Saviour prayed.

In the final conflict, a unity other than that which emanates from Christ will produce a situation in which the forces of the earth will be one in mind and one in spirit.

"There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:983.

The unity proposed here is not on a platform of truth, but is a tactic designed for gaining a substitute power in the place of God's power which they will have lost through their rejection of the third angel's message, the gospel of Jesus Christ. The only power to which the churches can rightfully look, and to which alone they should turn, is the almighty omnipotence of the Most High, but those churches who have lost that power do not do that. Instead, they seek to fill the vacuum from other sources—money-power and people-power.

Of that power, earthly civil governments are the custodians, the source of supply. Therefore, in order to acquire that power, the churches must go to the state. This they cannot do separately, but must make their approach as a united body—all for one, and one for all. Hence the all-powerful drive for unity.

Some may feel that the image of the beast must already be set up because there are numerous Sunday laws upon the State books throughout the United States as well as in Australia and Europe. But, at the present time, these stand largely unenforced while the time will come when, in the face of human-existence threatening crises, there will be a strong uniting of the churches followed by a very definite enforcement of the law in America first. It will be a nationwide affair that will involve rewriting portions of the American Constitution. It will be "national apostasy which will end only in national ruin." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:976.

It should now be clear that when the civil authorities of the United States use their powers on behalf of the churches, to enact and enforce the national Sunday law, the image of the beast will have been set up in that land. No true Christian who studies the sure word of prophecy will have the least difficulty in recognizing the event when it comes.

The United States will be the world leader, for the image will be established by her government before it will be adopted in turn by every nation on the globe.

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the Papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example." "Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." *Testimonies* 6:18, 395.

It must be self-evident by now that the setting up of the image of the beast is a most significant event. It is a development which brings the world to a certain point of acute crisis and ushers in a series of chain reactions that end only in the seven last plagues, the coming of the Lord in glory, and the total destruction of all the wicked. Hence the importance of putting this peg in its sure place at the very outset of this book.

Consider the fearful implications of the fact that the setting up of the image is the act of national apostasy, firstly in the United States, and then in each country in turn, until the whole world has plunged itself into global apostasy.

"When our nation, [USA] in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin." *Review and Herald,* December 18, 1888.

This will be no minor apostasy, but total descent into separation from the Lord of glory. These next statements declare this:

"By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation [USA] will disconnect herself fully from righteousness. When Protestantism shall stretch her hand across the gulf to grasp the hand of the Roman power, when she shall reach over the abyss to clasp hands with spiritualism, when, under the influence of this threefold union, our country shall repudiate every principle of its constitution as a Protestant and Republican government, and shall make provision for the propagation of papal falsehoods and delusions, then we may know that the time has come for the marvellous working of Satan and that the end is near.

"As the approach of the Roman armies was a sign to the disciples of the impending destruction of Jerusalem, so may this apostasy be a sign to us that the limit of God's forbearance is reached, that the measure of our nation's iniquity is full, and that the angel of mercy is about to take her flight, never to return." *Testimonies* 5:451.

Fearful will be the consequences of this irreversible descent into godlessness which will bring the entire nation and, in turn, the whole world to spiritual, moral, social, financial, and economic ruin. The stock market crashes we have known so far, are nothing compared to what is coming. It will bring ruin so total that there will not be the slightest hope of the least recovery.

"When Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution, then will the papal Sabbath be enforced by the combined authority of church and state. There will be a national apostasy, which will end only in national ruin." *Evangelism,* 235.

"It is at the time of the national apostasy, when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers of the land will rank themselves on the side of the man of sin—it is then the measure of guilt is full; the national apostasy is the signal for national ruin." *Selected Messages* 2:373.

These statements need no further comment. They plainly tell us that the act of passing and enforcing the national Sunday law as an act of homage to the papacy; is national apostasy so deep and dark that it brings complete severance from all righteousness, fills up the measure of their guilt, and causes the angel of mercy to leave, never to return. It is no wonder that this is a significant event and one which is fraught with fearful consequences. It is the great point of no return. Once that step is taken, the powers of this earth will have gone too far to return and their destruction is certified.

By the setting up of the image, the device of Satan is perfected.

Then he will be fully armed and equipped for the final battle. For a long time the Devil has been working to bring the whole world under his complete control by uniting its people into one vast army of confederated opposition against the people and the truth of God. But, he could not accomplish this while his forces were scattered and pitted against one another. To perfect his device, he has to terminate this infighting and enlist the legions throughout the entire world to fight under his command alone in the common commitment against the Sovereign of the universe.

Now at last his device will be perfected and he will be fully prepared for the final confrontation by which he cherishes the futile hope that he will be able to force God to recognize him as a legitimate part of the divine kingdom.

"When the legislature frames laws which exalt the first day of the week, and put it in the place of the seventh day, the device of Satan will be perfected." *Review and Herald,* April 15, 1890.

The perfecting of Satan's device makes God's law of no effect in the hearts and minds of those who have rejected truth and support the devil's claims.

"A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God's people will be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin." *Review and Herald,* December 18,1888.

Very naturally this will bring the great test for the people of God.

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . *[Revelation* 13:11-17 quoted.l. . .

' This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious Sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin, and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast." SDA *Bible Commentary* 7:976.

For the people of God the time will have come to take flight from the cities: "As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power

on the part of our nation in the *decree* enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains." Testimonies 5:464, 465.

This, as shall be shown later in the book, is when the message can and will go forth that Babylon the Great is fallen. The proclamation will not be that the hour of her fall has come, nor that she is about to fall, but that she is fallen.

"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.

"And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

" 'For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.' " *Revelation* 18:1-3.

There can be no question then in the light of the foregoing evidences from the prophetic Word, that the setting up of the image of the beast is a very significant and important event indeed, a waymark which must not be ignored. It marks a definite and decisive point of development in the great final conflict, and we must be thoroughly acquainted with all the facts that concern it. These facts will take on even greater significance as we proceed with the study, and witness the bearing that they will have on the crisis.

Chapter 2

The Rise of the Beast

The setting up of the image of the beast is the product of the play and counter play of the titanic forces of the last days in rebellion against God. Its assumption of absolute power and authority is now long overdue, because there is pitted in opposition to its rise to supremacy, the restraining power of the mighty angels who hold back the four winds of strife. These will continue to do so until the tardy people of the Lord are fully prepared to win the battle which shall bring about his eternal downfall.

But, despite the effective ministry of the four withholding angels, wickedness and violence are rapidly increasing and the angels are gradually releasing their hold. Inevitably and eventually, there will be insufficient resistance to the setting up of the image, and religious and political leaders will be quick to grasp their long awaited opportunity. God's people must be fully readied when that day arrives.

When the image is finally set up, it will be a development which will not have happened without a cause. Rather it will be the result of the outworking of certain steps and crucial decisions which have been made over quite a period of time. It is something to which the church and the state, having once set their feet in certain paths, must of necessity come in the end.

For us who are called upon by God to be faithful Bible students, it is not enough to know that the image is to be set up and to be able to identify it when it is. We must also understand the factors which bring about such a terrible development. As far as it is revealed, and as far as it is possible for the human mind aided by the Spirit of God to understand these weighty matters, we must comprehend the outworking of the principles which lead up to this situation. Otherwise we will not be equipped to recognize its rising to supremacy until it is too late to escape its deceptive power. Each must be swift to detect in himself any presence of those factors which lead to a person having the image of the beast developed in himself. If he should permit this

to happen, he will be the prisoner of that deception by which the image will hold him and the entire world captive.

The question now is: How shall we arrive at a clear understanding of those factors which even now are working in the building of the image of the beast?

The answer to that question was given in the last chapter. To understand what brings about the image of the beast, study what brought about the rise of the beast before it, for therein the answer will be found. The image is an image in every way. The forces that set up the beast will be the same forces, except at a later date, which will set up the its image. What caused the one will cause the other. Therefore to understand that which is yet to be, we must study carefully that which has already been.

What was it then that led to the setting up of the beast in the first instance? That is the question, to which the answer is clearly and plainly given in these words: "It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy—the beast. Said Paul, 'There' shall 'come a falling away, . . . and that man of sin be revealed.' *2 Thessalonians* 2:3. So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image of the beast." *Great Controversy,* 443, 444.

This statement takes us directly to the heart of the matter by declaring the sequence which developed the beast—the papacy. It all began with apostasy which robbed God's professed children of the powers of heavenly origin without which they could not operate as God's representatives. That was followed by the church's quest for, and acquisition of, the power of the state for enforcing the laws and authority of the church.

In the same manner the image of the beast will be formed. The apostasy which will give rise to it is already here and is rapidly becoming terminal. Soon now, the fallen churches will unite with the civil authorities to enforce the will of the church upon the people, and then and there will be the beast's image.

But why is it that apostasy is the cause of the church's assumption of civil power, and the framing of laws designed to rigorously enforce religion on the entire world? Why is it that the setting up of the beast and then of the image is the natural and inevitable consequence of the apostasy?

Apostasy is that falling away from the pure principles of the truth of God—the at first imperceptible decline in the faith of Jesus—by which the church departs from the light and walks further and further into darkness. This rejection of divine light can take quite a long time to develop, but when, sooner or later, it becomes total, it produces a system of unbelievably cruel, restrictive oppression.

The falling away which gave rise to the papal beast, was seeded in the pure and holy apostolic church, by men who had the best interests of the church at heart, but who did not understand the principles of absolute religious freedom. These men who had not fully left the spirit of the oppressor behind when they left Judaism, felt it their duty to control and direct the workers in the cause of truth. At this time, the power of the state was not available to them to enforce their wills, but they brought to bear upon the situation all the pressure they could.

This was the sprouted seed, which, once the fullness of the apostasy rested heavily on the whole earth, had grown to be the papal beast, and terrible were the consequences. See *Entering Into God's Sabbath Rest,* Chapters 10 & 11, by F. T. Wright, available from Destiny Press.

Many chapters could be written at this point detailing how the majority in the Christian Church drifted from one depth of unfaithfulness to a deeper one still, but, in this book there is insufficient space for such a detailed treatment. It is recommended that *Great Controversy,* Chapter 2, entitled "Persecution in the First Centuries", be diligently studied.

It will be found there that at first Satan tried to destroy the church by killing off its membership, but this failed to produce the desired result. Instead, it kept the church free from those who were not genuine, and multiplied its membership.

"In vain were Satan's efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. The great controversy in which the disciples of Jesus yielded up their lives did not cease when these faithful standard-bearers fell at their post. By defeat they conquered. God's workmen were slain, but His work went steadily forward. The gospel continued to spread and the number of its adherents to increase. It penetrated into regions that were inaccessible even to the eagles of Rome. Said a Christian, expostulating with the heathen rulers who were urging forward the persecution: You may 'kill us, torture us, condemn us. ... Your injustice is the proof that we are innocent .... Nor does your cruelty . . . avail you.' It was but a stronger invitation to bring others to their persuasion. The oftener we are mown down by you, the more in number we grow; the blood of Christians is seed.'—Tertullian, *Apology,* paragraph 50.

"Thousands were imprisoned and slain, but others sprang up to fill their places. And those who were martyred for their faith were secured to Christ and accounted of Him as conquerors. They had fought the good fight, and they were to *receive* the crown of glory when Christ should come. The sufferings which they endured brought Christians nearer to one another and to their Redeemer.

Their living example and dying testimony were a constant witness for the truth; and where least expected, the subjects of Satan were leaving his service and enlisting under the banner of Christ." *Great Controversy,* 41, 42.

When Satan saw the indestructible nature of the church kept pure by the refining process of persecution, he knew he had to adopt different procedures, which he did.

"Satan therefore laid his plans to war more successfully against the government of God by planting his banner in the Christian church. If the followers of Christ could be deceived and led to displease God, then their strength, fortitude, and firmness would fail, and they would fall an easy prey.

"The great adversary now endeavored to gain by artifice what he had failed to secure by force. Persecution ceased, and in its stead were substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. Idolaters were led to receive a part of the Christian faith, while they rejected other essential truths. They professed to accept Jesus as the Son of God and to believe in His death and resurrection, but they had no conviction of sin and felt no need of repentance or of a change of heart. With some concessions on their part they proposed that Christians should make concessions, that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.

"Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this. Some of the Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no compromise. Others were in favor of yielding or modifying some features of their faith and uniting with those who had accepted a part of Christianity, urging that this might be the means of their full conversion. That was a time of deep anguish to the faithful followers of Christ. Under a cloak of pretended Christianity, Satan was insinuating himself into the church, to corrupt their faith and turn their minds from the word of truth.

"Most of the Christians at last consented to lower their standard, and a union was formed between Christianity and paganism. Although the worshipers of idols professed to be converted, and united with the church, they still clung to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints. The foul leaven of idolatry, thus brought into the church, continued its baleful work. Unsound doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies were incorporated into her faith and worship. As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost her purity and power. There were some, however, who were not misled by these delusions.

They still maintained their fidelity to the Author of truth and worshiped God alone." *Great Controversy,* 42,43.

Note in particular that "As the followers of Christ united with idolaters, the Christian religion became corrupted, and the church lost her purity and power." *Great Controversy,* 43.

A corrupted church is an apostate church which is marked by impurity and weakness. Such a body is ineffective; having no influence with sinners to win them to Christ. Possessing no power to attract members, the number of its adherents ever diminishes, as it sinks from weakness to greater weakness.



While, as Christ's bride, the church in the years succeeding the resurrection and ascension of Christ, maintained her purity and power, Satan sought to destroy her from the face of the earth by launching against her a fierce storm of bitter persecution. To his dismay, he discovered that this tactic only worked against him, for the martyrs' blood was seed which served to multiply Christians.

So, he directed the world to show a friendly face to the Christians which led many of the Lord's children to compromise as can be seen in the painted lips of this bride, the symbol of a corrupted church. This plan worked all too well producing deep apostasy as a result, and led to the establishment of the beast who reigned supreme in the Middle Ages.

Powerless to accomplish any thing of God's blessed purposes at all, such a church has lost the right to exist. Christian in name only, it is a curse to God and man.

But, another factor is introduced. When the church has the truth of God, then it also has the Spirit of God, the spirit of loving, humble service to others even to death if need be. But when the truth of God is lost, then that spirit of selfless service also disappears and is replaced by the desire to be served rather than to serve; to be lord, and not to be a servant. While the church had the truth of God and the power and Spirit of God, then it naturally attracted many people to her and to them she rendered loving service. But once she had lost that truth and that power, then she had nothing at all with which to

attract the people, and the church found herself drifting more and more into insignificance.

The priests, filled with the spirit of self-seeking, saw in all this the loss of their position, honor, and prestige to say nothing of their livelihood. So, the pressure was really on them to rescue themselves from the problem which confronted them.

What could they do? They no longer had the truth, God's power, or His Holy Spirit with which to successfully build God's kingdom on the earth, having apostatized from all that. Nor had they any disposition to recognize or acknowledge the true cause of their appalling weakness, so there was no possibility of their being able to solve their problem in the right way.

Therefore, they had to seek another power to attract the people other than the power of God. But what other power was there? There was only one other, and that was the power of force. If the people would not of themselves come to the churches and support them, then they must be compelled to do so.

But the power of force rested not in the hands of the priesthood. The state was the custodian of that. Therefore it followed that by some means or the other, the church had to win the support of the state until the decrees of the church ordering all men to worship as the church dictated, were put into effect by the civil authorities.

And this is exactly what they did. Having lost the power of God, and being possessed of the spirit of self-seeking, they could not do otherwise than that. And they were successful in gaining the power and the support of the sword in the enforcement of their decrees and the sustaining of their institutions. And thus it was that the beast was set up.

A. T. Jones sets out the principles involved in this clear way:

"The church was fully conscious of her loss of the power of God before she sought the power of the State. Had she not been, she never would have made any overtures to the imperial authority, nor have received with favor any advances from it. There is a power that belongs with the gospel of Christ, and is inseparable from the truth of the gospel; that is, the power of God. In fact, the gospel is but the manifestation of that power; for the gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth.' As long, therefore, as any order or organization of people professing the gospel of Christ maintains in sincerity the principle of that gospel, so long the power of God will be with them, and they will have no need of any other power to make their influence felt for good wherever known. But just as soon as any person or association professing the gospel loses the *spirit* of it, so soon the *power* is gone also. Then, and only then,

does such an organization seek for another kind of power to supply the place of that which is lost.

"Thus was it with the church at this time. She had fallen, deplorably fallen, from the *purity* and the *truth,* and therefore from the *power* of the gospel. And having lost the power of God and of godliness, she greedily grasped for the power of the State and of ungodliness. And to secure laws by which she might enforce her discipline and dogmas upon those whom she had lost the power either to convince or to persuade, was the definite purpose which the bishopric had in view when it struck that bargain with Constantine, and lent him the influence of the church in his imperial aspirations." *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 472.

It had taken several centuries to come to the place where they had sunk so low, but, as surely as the church leaders had rejected the divine solution of restoration to God's adequate sufficiency, they were faced with no other possible outcome than this. Step by step they had been led by their ever increasing separation from God, deeper and *deeper* into this situation of frustrating, humiliating, spiritual feebleness.

Thus the conditions were established and the way fully prepared for the next step to be taken by the church—the securing of the Emperor's enforcement of the church's will upon the people. They could see no other option to satisfy the grasping need of what had now become a purely selfish and self-exalting church, than the seeking of the one other power outside of the power of God—the power of force. And inasmuch as that power is firmly held in the possession of the secular authorities who have been put in the world to rule those that cannot rule themselves, it follows that the Church must gain the control of the State in order to achieve her aims and appear to all as a creditable and effective institution. And when that is accomplished, then the beast is formed.

The time had come, as noted above, when the churches so lacked the power of God that they could no longer attract the people at all, and on Sunday and special feast days, the priests found that the people would rather work than come to church. This practise the priests could never permit to continue, for not only was it a serious blow to their pride and prestige, but a decided threat to their livelihood. Having in the meantime gained great favor and influence with the Emperor, they went to him and secured the law which forbad all work on the first day of the week, in the mistaken belief that when the people could not labor on Sunday, they would assuredly fill the churches.

A. T. Jones, in *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 487, quotes Neander as saying, "By a law of the year 386, those older changes effected by the Emperor Constantine were more rigorously enforced;

and, in general, *civil transactions of every kind on Sunday were strictly forbidden.* Whosoever transgressed was to be considered, in fact, guilty of *sacrilege."*

Commenting on this, A. T. Jones writes: "As the direct result of this law, there soon appeared an evil which, under the circumstances and in the logic of the case, called for further legislation in the same direction. The law forbade all work. But as the people had not such religion as would cause them to devote the day to pious and moral exercises, the effect of the law was only to enforce idleness. Enforced idleness only multiplied opportunity for dissipation. The natural consequence was that the circuses and the theaters throughout the empire were crowded every Sunday." *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 487,488.

To their chagrin and acute disappointment, the priests found that their attempt to have the people come to church by forcing them to refrain from work on Sunday, did not produce the desired result. Instead, the owners of the circuses and theaters were the ones who prospered.

The question which then arose was: "What is to be done now?"

The answer was simple. Having entered upon this wholly wrong course, there was nothing left for them but to go further along that path and accordingly they worked till they had a law which closed the theaters on Sunday. At the Council of Carthage in June, A.D. 401, the following Canon was enacted:

"Canon 5. On Sundays and feast days, no plays may be performed.

"That this canon might be made effective, the bishops in the same council passed a resolution, and sent up a petition to the emporor Honorius, praying 'that the public shows might be transferred from the Christian Sunday and from feast-days, to some other days of the week.'—*Neander.* . . . The church members had not enough religion or love of right to do what they professed to believe was right; therefore the State was asked to take away from them all opportunity to do wrong; then they would be Christians! Satan himself could be made that kind of Christian in that way—and he would be the devil still." *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 489, 490.

In A.D. 425 this became law and the priests were confident that, now that the competition had been nullified, the churches would be filled with a people, having been strictly forbidden to either work or to play on Sunday, would now come to church. But again they were disappointed, for the people would rather do nothing at all than come to a church which held nothing for them. Accordingly they rested at home on Sunday leaving the churches as empty as ever.

Thus, up to this point, the religious leaders had not achieved

their objective, yet they would never admit defeat, but pressed forward regardless. The devil and his agents are to be admired for their determination, tenacity, and persistence. A typical example of this is found in the behavior of a defiant Queen *Jezebel* after the crushing defeat suffered by her and her followers on Mount Carmel.

There, God had demonstrated His mighty power, the people en masse had declared their positive and emphatic conviction that, The Lord, He is God,' the priests of Baal had been executed to the last man, the drought was broken, and the King was mightily shaken. With all that going against her, the wicked Queen should have been cowering in fear that her own life was about to end. But no! She was so unconquered and defiant that she could issue a threat against Elijah's life so charged with menace that he took ignominious flight to a place of safety far away.

Such is the way of Satan and his followers—they never give up, whereas God's people, by contrast, are usually too ready to surrender. They need to learn that "Faith is the living power that presses through every barrier, overrides all obstacles, and plants its banner in the heart of the enemy's camp." *SDA Bible Commentary* 2:995.

When, under God's command, we move out to face the enemy and find ourselves succumbing to his intimidating power till failure seems certain, then let these words rally your flagging faith, zeal, and courage:

"But when we give ourselves wholly to God and in our work follow His directions, He makes Himself responsible for its accomplishment. He would not have us conjecture as to the success of our honest endeavors. Not once should we even think of failure. We are to co-operate with One who knows no failure." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 363.

The dogged determination of Satan and his followers never to capitulate no matter how much the battle goes against them, will be more than matched by God's people in the final struggle. Not once will they permit themselves to even think of failure though they will be powerfully tempted to do so.

In the meantime, we are to be ever conscious that we face foes who know no such tactics as retreat. So it was that when their successive laws forbidding the populace from working or playing on Sunday, failed to bring the laity to the house of worship, the priests did not even think of abandoning their cause. Instead, they pressed upon the Emperor their plea that worship on Sunday be made compulsory. So the people, whether they liked it or not, were not permitted to work, play, or rest at home on Sunday. They had to go to church or suffer the full penalty provided in the law, even to a martyr's death.

Again, A. T. Jones describes the development in these words:

"In the logic of this theory there was one more step to be taken. To see how logically it came about, let us glance at the steps taken from the first one up to this point: First, the church had all work on Sunday forbidden, in order that the people might attend to things divine; *work* was forbidden, that the people might *worship.* But the people would not worship; they went to the circus and to the theater instead of to church. Then the church had laws enacted closing the circuses and the theaters, in order that the people might attend church. But even then the people would not be devoted, nor attend church; for they had no real religion. The next step to be taken therefore, in the logic of the situation, was to compel them to be devoted—to compel them to attend to things divine.

"This was the next step logically to be taken, and it was taken. The theocratical bishops were equal to the occasion. They were ready with a theory that exactly met the demands of the case; and one of the greatest of the Catholic Church Fathers and Catholic saints was the father of this Catholic saintly theory. He wrote:—

" 'It is, indeed, better that men should be brought to serve God by instruction than by fear of punishment or by pain. But because the former means are better, the latter must not therefore be neglected. . . . Many must often be brought back to their Lord, like wicked servants, by the rod of temporal suffering, before they attain the highest grade of religious development.' *Augustine." Great Empires of Prophecy,* 490, 491.

So it was that, along this course of development, which step by step was the only possible outcome of the long-standing and ever deepening apostasy, the beast rose to absolute power. Of course, the majority of people who before did not have enough religion to take them to church now went, for they did not have enough religion in them either to discern the nature of this authoritarianism, or to offer any resistance to it.

But now the true people of God began to find themselves in difficulty. They could obey a civil law which prohibited their working on the first day of the week, and the law which forbad them from going to the circuses and the theaters did not touch them either, for they found no pleasure in the entertainment offered there. But, when a requirement was imposed upon them demanding that they worship God on the false sabbath, they found that they had to disobey that law.

This disobedience of an unjust and unrighteous law which the Sovereign of the universe had never given any man the right or the authority to make, very quickly attracted severe civil punishments on the real Christians. It was all done in the interests of a Church which,

having lost the power of God, had no right to even exist as a Church. And when the Church found that such punishments as were inflicted did not cause the true ones to waver and to obey, then, in the ultimate, they brought in the death *decree* and, as history attests, they slew with savage and heartless cruelty the defenceless millions who would not yield, but would obey God rather than man no matter what the price might be.

Such was the history of the setting up of the beast.

"It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy." *Great Controversy,* 443.

As it was with the rising of the beast—the papacy—so it must be with the developing of the image of that beast. The one is a matter of the past, but the other is yet in the future and terrible will be the repetition.

In the annals of history is recorded the coming of the beast into existence; in the Prophetic Word is revealed the emergence of his image. The beast has been the subject of this chapter—his image the subject of the next.

For further study on the information presented in this chapter, see *The Great Empires of Prophecy,* Chapter 32, by A. T. Jones, available from Destiny Press under the title *Opposing Principles.*

Chapter 3

The Rise of the Image

So far in this study of the order of last day events, we have noted that the setting up of the image of the beast is a landmark in the unrolling of the scroll. It is accomplished when the churches, having secured the support of the power of the State, have the national Sunday law passed and enforced. Such an act, we learned, would bring about the complete fall of Babylon. It will have brought the powers of church and state to the point of no return and there will be left only the calling out of the true children of God before the judgments on Babylon fall in deadly earnest and destroy her completely.

Such a point of disaster will not have been reached in a moment. Rather, it will be the outworking of certain forces over quite a period of time. The object of our study at the moment is to understand this outworking, so that we can follow it as it develops and know that all things are at hand in the final and finishing movements of this world's history.

We are fortunate that already such an outworking has taken place, for, as we have already seen from the words in *Great Controversy,* 443, 444, the development of the image of the beast is the exact reproduction of the development of the beast before it. There we read, "It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy—the beast. Said Paul, There' shall 'come a falling away, . . . and that man of sin be revealed.' *2 Thessalonians* 2:3. So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast."

The word "so" means, "in just the same way." This means that, as the apostasy in the early church led to the rise of the papacy, so, in exactly the same way, apostasy in the modern church will lead to the rise of the image of the beast. The development of these things is sufficiently matured at the time of writing this book that it is not difficult to see the approach of the image of the beast.

So then, having seen in our last chapter, the relationship between the development of the rise of the apostasy and the conse-

quent rise of the beast in the early centuries, let us now study the step by step progression of events which will lead to the full development of the image in these last days.

Between the years 1831-1844, the Lord of heaven and earth sent to the Protestant churches who were then the churches of God in the world, the glorious light of the Advent message. Had that light been received as the Lord planned that it should have been, then those churches would have become a mighty power in the world. Soon the gospel would have been carried to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, and the kingdom of Christ would have been established.

But the light which was sent was unwelcome and was fiercely rejected. The inevitable consequence was a serious spiritual fall. "The second angel's message of *Revelation* 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower." *Great Controversy,* 389.

That rejection of light there, was a step which could only end in the full formation of the image of the beast. There is no other possible outcome than this. The setting up of the image of the beast and all the oppression and persecution which will go with it, was from that moment on, an unavoidable certainty. It is such not by any arbitrary decree of God, nor even basically by the will and choice of man, but simply because effect will follow the cause in this field as reliably as in any other. Just as surely as the cause is there, then just so certainly will the effects follow.

All that is required to verify this truth is to make a survey of the history of the Protestant churches subsequent to their rejection of the great second advent message which the King of the universe sent to them to separate them from sin and the world, and to fit them to stand for the right in the final conflict.

But no matter how comprehensive the survey may be, we will never understand the true nature of that uprising, unless we recognize what it was in fact that was rejected at that crucial time. Obviously, it had to be something very serious in order to effect such drastic consequences, which were no less than their eternal loss of God's

presence, guidance, and blessing. As church organizations, they fell never to rise again.

So, what was it that was spurned at that time!

Was it simply some special point of truth, was it an urgent warning, or was it a point of prophecy?

It can be stated that it was all of those without truly comprehending the real issue of the hour. That which was rejected by those churches was the saving gospel of Jesus Christ, "the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes. ..." *Romans* 1:16.

That this is so is verified by *Revelation* 14:6, in which verse it is revealed that the angel who symbolizes the first angel's movement has in his possession the gospel of Jesus Christ. Firstly, he has it;

OPPOSITE PAGE: The gospel is something which every Bible student, professed Christian, church member, and so forth, is confident he truly understands and possesses. He may hold and teach views at serious variance from those held by other religious bodies, yet will believe that they are all united in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

But, the real facts are that very few know what the gospel actually is, and what they are rejecting when they turn their backs on the gospel of Jesus Christ.

The gospel of Jesus Christ according to the Holy Spirit speaking through the mighty, inspired apostle Paul, is the power of God sent into the world to save mankind from sinfulness and sinning. Even when this much is accepted as a definition of the all-powerful gospel, it is not enough. The application of this power must be accurately seen. God did not send His mighty power into the sinful world to restrain men from sinning, that is, He does not solve the sin problem by giving men the power to suppress their evil natures, and force them to do the right.

Instead, by His creative power, the gospel, He recreates in the repentant one a new nature whose only disposition is to do right. Such an incredible achievement can only be attained by the gospel, not as a theory, nor as a teaching, nor as power to suppress a man from doing what, by nature, he desires to do, but as the creative might by which a sinner is created into a saint.

Only those who have been blessed with this ministry, and have actually been recreated into the spiritual image of Christ can be said to have and to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Throughout the created world as pictured in this impressive scene from nature in which elements both massive and beautiful are assembled, one has the opportunity to gain some concept of the power of God and its capacity to deliver a person from sinfulness and sinning. It sets those in bondage free, and lights up the darkness. It emancipates those in spiritual slavery, and, once it truly comes to you, it never leaves you as it found you.

This glorious deliverance is what the churches despised and rejected when the gospel was offered to them in the years leading up to 1844. Once they did, they set their feet on a course which could only bring them to the erection of the image of the beast, an organization as bereft of the gospel as it is possible to be.



secondly, he preaches it to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people. Therefore, for the churches in 1844 to become a part of the movement symbolized by the mighty angel flying with power and speed in the midst of heaven, they had to come into possession of what the angel had—the everlasting gospel—and to do what he was said to do—preach it effectively throughout the globe, as it is written:

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—" *Revelation* 14:6.

This saving gospel is further revealed as the solution to the terrifying hour of judgment which commenced for the dead at the close of the 2,300 year time period, and will open for the living at that future moment when probation shall finally close. It has the power through the ministry of Jesus Christ, to so perfect a man that he can successfully measure up to the standard of perfection required by God's holy law. No sinning person will gain admittance to heaven, and no one can attain to the level of character excellence in which sinlessness is the way of life, except by the gospel, the power of God to save—not in—but from sin.

Through the angel messenger, God designed that His church should be the custodians of His purity and His power, for in no other way can fitness for heaven be attained, and in no other way could the churches be able to bring salvation to the lost and perishing. This is her high and holy destiny.

"To His church, Christ has given ample facilities, that He may receive a large revenue of glory from His redeemed, purchased possession. The church, being endowed with the righteousness of Christ, is His depository, in which the wealth of His mercy, His love, His grace, is to appear in full and final display. The declaration in His intercessory prayer, that the Father's love is as great toward us as toward Himself, the only-begotten Son, and that we shall be with Him where He is, forever one with Christ and the Father, is a marvel to the heavenly host, and it is their great joy. The gift of His Holy Spirit, rich, full, and abundant, is to be to His church as an encompassing wall of fire, which the powers of hell shall not prevail against. In their untainted purity and spotless perfection, Christ looks upon His people as the reward of all His suffering, His humiliation, and His love, and the supplement of His glory—Christ, the great center from which radiates all glory. 'Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb' " *Testimonies to Ministers,* 18, 19.

One would expect that to be the recipient of such glorious gifts from God, would establish in the churches the most earnest desires to obtain these incredible provisions of divine grace, but, to the amazement of God's true children, in 1844, the churches despised

the light sent to them in love from heaven, treating it as a deadly enemy.

Now, if they who needed the saving power of God so much refused to *receive* it, then they did not have it, for no one can refuse the gift of God and have it at the same time. That is obvious, but even though obvious, it needs to be stated, for we must understand that the churches stood devoid not only of the truth, but also of the power of God in that truth.

Pitted against the church is the power of sin and the church is in the world to save men from sin. But in order to accomplish this mission and to fulfill the very purpose of its existence, the church must be equipped with power sufficient for the task. The power of sin is a mighty power—of that there can be no question. And it is the truth that the only power in existence which can meet and conquer the power of sin is the power of God.

Now either the church has that power or she does not. It is not the smooth running of a great and splendid organization, nor the large number of people that serve the church, nor the amount of money under her command, nor any other of these things which gives to a church this power. That which gives to a church such power is the acceptance of the truth of God as it is brought to the church by God. This acceptance of the truth must go much deeper than merely grasping the theory of the truth. In order to provide the church with the power needed for the execution of her appointed mission, the power of the living God must be present as a vitalizing, creating force in that truth, and within the believers who hold to the light from heaven.

In 1844, the churches rejected the truth of God in the experience and power of it, and thus were left without the sufficiency needed to combat the power of sin. This deficiency left them powerless, defenceless, and destitute of all that which is needed to attain to righteousness. Worst of all, they became so blind to their true condition that they believed themselves true to God when in fact they were the slaves of the arch rebel.

Out of such a condition of things, certain predictable developments had to arise, and they have. Sinfulness in its various forms of infidelity, immorality, violence, iniquity, and perversion of God's truth, have flourished as a direct result of the rejection of light, even though hidden in part from human sight behind that cloak of professed righteousness. This is the only possible outworking of the situation. Such a cause must be followed by the certain effects of that cause. History itself attests to the reliability of these principles of operation as we read: "The iniquity and spiritual darkness that pre-

vailed under the supremacy of Rome were the inevitable result of her suppression of the Scriptures." *Great Controversy,* 586.

As it was in the past so it will be in the present and in the future, for the same rejection of the truth of God will bring the same sad results.

The message of the everlasting gospel as brought in the light of the Advent truth of 1844, called upon men to obey all the commandments of God including the seventh-day Sabbath. Truly understood, received, and obeyed, the Sabbath of God is the evidence of the presence of the power of God, and therefore its place in the teaching of the last message of mercy to the world is vital and necessary. It has to be there or the message is incomplete and lacking in vital power and strength. For further information on this vital point, study *Living Righteousness and the Sabbath of God,* by F. T. Wright.

But the Sabbath is particularly objectionable to those who reject the message, and are led to cast aside the whole law in order to avoid the claims of the Sabbath. But the work of Sabbath reform extends nevertheless, and the more it does, the more it is resisted by the churches. In this way their rejection of the truth of God becomes the more confirmed, and inevitably the power of sin makes the more determined and effective inroads into the world. Thus the very churches that are in the world as the channels by which the salvation of God is to come to the world, become the very means by which sin is strengthened and entrenched.

Thus we read: "As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become well-nigh universal. The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world." *Great Controversy,* 587.

This is utterly true.

None but those who knew nothing of history can honestly deny it. Up till 1844, the churches were strong teachers of the obligations of the law of God and the period is recognized as one of the most circumspect and moral of history. True, there was the worldly class who lived wickedly, but the hard core of society was religious and law abiding. It was a period when there were men and women of decided strength of character and moral worth. The divorce and crime rates were low and the family was a solid and well bound unit on the whole.

But then came the added light of the Advent Message in 1844, and as has been noted already, the churches led out in a rejection of that message. Ever since that time there has been around the world an ever increasing disregard for the requirement of obedience to

God's law. The family unit is no longer stable. Juvenile as well as adult crime is of such fearful proportion as to be a major concern to the powers that be. Divorce is common, violence is rampant, and terrorism is a fearful threat to all. And all this is rapidly on the increase.

These are facts, and no one can honestly deny them. The world is not getting to be a better place. It is becoming worse and worse at a fearful rate just as the Scriptures warned us it would.

"But know this, that in the last days perilous times will come:

"For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

"unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,

"traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God,

"having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!" *2 Timothy* 3:1-5.

We are in the last days, and this situation exists right now. The common man can see it. The officials can see it. The church can see it. And the leaders of the nations can see it. Everyone can see it. And it is because they can, and because they are disturbed by it, that it becomes the issue even on political platforms.

The situation is very really and terribly here. Men will advance a number of different reasons for its presence or even be at a loss to give a reason at all, but let it be known on the authority of the Word of God that there is but one reason for it, and that is the rejection of the truth sent to the churches from heaven. This is *the reason.* Having rejected the truth of God, they have rejected the power of God and thus have no defence against the power of sin in the world.

Daily it floods in stronger and stronger, and the only way to save the situation would be for the churches to "be zealous and repent", and take up the very message and the very power of it which they refused to *receive* when it was offered to them in the past.

But will they?

The sure Word of Prophecy indicates that they will not.

Then what will they do instead? They are the ones who are supposed to have the answer to the problems of sin in the world, but the ever increasing crime, violence, and immorality provides an ever strengthening indictment against the churches for their failure. Such a situation then imposes on them an ever increasing pressure to come up with an answer that will either solve the problem or at least remove the blame from themselves.

This brings us to the next step in the inexorable march to the setting up of the image of the beast.

They have rejected the truth of God—the Sabbath of God—the power of God.

The barrier to sin removed, it has swept in like a flood.

Now what?

Already quoted above is this statement: "The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world." *Great Controversy,* 587.

Though perfectly correct and truthful, this charge is a heavy one to make, and difficult to maintain, for it is leveled against men who make the highest professions of loyalty to God, whose appearance and demeanor match their lofty profession, and who denounce sin in thunderous tones. Yet they truly are wolves in sheep's clothing, a fact which becomes clearly visible when their teachings are carefully examined and analyzed.

For instance, they assure their listeners that the law is no longer binding on Christians, for, they say, it was nailed to the cross after having been kept by Christ in our stead. They further assert the law cannot be kept anyway. What an invitation to sinful man this is to cast off all restraint and sin all he likes in the belief that where sin abounds grace is even more abundant! Week after week, those who are bewitched by such teachings, return from their attendance at their churches with no conviction of sin, no restraint from God's holy word, and no fear of coming judgment. It is no wonder that God, through the Spirit of Prophecy has declared:

"The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world." *Great Controversy,* 587.

Now there immediately follows these words: "Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called 'Christian Sabbath,' and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society." *Great Controversy,* 587.

It is a principle of life that the committing of one wrong act opens the door for the next. Thus, when David committed adultery with Bathsheba the wife of Uriah the Hittite, he had the option of making a clean cut confession of it, or of committing murder to cover up the first sin. So the churches, having rejected the Sabbath of God and the power of God, add further sin to the first sin by charging the trouble to Sunday desecration when it is not that at all. This is an act in support of Sunday and therefore is a further act in the rejection of the Sabbath—the truth and the power of God.

This then can only drive them still further away from God, still more deeply into the power of sin, and thus more widely open the door to the inroads of immorality, sin, and spiritualism. Thus the churches are found to be in a descending spiral of ever frightening proportions until a crisis is reached of such dimensions as will demand drastic and immediate action to solve the problem. It will be a situation in which God alone can effectively fill the position of problem-solver, but in which men will seek to take over the responsibility, as they have done so consistently from the beginning of the great controversy.

At the time of the writing of this book, there is no problem in seeing that a crisis of worldwide proportions is developing both for the church and the world.

The world is facing an intensifying, life threatening time of trouble in every aspect of its existence such as it has never previously known. Natural disasters in the form of volcanic eruptions, floods, earthquakes, tornadoes, great conflagrations and such like, of increasing frequency and destructive power, are wiping out whole communities of people, while famines made more terrible through the ravages of war, exact a fearful toll of human life.

Deadly diseases such as cancer, aids, and other incurable scourges defy man's best and most expensive efforts to find a cure for these disorders.

Crime is out of control as law enforcers wage a losing battle against the lawless elements of society.

Savage wars ravage the earth exacting a fearful toll of human life and property.

All this adds up to a cost so fearful that the total extinction of all life on this planet becomes an ever more obvious prospect. Men will be desperate for a solution, and will turn to any and every proposition which seems to offer hope, excepting the way of the Lord.

Politicians and administrators are the ones to whom the people look to effectively solve the woes of a lost world, but they are proving very incompetent at this task, and there is manifest today an increasing loss of confidence in their capacity to fill this role.

To whom then can frantic mankind turn in his distress when he should be turning to God alone?

There is but one other institution—the churches. But, the problem is that they too suffer a severe lack of confidence in them by the people. Millions who once placed their implicit trust in the religious leaders, now turn from them charged with skepticism. Add to these those who were always irreligious, and the churches are left with but few of the supporters they need to erect the image of the beast.

This loss of implicit faith in the church is nowhere better mani-

fested in recent times than in events which took place in the Roman Catholic church over the issue of birth control.

For a long time the Catholic world awaited the Pope's declaration on this matter. In view of the staggering problem of a rapidly increasing world population to the point and beyond which it would be impossible to support the billions on the planet, it was anticipated that the Pope would take a practical and common sense view of the matter and endorse certain means of birth control. But no such stand was taken by the head of that Church. Instead, he held to the hard line of the old traditions.

For a brief moment the world caught its breath and then a wave of rebellion swept through the ranks of the Catholic Church that was as surprising in its proportions as it was outspoken and definite. Suddenly the world became aware of the fact that the Papacy does not hold over its people the power and the authority which it once had.

This is not to say that the encyclical on birth control brought about this decay in Papal authority. By no means. Such a decay is the work of a long period of time. There were many factors that contributed to it. The above mentioned incident only triggered off the reaction which revealed a situation that already existed but of which the majority was not aware.

So serious did the situation become that the Pope called a special council for October, 1969, to discuss the matter and to discover what steps might be taken to counteract the problem. This is nothing short of an admission on the part of the Papal hierarchy, of their consciousness of the loss of power over many of the people. And this is also admission of their loss of the power of God. This is an essential development immediately preceding the seeking on the part of the Church of the power of the state. We quote again the statement from A. T. Jones which was quoted in the last chapter. "The church was fully conscious of her loss of the power of God, before she sought the power of the State. Had she not been, she never would have made any overtures to the imperial authority, nor have received with favor any advances from it." *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 472.

The very fact that once again the church is becoming fully conscious of her loss of the power to reach and to hold the people is a clear indication that soon she will again seek the power of the state. And in this thing the Protestant churches will actually lead out as we know from our study of *Revelation* 13. Conscious of the fact that they are powerless to reach and hold the people, and of the fact that they cannot stem the rising tide of evil, the churches will be forced to seek power where it can be found. But they have rejected the power of God and have confirmed themselves in that rejection to the point where they have no mind to confess the sin and return to the Lord.

Therefore they must find some other power, and they will. The only other power that is available is the power of force, the means whereby a man is compelled to do that which it is not in him to do.

But such power is vested, not in the church, but in the state. It is not the way of God to force anyone to do anything. God desires only willing and cheerful obedience. He looks for a people who will do right because it is right and good and proper. But the power of the state is such that it can obtain obedience to its law only by force. It has no other means. Therefore, when the church has lost the power to appeal to the heart of man, and needs the power of force to compel men to obey even against their wills, then she will go to the State and obtain from it the power which it has, the power of force, and, when she has obtained that, then she will have set up the image of the beast. But such a situation will not have arrived in a moment. It will be the culmination of a long process beginning with the rejection of the power of God, followed by the consequent inroads of immorality, vice, spiritualism, violence, rebellion, and such like, and ending with the formation of the image of the beast.

If they were but to see that this is the outworking of their own mischievous course of action and thus be led to repent of that which caused the problem, then well and good. But instead, the one wrong action leads to another and then another until the matter reaches crisis proportions and a desperate church calls in the power of the state to do that which she is powerless to do.

This is the procedure, long and remorseless, which leads up to the image of the beast. Already this is well advanced and shortly we shall see the fruition of it all.

Chapter 4

The Role of Spiritualism

In the work of restoring the beast in the person of his image, the important and powerful role of Spiritualism is not to be overlooked, for it will play a major part in this return to ecclesiastical dominance and oppression. In the Scriptures, explicit warnings have been given concerning this factor of which John wrote:

"Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared.

"And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs coming out of the mouth of the dragon, out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

"For they are spirits of demons, performing signs, which go out to the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.

" 'Behold, I am coming as a thief. Blessed is he who watches, and keeps his garments, lest he walk naked and they see his shame.'

"And they gathered them together to the place called in Hebrew, Armageddon." *Revelation* 16:12-16.

Two major pieces of information are provided in this Scripture. One is that the kings of the earth and of the entire world will be gathered to participate in the battle of the great day of God Almighty, which confrontation we know to be the awful battle of Armageddon.

The other vital piece of information is that this gathering of the kings of the earth and of the whole world will be brought about by the work of miracle-working spirits of demons, or, in other words, by spiritualism.

It is important that we recognize that the gathering to Armageddon of the powers who rule the earth, is in fact the erection of the image to the beast. They are one and the same event. Understanding this depends on our knowing what the battle of Armageddon will be, and therefore what it will not be. It is not, as so many suppose, a ti-

tanic struggle between eastern and western nations to be fought out on the plains of Megiddo in Palestine.

Those who draw this conclusion, interpret the Bible according to the principles of geographic interpretation. In this system, where you are determines who you are, so that, if a kingdom lies to the east of Palestine, it is a king of the east. Therefore, this type of reasoning identifies Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, India, Japan, and so forth as kings from the east, and sees them fighting against those kings located to the west of Palestine, in the final battle which is called Armageddon.

But God does not judge you by *where* you come from geographically, but by *what* you are in character. With the Sovereign of the universe, tuhatyou are, determines luhoyou are.

Those who believe in the geographical interpretation are not able to consistently apply their method of explaining the messages in the prophecies. For instance, Babylon plays a very large role in the final scenes of the last great conflict, but no one in her ranks comes today from a geographical location called Babylon. So, if we are looking for a power coming from the great city which was once physically Babylon, we will find nothing, for the great capital lies in ruins to this day and will never be rebuilt nor ever be dwelt therein again.

But, if without the slightest regard for where she came from, we look for a kingdom or kingdoms with the character, policies, aims, and methods of ancient Babylon, then we have found the "Mystery, Babylon the Great, The Mother of Harlots and of the Abominations of the Earth." *Revelation* 17:5. No matter where she is found, be it north, south, east, or west of Palestine, she is the same Babylon, and is therefore known by that name because of what she is.

While those who are tied to a geographical interpretation of Bible prophecy inevitably expect Armageddon to be an armed clash between eastern kings and the rest of the world powers, there is not a single reference to be found in the Spirit of Prophecy supporting such a view. Instead, "the battle of that great day of God Almighty", *Revelation* 16:14, is declared to be a conflict between God and those who are obedient to His law on the one side, and Satan and those who are disobedient on the other. This is declared in the plainest of language in statements such as the following:

"Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:982, 983.

There are more statements to this same effect in the Spirit of Prophecy, but as this is not a specific study on Armageddon, but of

ARMAGEDDON

WILL BE
THE LAST GREAT BATTLE
OF THE AGES

BUT IT WILL NOT BE
A TITANIC STRUGGLE
BETWEEN WESTERN
AND EASTERN NATIONS

NOR WILL IT BE THE
FINAL CONFRONTATION
BETWEEN ONE GROUP
DISOBEDIENT TO GOD
AND A SECOND GROUP
DISOBEDIENT TO GOD

BUT IT WILL BE
THE FINALLY DECISIVE
BATTLE BETWEEN
CHRIST AND HIS ARMIES
AND SATAN AND HIS ARMIES
THE DISOBEDIENT
VERSUS THE OBEDIENT

"Two great opposing powers are revealed in the last great battle. On one side stands the Creator of heaven and earth. All on His side bear His signet. They are obedient to His commands. On the other side stands the prince of darkness, with those who have chosen apostasy and rebellion." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:983.

last day events, then we will not take the space to quote them all here. For more information on the nature of this titanic struggle, study *The Seven Angels,* by F. T. Wright, available from Destiny Press.

The fact is that *Revelation* 13,16,17,18 and 19, are all descriptions of the forces aligned against each other in the Battle of Armageddon, even though only in *Revelation* 16 is it called by that name. Each of these great prophetic chapters are revelations of the disobedient at war against Him of whom it is written that: "in righteousness He judges and makes war." *Revelation* 19:11.

In Chapter 13:1-10, this picture of all the earthly powers being united against the King of kings is clearly portrayed:

"And all the world marveled and followed the beast. . ..

"Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven.

"It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation.

"And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." Verses 3, 6-8.

As these verses are read, two points stand out: Firstly, it is declared that, except for God's true people, the entire world will be united under the papal head, and that, secondly, these united forces are led against the Most High and not against each other. There is no interest taken by the prophecy in any struggles that might break out between various nations before or during the assembling of these forces under Satan's banner. The only concern is that they go to war against the armies of the Lord. No other conflict apart from this is the subject of these prophecies.

To God's children the message is plain: Do not engage in the futility of trying to discover some political event or particular international conflict in Bible prophecy, for battles between nations are not the subject of prophecy unless they are an event in Babylon's war against God and His people.

While it is true that the verses quoted above from *Revelation* 13:1-10, refer to what is now past history, they will be even more true in the future, for, whatever is a description of the beast, is likewise a revelation of what the image will be and do. In fact, it will be in the future that the greatest fulfillments of *Revelation* 13:1-10 will be manifested.

Let our attention now be drawn to *Revelation* 16 in which chapter we are informed that the kings of the entire earth will be gathered to Armageddon, to pit themselves against the Almighty. They will

not come as a divided people, but will be joined together in a world-wide unity of spirit, purpose, and action as is made plain in these words;

"The ten horns which you saw are ten kings who have received no kingdom as yet, but they receive authority for one hour as kings with the beast.

"These are of one mind, and they will give their power and authority to the beast.

"These will make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, for He is Lord of lords and King of kings; and those who are with Him are called, chosen, and faithful." *Revelation* 17:12-14.

" These have one mind.' There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy is Satan's forces." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:983.

Those who believe Armageddon to be a confrontation between two great divisions of Satan's forces, certainly would find no support for their understanding in this statement. It provides for "a universal bond of union", which is a unity encompassing every individual on the globe. There will be only "one great harmony", not two or more, and every member of this global "confederacy of Satan's forces" will unreservedly follow the devil into battle against the Almighty. That is the nature of the impending battle of Armageddon. Every man, woman, and child then living will be on the one side or the other of this struggle for supremacy on the devil's part.

In *Revelation* 19, the same picture is again presented. First Christ, the mighty champion on the righteous side of the conflict, is portrayed in the following verses:

"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

"His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

"He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called the Word of God.

"And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

"Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

"And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." *Revelation* 19:11-16.

The next few verses reveal the outcome of the showdown—utter

defeat for the forces of darkness. Their annihilation will be so total that not one survivor will be found throughout the entire world. Here is the prophetic record of what is coming:

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, 'Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

" 'that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.' " *Revelation* 19:17,18.

Once more it is reiterated that it is against Christ and His armies that Armageddon will be fought and lost.

"And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army." *Revelation* 19:19.

It will be an incredible achievement for Satan to unite, apart from God's faithful remnant, every living person under his leadership, to fight for his personal cause. He has worked to realize this ambition ever since Adam and Eve were banished from Eden, but to date, he has never fully gained his objective.

Others too have tried to rule the whole world—men in the persons of mighty generals in command of seemingly invincible armies; astute politicians who were skilled in moving the masses according to their desires; religious leaders who knew how to instill deadly fear into the souls of men or to sway them with flattery or the offer of high positions; and unscrupulous business men with access to virtually unlimited money-power; have dedicated their lives to bringing the world under their sole control, but none have achieved this elusive dream.

When one considers the difficulties to be overcome, one begins to *realize* what it would require even for Satan to bring everyone completely under his personal leadership. Think of the problems to be overcome. There is personal ambition driving powerful men who are interested, not in building Satan's'kingdom or anyone else's, but only their own. Weigh the factors of bitter personal hostilities, international mistrust, universal suspicion, the absence of unselfish regard for the rights of others. Then try to assess the effects on human relationships of destructive pride, seething hatred, lust for revenge, unholy desire, love of praise, and so forth, and we will have some idea of what it will take to unite "the kings of the earth and the whole world", into "one great harmony".

Yet it will be accomplished. Spiritualism has the capacity to do this. The ten kings will come to the place where there will be "a universal bond of union", one vast "confederacy of Satan's forces".

But how will it be achieved? How will the seemingly impossible be established?

The answer is iterated and reiterated in the Scriptures. It will be accomplished through the employment of spiritualism's power to deceive. Satan must resort to persuasion by deception in order to gain his objectives, for he does not have the power, as some might suppose, to take over the unlimited command of human lives except in the cases of demon possession.

Satan is not the sin-master, for he himself is the slave to sin. He is not in control of himself even, for like all other sinners, ". . . he is moved by a power from beneath". *Testimonies to Ministers,* 407.

But, while he cannot control men and women as he wishes he could, he understands human nature and the forces in control of it, and is practised in the art of manipulating mankind by making things appear what they are not. Note the repeated assertions in the following Scriptures that it will be by deception that the devil will persuade human beings to follow him without reservation.

"Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone." *Revelation* 19:20.

"For false christs and false prophets will rise and show great signs and wonders to deceive, if possible, even the elect." *Matthew* 24:24.

It is worth noting that, whenever a satanic force employs "great signs and wonders", they are always *lying* signs and wonders. They are never truthful and honest workings of God's law.

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived. Persons will arise pretending to be Christ Himself, and claiming the title and worship which belong to the world's Redeemer. They will perform wonderful miracles of healing and will profess to have revelations from heaven contradicting the testimony of the Scriptures." *Great Controversy,* 624.

So it will be that the image of the beast shall be brought into being by the exercise of the deceptive power of the kingdom of darkness. Note how specifically this is stated in *Revelation* 13:11-14:

"Then I saw another beast coming up out of the earth, and he had two horns like a lamb and spoke like a dragon.

"And he exercises all the authority of the first beast in his presence, and causes the earth and those who dwell in it to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

"He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

"And he deceives those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived."

Now that we begin to *realize* that the devil has so great deceptive power at his command that he will induce the entire world, apart from God's true people, to follow him without reservation, we have some appreciation of that with which we shall have to contend. We know now that we shall not be confronted only by mere human beings, powerful as some of them are, but by the devils themselves—supernatural beings possessed with supernatural power.

This enables us to more clearly understand what Paul meant when he said:

"For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places." Ephesians6:12.

The Scriptures do not provide a list of the different deceptive miracles to be performed, but they do mention one in particular—the bringing of fire down from heaven:

"He performs great signs, so that he even makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men." *Revelation* 13:13.

It has been proposed by some that the fires here foretold are the blinding flashes of nuclear explosions.

But this cannot be, for the detonating of nuclear devices does not delude people. It terrifies them. Furthermore, their destructive power is so great that if fires were to break forth from them on a worldwide basis, there would be no survivors to support the devil's cause. Therefore, it would be completely against Satan's interests to flood the earth with atomic fire. So, dispensing with all preconceived ideas, we search the Scriptures for the explanation of these words.

Prominent among the wicked will be false christs and false prophets who, by performing impressive miracles including the bringing down of fire from heaven, will thereby seek to establish their false identity. Their achievement of a successful impersonation requires that they garb themselves with what appears to be the garments of Christ. Therefore, the bringing of fire down from heaven must be in the form of something that men have come to associate with the true



Christ and His prophets. In other words, it must be a counterfeit of the true fire.

When these spirits of devils appear, it will be at the time when the true Christ and His messengers will be endowed with the greatest power the church has ever manifested in all its long history. That coming era of glory is foretold in *Joel:*

"And it shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions.

"And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

"And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth: Blood and fire and pillars of smoke.

"The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the coming of the great and awesome day of the Lord.

"And it shall come to pass that whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. For in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem there shall be deliverance, as the Lord has said, among the remnant whom the Lord calls." *Joel* 2:28-32.

This promise has received a most wonderful fulfillment when the Holy Spirit descended in mighty power upon the waiting disciples at Pentecost.

"When the day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

"And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

"Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

"And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." *Acts* 2:1-4.

There cannot be the slightest doubt that this outpouring of the Holy Spirit was the first mighty fulfillment of the prophecy of *Joel,* for the Holy Spirit, through the inspired Peter, declared it was. There is no higher or more trustworthy authority for the truth than the

OPPOSITE PAGE: It will be by the manifestation of fire descending from heaven, that the final generation of mankind will be deceived into aligning themselves fully with Satan. Some have interpreted this fire to be from the blasts of nuclear explosions, but this cannot be, for these have no capacity to deceive but only to terrify. Therefore, a different fire is here referred to, which will be spiritualism counterfeiting the descent of the tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost. That will certainly deceive. The multitudes will be totally convinced that the true God has visited them, and that they are His favored ones, when in fact they will have sold out to the great imposter.

Holy Spirit, for He as God is equal with God. Here is His verification that the prophecy of Joel was fulfilled by the gift of the early rain:

"But Peter, standing up with the eleven, raised his voice and said to them, 'Men of Judea and all who dwell in Jerusalem, let this be known to you, and heed my words.

" 'For these are not drunk, as you suppose, since it is only the third hour of the day.

" 'But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel.' " Acts 2:14-16.

It was in that day when the words of *Joel* were first fulfilled that fire came down from heaven in the sight of men as a testimony that the Holy Spirit had come in power on the people of God. That was a demonstration of the way in which this prophecy was to be fulfilled, a fact of which the devil is well aware. Inasmuch then as he is determined to appear as the all-powerful Christ, it follows that through the agency of Spiritualism, or the spirits of devils working miracles, he will make it appear that the outpouring of the Holy Spirit has come upon his followers, that Pentecost is being repeated among those who worship the beast and his image.

Therefore, as in the first fulfillment of the prophecy of *Joel* fire came down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men as a testimony of the arrival of the true Holy Spirit, we know we can expect the same to happen in the second and final fulfillment of the same prophecy. This expectation is not limited to the true people of God but is widespread throughout all the fallen churches. Before the time comes for the predicted event to occur, Satan must counterfeit it. Thus the fire which the spirits of devils will bring down from heaven will be the counterfeit outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

The coming down of the fire from heaven which marked the descent of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, was immediately followed by miracles of healing. Likewise we can expect to see miracles of healing sweeping through those churches which, having rejected the light of truth and the message of Sabbath Reform, have opened the door to the inroads of Spiritualism.

There are two doctrines in particular which give Satan great power in his determined effort to bring the entire world under his control.

"Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the people under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome. The Protestants of the United States will be foremost in stretching their hands across the gulf to grasp the hand of spiritualism; they will reach over the abyss to clasp hands with the Roman power; and under the influence of

this three fold union, this country will follow in the steps of Rome in trampling on the rights of conscience." *Great Controversy,* 588.

There was a time when this was a prophecy. That time is no longer. Already much of it is fulfilled. The Protestant churches have already stretched their hand over the gulf to grasp hands with Spiritualism and with Rome, and the influence is already here which will lead to the trampling on the rights of conscience.

There is neither time nor space to quote even a small percentage of the mountain of evidence to the truth of the above paragraph. True, this news is not generally reported in the newspapers—yet. That will come when the movement breaks open and really begins to make its impact felt in the world.

But we will quote from one source as an evidence of the above. The quote is from the *Full Gospel Businessmen's Voice Magazine* of September, 1962. In this issue is a report of a mighty outpouring of "the spirit" at Seattle, Washington, in July of that same year. The report reads as follows: "Thousands who yearn for the fullness of Christ, with complete freedom to worship Him as they desire, assembled in Seattle, Washington, July 2-6, for the tenth annual convention of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International.

"Christ met the people's faith in a mighty way as He poured out His Holy Spirit upon them.

"If you were there, you know what happened. The power of God could be felt as if He had swooped down in the flesh! If you were not fortunate enough to attend this great meeting, then you undoubtedly missed something that could have meant the highlight of your own Christian experience!

"The Holy Spirit came down upon the people, assembled in one accord in the grand ballroom of the Olympic Hotel. Scores received the precious baptism of the Holy Ghost, and spoke in tongues, as the early Christians did on the Day of Pentecost almost 2,000 years ago! (Acts 2:4).

"There were representatives of many faiths assembled for a common purpose: Presbyterians, Episcopalians, Dutch Reformed Laymen, Methodists, Lutherans, Nazarenes, Baptists, Seventh Day Adventists all meeting at the feet of Jesus."

To all appearances this was the great work of God. The lovely unity, the beautiful love, and the awesome power manifested there, proclaimed to those present that what appeared to be the divine presence, was in fact just that. It was a most convincing performance. Certainly the people involved in the experience as well as many, many others looking on, thought that it was none other than the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

But, this happened to a large company who have rejected the

third angel's message and are firm believers in Sunday sacredness and the immortality of the soul. We know that, on such a people, the latter rain will never be poured out. Therefore, we must conclude that that had to be an occasion when the developing image to the beast brought down false fire "on the earth in the sight of men."

"And he" deceived "those who dwell on the earth by those signs which he was granted to do in the sight of the beast, telling those who dwell on the earth to make an image to the beast who was wounded by the sword and lived." *Revelation* 13:13,14.

So plainly have we been warned of what Spiritualism as the working force in the image of the beast can do, that there is no excuse for being deceived by his miracle-working power. Therefore we are to know that it is not safe to accept every apparent appearance of the Holy Spirit as the visitation of the power of God.

What we have witnessed so far is not the full dimension of what is yet to appear. Not yet have God's people been fully tested on the deceptive power of the image, but that time is rapidly coming. As true spirituality decreases throughout the earth, the power of Spiritualism grows:

"The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves and are ready to join with them, and Satan determines to unite them in one body and thus strengthen his cause by sweeping all into the ranks of spiritualism. Papists, who boast of miracles as a certain sign of the true church, will be readily deceived by this wonder-working power; and Protestants, having cast away the shield of truth, will also be deluded. Papists, Protestants, and worldlings will alike accept the form of godliness without the power, and they will see in this union a grand movement for the conversion of the world and the ushering in of the long-expected millennium." *Great Controversy,* 588, 589.

But the true people of God will not be deceived. They will know that the work of these forces will be upholding error, and suppressing truth. Therefore, without hesitation, they will turn their backs on the alluring temptation to join in the building of the image to the beast. As false Christs are presented to them, they will say, "This is not my God, nor is that my God! I do not accept or follow them!"

But when Jesus at last appears in the clouds of heaven, then the true children of God will say, "Behold, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us. This is the Lord; we have waited for Him; we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation." Isaiah 25:9.

There is yet another means that the Devil is using in his effort to bring all the people into subjection to himself and that is the instrument of calamity and trouble. While on the one hand through Spiri-

tualism he heals the people and thus appears as the benefactor of the race, on the other hand he works in his true role of destroyer. His capacity for manipulating the mighty forces of nature is most astonishing. A revelation of this is given in the destructive storm which Satan marshalled against Job for the purpose of destroying him, an objective he would have achieved if the Lord had not protected his faithful servant.

So today still, "it is God that shields His creatures and hedges them in from the power of the destroyer. But the Christian world have shown contempt for the law of Jehovah; and the Lord will do just what He has declared that He would—He will withdraw His blessings from the earth and remove His protecting care from those who are rebelling against His law and teaching and forcing others to do the same." *Great Controversy,* 589.

The removal of God's protection leaves the door open for Satan to work his will. He will not treat all the same, but as it will best suit his purpose. "Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them." *Great Controversy,* 589.

Since the far off time when he afflicted Job, Satan's understanding of the powers in nature has been greatly extended, and his skill in deploying them likewise has advanced. Now he has even greater power to destroy than previously. Thus we read:

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. 'The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people ... do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' Isaiah 24:4, 5." *Great Controversy,* 589, 590.

Here is further sobering evidence in support of the fact that Satan is an exceedingly powerful being, against whom no human being is any match. What man upon this earth has the capacity to generate, stop, or re-direct a fierce tornado, a terrific hail-storm, a tidal wave, or an earthquake? The answer is that no man can, but the

devil does have that kind of power. Each time you see a violent, destructive storm bearing down on you, remind yourself that you are being given a revelation of Satan's incredible might and skill. It will help you to *realize* that only in Christ can the victory be gained.

It must be impossible to be unaware of the sharp increase in natural disasters which have been mounting over the past few years. Volcanic eruptions, devastating earthquakes, consuming conflagrations, searing droughts, and flooding rivers, coupled with unrestrained terrorism, violent crime, deadly pestilences, and wanton wars, have become more and more frequent, at the cost of a greater and still greater sacrifice of human life.

The messages to be read in all this are that God's protective care is being steadily withdrawn from the earth, in response to increasing rejection of Him and His righteousness, and this has afforded the devil the opportunity to exercise his extraordinary power to lay the earth waste so far as he is permitted. This frightening state of affairs will become much, much worse, but the more it does, the nearer to the end we have been brought.

But, Satan has no intention of permitting mankind to understand who is the real force behind all this destruction, suffering, death, and loss, so he works to make it appear that God is the cruel destroyer, while he, without revealing who he really is, presents himself as the benign benefactor of the people and the saviour of the race.

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity. Thus the accusation urged of old against the servant of God will be repeated and upon grounds equally well established: 'And it came to pass, when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou, and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Baalim.' *1 Kings* 18:17, 18. As the wrath of the people shall be excited by false charges, they will pursue a course toward God's ambassadors very similar to that which apostate Israel pursued toward Elijah." *Great Controversy,* 590.

Though the charges will be the opposite from the truth, they will

be readily believed by the multitudes eager to find a scapegoat on whom they can fasten the blame for all their troubles. Thus God's people will become the recipients of the most bitter persecution and will be forced to suffer much for the truth's sake.

The participation on the part of the wicked in the laying of false charges against God's people, still further alienates them from God, increases their iniquity, and reduces the level of protection God can give them. This can only serve to open the door wider for Satan to bring more trouble on the one hand, and, on the other, to lead to still greater wickedness in the land, in the face of which there will be a more urgent agitation for the strict enforcement of the Sunday law. So, events will move in an ever steepening spiral to the one possible end—the setting up of the image of the beast.

Thus it is that all of these diabolical forces are working toward this end. The mighty power of Spiritualism masquerading as true religion, will be the great motivating and unifying force in the movement.

Those who will stand resolute for truth and righteousness in the face of the awesome power of Spiritualism as it exercises its capabilities in these last days, will have had to have made the most diligent preparation for the ordeal. Now is the time to prepare. Let us make the most of these few golden hours of opportunity which yet remain.

Chapter 5

The Four Angels

As has *been* noted already in these studies on the order of last day events, the setting up of the image of the beast is a landmark. It is an event toward which and from which we can work in our tracing of the important developments yet to bring the earth's history to its tragic closure.

Thus far we have traced the factors and forces which bring the churches to the point where they must make the image to the beast. These churches, having rejected the living power of God as offered to them in the truth of God, are no longer in any sense of the word the true people of God but only His enemies despite their high profession and appearances of piety and virtue. Therefore, we have been tracing so far the development of the enemies of God toward their final role in the last conflict.

This development will bring the world to a point of fearful and terrible crisis wherein it will appear that the enemies of the truth have triumphed and that the whole world has gone over to the ranks of the devil.

But God is never caught by surprise. He knows what is coming and long before it ever comes, He has worked out the perfect and complete solution to the whole problem. Thus it will be when the time of this vast confederacy of defiance and rebellion against God is formed in the world. God will meet it with the power of His might and will utterly defeat and destroy it, but not without a very terrible and bitter battle indeed. The armies of the living God will take the field in this great spiritual warfare to be waged in the last days. The weapons to be used by this army will not be the regular munitions of war, but the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.

The preparation of this army of the living God is a work occupying quite some period of time. Certainly it is taking longer than is needful, not because there is any shortcoming on the part of God, but because of the slowness of heart and the unbelief of His people. But it is important for us to understand the development of the people through whom God will work in the final and finishing conflict, for this battle cannot be fought without the use of the frail human agency. God might have committed the entire task to the heavenly

angels, but it is needful to the proper outworking of the plan of salvation for the task to be committed to men under the protection and guidance of the angels.

Our last chapter brought us right up to the formation of the image of the beast, an event which, at the time of the writing of this chapter, is yet future. Now we will need to go back and in a similar manner trace the development of the army of the Lord, which is to meet and to defeat the powers of darkness.

Clear down through history God has had an unbroken line of faithfulpeople.

"From the beginning, faithful souls have constituted the church on earth." Acts *of the Apostles,* 11.

These constitute the church of God, and these are the people of God, although they are usually scattered, few in number, and unrecognized by the world. Yet, it is a reasonably simple thing for the spiritually enlightened to trace this church through from generation to generation. Therefore, it is not necessary for us to begin our survey of who constituted the church of God beginning with Adam, but we can begin in much more recent times.

Unquestionably, Christ is the one true Head of the Christian Church. Therefore, those whom He is leading are the people of God and the Church of God. Thus, in His own day upon the earth, the apostles and their converts to Christianity, were the true people of God. But with the falling away of those who followed the early leaders came the rise of the apostate Church, the man of sin foretold in prophecy. But despite this, there were true followers of the Lord in all lands, people who suffered terribly at the persecuting hands of the Roman Church.

Then came the revival of the truth through the Reformers, the first of whom was John Wycliffe, followed by Huss and Jerome, after which came Luther and his associates. With the word of God in their hands opened to the seventh chapter of *Daniel,* by the sure word of prophecy, they identified the papacy as the Antichrist of history.

Mighty indeed was the work which they did, but their understanding and experience was not sufficient to finish the work. More was needed for the preparation of the people who were to finish the work of God in all the world. They did not understand the great prophecies of *Daniel* 8:14 and of *Revelation* 13-19. More truth was yet to be revealed and for this purpose, God brought into being the Great Second Advent Movement of the 1831-1844 period.

Once again let us state here that we presuppose our readers have a clear knowledge of the history of the rise of this movement so that we do not intend to give a detailed history here. Should any find

themselves at a loss on this point, then we shall be glad to supply material to cover the period.

We are concerned here with certain facts and conclusions which appertain to the rise and development of the movement of God's people which will be in force when the image of the beast is formed. A thorough knowledge of the rise of the message and the movement will enable all to understand these facts and conclusions more clearly.

There is not the slightest excuse for anyone finding himself unable to positively identify God's true people at the time when the setting up of the image approaches. This event will not catch God by surprise, and He has long since formulated the perfect answer to it. That is wonderful enough, but what is more wonderful is the glorious fact that He has not kept this knowledge to Himself, but has revealed it through His prophets as He has declared He would in these words:

"Surely the Lord God does nothing, unless He reveals His secret to His servants the prophets." Amos 3:7.

Here is a most comforting and assuring promise, and we are glad of it. It assures us that there in not even one single thing which the Lord will do in His determination to resolve the mounting crisis, without firstly announcing it to His people through the Prophetic Word.

Therefore, it follows that the development of the people of God in preparation for the last final conflict will all be traced in advance in His prophecies. And it is. The principal prophecies which cover this, are found in *Revelation* 14 and 18, and in *Matthew* 22. Let us turn to these to find in their messages for us a clear revelation of the way the final movement shall be developed to the place where its people will be instruments in God's hands; fit to finish the great controversy.

Nowhere is the rise of God's final movement through which He will conclusively channel His closing answer to the long, dark reign of sin, better portrayed than in *Revelation* 14:6-12, and 18:1-4.

"Then I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to those who dwell on the earth—to every nation, tribe, tongue, and people—

"saying with a loud voice, 'Fear God and give glory to Him, for the hour of His judgment has come; and worship Him who made heaven and earth, the sea and springs of water.'

"And another angel followed, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.'

"Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

" 'he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of His indignation. He shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

" 'And the smoke of their torment ascends forever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.'

"Here is the patience of the saints; here are those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." *Revelation* 14:6-12.

"After these things I saw another angel coming down from heaven, having great authority, and the earth was illuminated with his glory.

"And he cried mightily with a loud voice, saying, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a dwelling place of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

" 'For all the nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her and the merchants of the earth have become rich through the abundance of her luxury.'

"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, 'Come out of her, My people, lest you share in her sins, and lest you *receive* of her plagues.' " *Revelation* 18:1-4.

Here is brought to view the existence and ministry of four angels, mighty in power, and resplendent in glory. All of these play a key role in the concluding of the great controversy. These angels each symbolize a movement of people under their protection, guidance, and instruction. This is made plain in the second and third chapters of *Revelation,* where each church is symbolized by an angel. Thus the word reads again and again, "To the angel of the church of Ephesus . . . Smyrna. . . Pergamos . . . Thyatira . . . Sardis . . . Philadelphia . . . Laodicea" in their turn. But the messages are in reality being addressed to the people in those churches. Therefore, it is evident that an angel is a symbol of a movement of people, to whom he is a messenger.

This truth is further confirmed by the following statement:

"Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: 'Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.' *Revelation* 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and 'receive not of her plagues.' Hence the movement symbol-

ized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 604.

This statement clearly establishes the point that the angel is the symbol of the movement.

But notice that each of the angels follows the one before him. They do not all come at the same time but in succession. This indicates that rather than there being the one movement, there is a succession of them. Yet at the same time we speak of the Great Second Advent Movement as if it were one movement only. This is also true, but the fact remains that there is a succession of movements within the overall movement.

This is the fact of the case as we witness it in history and, in the rise of the movement, we shall see a significant pattern emerging. The warning message began to be given under the call and direction of the Lord within the Protestant churches which at that time, 1831, were the churches of God upon the earth. It was light beyond that which they had yet found in their march away from the darkness of Rome, but it was not given by the leadership of the churches, and only a small proportion of those in the churches actually accepted the light and followed it.

Now there is a consistent and basic pattern which is repeated with every new angel coming upon the scene, and with every new movement being formed, beginning with that of the first angel. Let us put the facts of it down again so that it is clear in mind.

First of all, when the first angel's movement began to form, it was in response to light beyond that which the churches already had received. It was the message of the impending judgment based upon Daniel 8:14, and *Revelation* 14:6, 7

Secondly, it was proclaimed, not by the established and recognized leaders of the churches, but by laymen of God's own choosing. William Miller was the founding father of the first angel's movement in America with other capable men joining him as time went by.

Thirdly, not all of those who were in the churches took their stand for the message. The remainder fought it most vigorously. Only the minority stood for it.

So the first angel's movement was formed, and it was then largely a church within the churches. Separation was not a clear cut and absolute matter although the gulf between believer and unbeliever grew daily wider. Yet they still physically remained in the churches, though they were separate in spirit, and therefore in fact.

But the second angel followed the first. In the summer of 1844 began to sound the message, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen", and a new movement took shape.

Now once again the same pattern is repeated.

First, here was light in advance of that sounded by the first angel's movement. But at the same time they held to and taught all the truth which had been revealed through the first angel.

Secondly, it was begun, not by Miller nor his leading associates, but the beginning voice of the second angel's message was that of Charles Fitch who had a place in the first angel's movement but was not a prominent leader.

Thirdly, not all those who had stood for the message of the first angel were prepared to go on into the second message and movement. They showed then that they were willing to follow the Lord but not as far as He wanted to lead them. Thus they turned from following Him and lost the truth and the salvation which comes through the truth. But others came in to take their places until the numbers had swelled to over 50,000 in the days which led up to October 22, 1844.

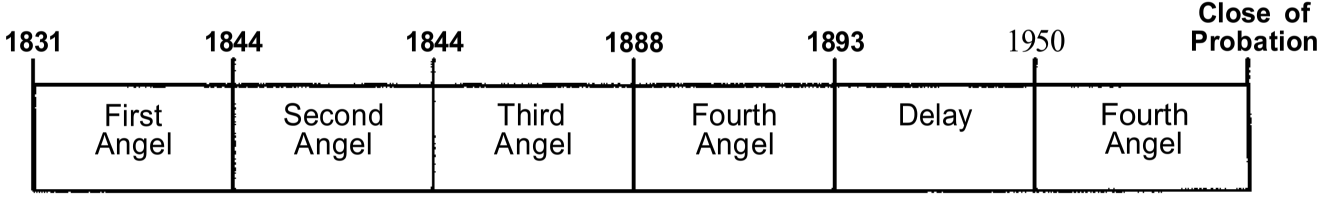
But the second angel did not complete the work either. He was but a stage further in the program of last day events. The third angel follows the first and the second according to the prophecy in *Revelation* 14. And the fact of history is that this third movement began immediately after the second had taken the people as far as it could for the time being. On October 22, 1844, came the Great Disappointment as their expectations of seeing the Lord return were not realized. The very next day, after a long night of prayer, the clarifying light began to dawn, and the third angel's movement began.

Again the pattern was repeated.

First, there was additional light not given by either the first or the second angel. It was the light which showed the special work of Christ in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. It showed the real nature of the cleansing of the sanctuary and explained why they had been disappointed in their expectations. But let it be seen that nothing of what they now received led them to reject the great basic truths received under the first and the second angel. The new light only added to and confirmed the previous light given, and they could preach all that and the extra light with even greater conviction and power.

Secondly, a new voice was to begin the light of the third angel. This time is was Hiram Edson who received the first rays of light on Christ's ministry in the holiest place in the heavenly sanctuary. He too was not a prominent individual in the previous movement. And, according to the pattern of the former two movements, he was

Progressive Development of the Four Angels' Messengers, Messages, and Movements



Each angel symbolized and led a new movement.
Each movement is led by a fresh human leader.

William Miller	Charles Fitch	Hiram Edson	Waggoner & Jones	No Messenger	Final Messengers

Each messenger brings added light not revealed before.
Each causes a shaking and a separation.

The Ministry of all Four is Essential for the Finishing of the Work

joined by others in proclaiming the new light from the Lord. With each new movement, we find new individuals rising to prominence, while those who were prominent in the former movement were usually the last to accept the new light. This fact is brought out in the following statement:

"Those who had formerly led in the cause were among the last to join in this movement." *Great Controversy,* 402. Though this statement was written concerning the reaction of the former leaders to the Midnight Cry, the historical facts reveal that, with few exceptions, it is a pattern that repeats itself every time new light is revealed that forms a new movement.

Thirdly, not all those who took their part in the second angel's message found their way into the third. In fact, only a remnant did. Of the 50,000 who looked for the Lord to return on October 22, only a very, very few remained the next day to pray and to wait for the added light. They also showed that their faith was of a nature which could not endure the trials which awaited them and they failed the test and then cast away what truth they had. Thus they too lost their eternal life.

There are those today who believe that they are members of the third angel's movement, and are confident that, at the same time, the movement to which they belong is God's final people through whom He will channel the last light ever to be transmitted to perishing mankind. But in this they are sadly mistaken, for there are four more movements to be called of God before the end can come. The first of these to follow the third is the fourth angel whose work is described in *Revelation* 18:1-4. Altogether, there will be seven angels' movements, and not merely three.

For a more detailed study of these, see *The Seven Angels,* by F. T.Wright.

Already laid down for us is the clear cut pattern of what this will mean. It will mean that there is a great deal of additional light to be added to the light already given. It means that it will be championed by new leaders. It means that the vast majority of those who are numbered as members of the third angel's movement will reject this light and persecute those who do accept it. It means though that they will lose their eternal life in so doing, for they will demonstrate that they are prepared to follow their Lord so far and no further. Such are not fit for the kingdom of God as we read:

"No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." *Luke* 9:62.

Those words are as plain as they are solemn. The messages which God sends into the world are life and death messages, and we dare not treat them lightly. While on the one hand we must be careful

not to accept error, yet at the same time we must be afraid lest we reject the truth. Truth is not measured by the channels through which it comes, but only by the Word.

But there is more evidence yet to prove that this situation will be as indicated in the previous paragraphs, namely that the fourth angel will institute a fresh movement as did the previous three, with added light, new leadership, and only a remnant of the personnel of the previous movement going on into it.

In closing this chapter, let us turn to statements in the Inspired Word giving us the sure truth in very fact.

There will be light brought by the fourth angel not seen and delivered by the people of the third angel's movement. This is evident from the following:

"Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 604.

Here then is the plain declaration that there will be truths from heaven which reveal as never before the real nature of the apostasy, which will be united with the light already understood under the third angel's message. Exactly as it was in the previous three angel's messages in their turn, so it will be in the giving of the last message. And notice too that this angel is the symbol of a definite movement. There can be no doubt, but the angel referred to in this quotation is the angel of *Revelation,* 18, and this angel symbolizes a movement. The statement makes that very clear indeed.

Secondly, there will be new leadership. The following statement bears this out as it speaks about the time when the mark of the beast is to be urged upon the peoples of this earth.

"The days are fast approaching when there will be great perplexity and confusion. Satan, clothed in angel robes, will deceive, if possible, the very elect. There will be gods many and lords many. Every wind of doctrine will be blowing. Those who have *rendered* supreme homage to 'science falsely so called' will not be the leaders then. Those who have trusted to intellect, genius, or talent will not then stand at the head of rank and file. They did not keep pace with the light. Those who have proved themselves unfaithful will not then be entrusted with the flock. In the last solemn work few great men will be engaged. They are self-sufficient, independent of God, and He cannot use them. The Lord has faithful servants, who in the shaking, testing time will be disclosed to view." Testimonies 5:80, 81.

Just as in every other previous movement the old leadership is no longer usable, so it will be again. The pattern will be repeated. This does not necessarily mean that all former leaders will apostatize, but it does mean that, with few exceptions, they will not hold prominent positions of leadership in the next movement.

Finally, not all who belong to the third angel's movement will pass on into the fourth. Many such predictions as these are to be found.

"Many a star that we have admired for its brilliancy will then go out in darkness. Chaff like a cloud will be borne away on the wind, even from places where we see only floors of rich wheat. All who assume the ornaments of the sanctuary, but are not clothed with Christ's righteousness, will appear in the shame of their own nakedness." Testimonies 5:81.

Today God is leading out a people and preparing them for the great and final work to be done in all the world. At the same time He is sifting and winnowing so that all who are content to cling to the convenience of a comfortable church organization rather than go forward with the truth, will be left behind and perish with the rejecters of the message. We must today keep pace with the advancing light and be prepared to leave the movement of the third angel and enter into the fourth as it develops.

This chapter provides an over all picture of the situation. It is now time to turn to a more detailed prophecy of the same period. This we will do in the next chapter.

Chapter 6

The Marriage Prophecy

The prophecy of the four angels which we have just studied in the previous chapter clearly reveals what will happen, and in fact is in the process of happening among those who profess to be God's people once the fourth angel began his mighty work. It reveals both those in the church who genuinely love the truth of God and those who only give lip service to present truth.

At the opening of this chapter, we would do well to briefly summarize the last day events as they develop among the professed people of the Lord, for, as the wicked are closing ranks in preparation for their role in the last conflict, God's true people must simultaneously be coming into line.

Firstly, God sends a messenger with a powerful presentation of the gospel in a present truth setting perfectly adapted to meet the needs of the hour. The messenger called by God and used by Him to channel this light to the people does not come with the approval of the church authorities.

At first, many are roused to soul-searching, but, when they find that they must abandon their cherished sins, they turn from the light to war against the message, and to despise the messenger. By so doing, they close the door of mercy against themselves forever, permanently separate themselves from the Lord, and consequently are no longer the movement under His blessing and guidance.

This tragic outcome took place in 1844 as it is written:

"I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels' messages and rejected that light, were left in darkness. And those who accepted it and received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven, and who afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer pleaded with them.

"Those who did not see the light, had not the guilt of its rejec-

tion. It was only the class who had despised the light from heaven that the Spirit of God could not reach. And this class included, as I have stated, both those who refused to accept the message when it was presented to them, and also those who, having received it, afterward renounced their faith. These might have a form of godliness, and profess to be followers of Christ; but having no living connection with God, they would be taken captive by the delusions of Satan. These two classes are brought to view in the vision—those who declared the light which they had followed a delusion, and the wicked of the world who, having rejected the light, had been rejected of God. No reference is made to those who had not seen the light, and therefore were not guilty of its rejection." *Selected Messages* 1:63, 64.

This principle of the termination of salvation for those who reject the light from heaven, is repeated every time the Lord sends forth a message to awaken and test His people.

On the other hand, there is revealed to view a minority of those who are prepared to forsake all for Christ and His righteousness, and the separation between the two becomes inevitable.

Thus it is that a new movement is formed with new truth under new leadership comprised of a remnant only of those in the previous movement.

This is the normal pattern of behavior despite witness after witness in the Scriptures warning of the peril of rejecting the light and walking separately from the truth of God. The condemnation for such a course would be bad enough if what I have presented so far was the only witness to this effect. But it is not. The Bible has laid down the principle, that: "By the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established." 2 Corinthians 13:1.

That means two or three at least, and the Lord has provided ample witnesses to ensure that we do not miss the message. Accordingly, the Word of God has not left this important matter to be dependent upon one witness only. Quite a number more are given, each one as clear and specific as the prophecy already studied. To cover all these would require a separate book which I hope will be produced when time permits.

One might fear that such a repetition would be tedious. If each witness were merely a repetition of the facts given by the previous one, then this could well be so. However, no two witnesses ever give their testimony from the same standpoint, and therefore each one, while giving the same basic picture as the others, presents a view of things which introduces aspects of the case not given by the others. Therefore, each witness is complementary to the others. Each must be studied in order to gain the complete picture.

We turn our attention then to another witness which confirms the truth that, in response to the final messages ever to be given, there will be a new movement formed with new truth under new leadership. It will be under the command of the fourth angel that God's people will confront the image of the beast.

The second witness to which I now direct your attention is the parable of the marriage as contained in *Matthew* 22:1-14.

"And Jesus answered and spoke to them again by parables and said:

" The kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who arranged a marriage for his son,

" 'and sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come.

" 'Again, he sent out other servants, saying, "Tell those who are invited, 'See, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and fatted cattle are killed, and all things are ready. Come to the wedding.' "

" 'But they made light of it and went their ways, one to his own farm, another to his business.

" 'And the rest seized his servants, treated them spitefully, and killed them.

‘‘ 'But when the king heard about it, he was furious. And he sent out his armies, destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.

" Then he said to his servants, "The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

‘‘ ' "Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding."

" 'So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests.

‘‘ 'But when the king came in to see the guests, he saw a man there who did not have on a wedding garment.

‘‘ 'So he said to him, "Friend, how did you come in here without a wedding garment?" And he was speechless.

" Then the king said to the servants, "Bind him hand and foot, take him away, and cast him into outer darkness; there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth."

" 'For many are called, but few are chosen.' "

There are some who will object that a parable cannot be an outline prophecy, for, they argue, parables are intended only to present some devotional type of message, not prophetic outlines. But this is not so. A number of parables are very specific outline surveys of coming events and must be respected as such. This we shall see very clearly as we proceed to the study of the parabolic prophecy of the

marriage. In fact, the pen of inspiration describes the parable of *Zechariah* 3 as being a prophecy:

"In the beautiful parabolic prophecy of Zechariah, the high priest Joshua, standing clothed in filthy garments before the angel of the Lord, represents the sinner. And the word is spoken by the Lord, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment.' " Christ's *Object Lessons,* 206.

Generally, we think only of two ways by which prophecy is given. We think of its being given through visions and dreams as in the prophecies of *Daniel* and the *Revelation.*

Then again the word of God came directly to the prophet without there being an accompanying vision. An example of this is the prediction concerning the duration of Israel's captivity in Babylon as recorded in *Jeremiah* 25:12.

While there is no question about the validity of these two methods of revelation, we must not overlook the third by which prophecy is revealed. This is by means of some of the parables. It is true that not all the parables are prophecies, but there are certain ones which are.

An excellent example is found in *Matthew* 21:33-46. Even the most casual reading of the parable reveals that it was a prophecy accurately fulfilled by the way in which the Jews treated the prophets and finally Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

Another such example is the prophecy of the parable of the ten virgins as found in *Matthew* 25:1-13, of which it is written:

"I am often referred to the parable of the ten virgins, five of whom were wise, and five foolish. This parable has been and will be fulfilled to the very letter, for it has a special application to this time, and, like the third angel's message, has been fulfilled and will continue to be present truth till the close of time." *Review and Herald,* August 19,1890.

Other parables are devoted to the teaching of certain truths and are not prophecies in the sense of revealing a progression of events, but the ones we have looked at here are definitely such.

In approaching the study of the parabolic prophecy of *Matthew* 22, we need to be very careful to see that we place no human construction or interpretation upon it. Therefore, we shall follow a very systematic method of study.

First we shall take the prophecy itself and set it out point by point without making any attempt to match it with the fulfillment, for the time being.

Then, when we have the prophecy clearly in mind, we shall take the first fulfillment as outlined in the book Christ's *Object Lessons,*

and match the fulfillment with its prediction. At this stage we shall see how accurate the prophecy is and that it has been fulfilled to the very letter indeed.

Finally, we shall take the prophecy as it appears in our day and in its final fulfillment. Once again we shall see the exact nature of the prophecy and how it is being fulfilled to the very letter.

This then will be our systematic study procedure, and if we ask only, "What does the Word say?" then we cannot possibly go wrong.

The first event in the prophecy is the making of the marriage by the king for his son. Let us not concern ourselves yet with who the king and his son are. That knowledge will come when the study of the interpretation begins.

It is important to understand here that the making of the marriage is not the marriage itself, but is the preparation for it, and includes the making of the guest list and the inviting of those guests to the marriage.

Now in the normal order of things, and especially when it is a king's invitation, the guests come at the appointed time, but in this case things are not normal. Inexplicably, they do not come, and it becomes needful for the king to send his servants to call those who had been bidden to come to the marriage. Make a special note of two things at this point. Firstly, please understand that the making of the marriage is not the first call, even though it involves the issuing of invitations to those who hereafter are identified as "the bidden ones".

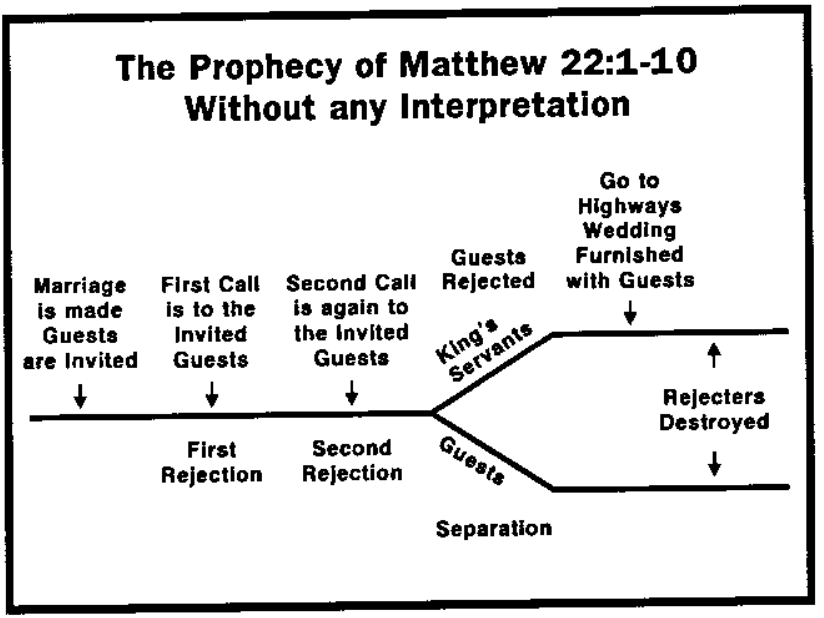
Secondly, it is to this class that the first call is directed. Noting the amazing fact that none of the previously bidden guests have responded to His invitation, the king sends his servants "to call those who were invited to the wedding; and they were not willing to come."

This is the first call. It is given by the servants of the King to those who had already been bidden and who should have responded to the invitation by coming to the wedding. But, surprisingly enough, they still refuse to come.

Despite the fact that this is nothing short of an outright insult to the king, he is very patient and sends out other servants to make a second call to those same bidden ones.

But it is as if the king has insulted the guests by inviting them to the marriage of his son, for some treat the third invitation with contempt while the rest actually persecuted the king's own servants in a cruel way.

Now the king can see that these guests have no intention of ever coming to the marriage. Their action is one of complete rebellion against his kingdom and authority, so he condemns them to the destruction which such an attitude merits.



While the wedding has been delayed thus far because of the refusal of the guests to come to it, it does not mean there will be no wedding. Guests will be obtained from another class of people, so the king sends His servants to the highways and the hedges and from this source are gathered both the good and the bad for this wonderful occasion.

Now the guests come and everything is set but for one thing. Before the marriage actually takes place, the king must check the guests to see that all are in order. So he examines them one by one, and he finds a man without the required wedding garment and, since the man can offer no reason for this omission, he is cast out into outer darkness.

So there it is. A marriage is made and guests are bidden. Two calls are made to them and no more. They refuse all three opportunities. Then the king abandons them to destruction and, by means of a fourth attempt to obtain guests, sends the call to another class. Then comes the examination, followed by another destruction, this time of those who came to the wedding but were not properly prepared.

This order of events appears to be what God is trying to present to us. But as we look deeper, we shall find that in reality, the destruction of both groups, the bidden ones and those who came improperly dressed, occurs at one time which is after the examination of the wedding guests.

At first some may feel that the destruction of the bidden ones

should come before the call to the highways and hedges and not after the examination of the guests as stated in this study and the accompanying diagram.

But we shall see that it is the way of the Word of God to carry through one phase of the story to the very end first and then come back and trace through the emerging alternative phase. Thus the ultimate fate of the bidden ones is recorded to complete their picture, then the prophecy goes back to reveal the alternative call and the response to it which, in actual fact, happens before the destruction of the bidden ones takes place.

This will become clearer still in the tracing of the fulfillment of the prophecy to which study we now turn.

The First Fulfillment

This prophecy has received a most exact fulfillment in the history of the Jews. With this past fulfillment, we are no longer so deeply concerned except as it serves as a clear cut picture of how the prophecy will be fulfilled again. What happened then must happen again as we shall clearly see very shortly.

Very obviously the King in the picture is God the Father. The Son, for whom the marriage is made, is Christ.

But what is the marriage?

"By the marriage is represented the union of humanity with divinity." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 307.

Therefore the making of this spiritual marriage must be the bringing together of these two divided parties—God and His church. That which separates them is sin in the individual members of the church, so the call to the marriage must of necessity be the preaching of the gospel as the power of God to really remove sin.

At any time at all in the history of the world, individuals can accept the gospel and become bound in marriage relationship to God, but it is not possible for the church as a people to become the fully consummated bride of Christ at any time.

The whole teaching of this parable will show that, while individuals did respond to the call, the body did not. The acceptance by a minority of individuals within the body is not mentioned in the parable. It is concerned, not with this, but with the response of the body as a whole. This therefore shows the marriage under consideration to be that of the church to Christ, and not of individuals to Him.

It was impossible for the Jewish Church as the body of Christ to have entered into the close marriage relationship with Christ during their period of captivity in Babylon. As slaves they were not free to put away all sin until there was nothing between them and their God. Except for a faithful few including Daniel and his companions, they

all entered Babylon already gripped by the power of sin, and therefore divorced from their true spiritual Husband. But the Lord brought them into freedom again for the express purpose of removing all sin from them thus establishing them in a position where they could have come into the closest marriage relationship with Him.

To achieve this, He gave them the gospel, the power of God to separate them from sin, and thus end their separation from Him. The sanctuary, which is a picture of the gospel, was restored to them. These provisions of divine grace set the church up in a position in which the Hebrews had unimpeded opportunity as individuals, as a Church, and as a nation to experience the marriage with Christ through to its complete consummation. So for them, His precious chosen people, the marriage was made and they were bidden to it. He gave them opportunity to see that the real purpose in His rescuing them from Babylon, was not that they might merely resume their life in their own land, but that they might enter into a total and everlastingly enduring marriage relationship with Him. Nor were they to dally in this work forever, for a time limit of 70 weeks or 490 years was apportioned to them in these unmistakable terms;

"Seventy weeks are determined for your people and for your holy city,
To finish the transgression;
To make an end of sins;
To make reconciliation for iniquity;
To bring in everlasting righteousness;
To seal up vision and prophecy;
And to anoint the Most Holy." *Daniel* 9:24.

Thus there were allotted to the Jewish church 70 prophetic weeks or 490 years beginning in 457 B.C. in which this work was to be done. The very conditions both in heaven and on earth whereby it might be done had been brought about. The marriage was made and the guests were invited. Their attendance at the wedding involved the work of making an end of sins and bringing in everlasting righteousness. The stage was set, the opportunity made, and when the work would have been accomplished, then the marriage would be consummated, for when an end has been made to all sin, and righteousness everlastingly brought in, then all division between divinity and humanity is gone.

But the Jews missed the divine purpose and permitted instead a terrible reversion into apostasy, so that when Jesus came toward the end of their allotted time to lead them into the final fullness of the marriage of humanity with divinity, they, who ought to have been walking very close to God, had wandered very far from him. A mar-

riage was quite impossible under these conditions wherein every day saw the two parties walking further and further apart.

So then, they who had been bidden to the marriage in 457 B.C., needed a special call sent to them to come to the marriage.

The important next step is to positively and unmistakably identify the first call to the members of the Jewish church at the time when they were the ones who had been bidden to the marriage.

There is not the slightest danger of making a mistake here, for we are specifically told by Inspiration that the first call was given by the twelve and the seventy disciples before the crucifixion of Christ. Of this we read:

"The call to the feast had been given by Christ's disciples. Our Lord had sent out the twelve and afterward the seventy, proclaiming that the kingdom of God was at hand, and calling upon men to repent and believe the gospel. But the call was not heeded. Those who were bidden to the feast did not come." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 308.

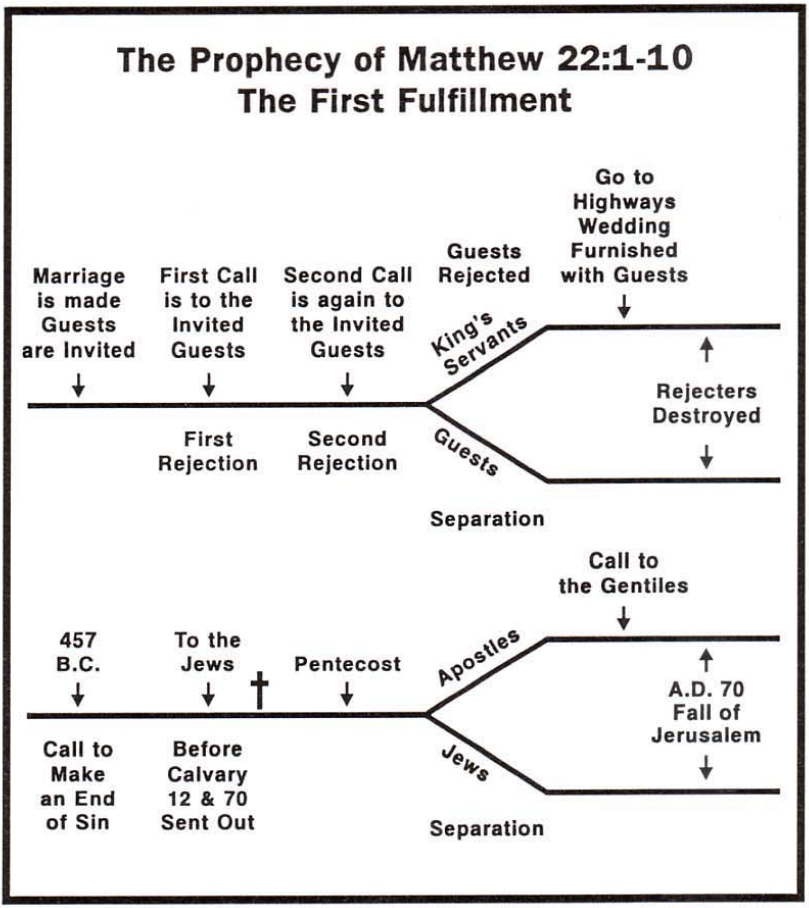
Thus came the first call and the rejection of it.

But this did not yet close the door of opportunity on the Jewish Church. We are familiar with the specific nature of Bible prophecy. In *Daniel* for instance, are foretold four world empires, not three, nor five, but four. Now if history had produced three or five instead of four, what would we do with the prophecy of *Daniel?*

We would certainly reject it as false!

So in this prophecy there are two calls to the bidden ones, no more and no less. Therefore when the first call was ended, the second was yet to come, but it would be the last. The Jewish Church had a total of three opportunities to enter, as a Church, into a full marriage relationship with Christ. Their rejection of these would seal their fate as a Church.

The second call came in the giving of the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. The fact of this is declared in the immediate continuation of the statement quoted above. "The servants were sent out later to say, 'Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my failings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.' This was the message borne to the Jewish nation after the crucifixion of Christ; but the nation that claimed to be God's peculiar people rejected the gospel brought to them in the power of the Holy Spirit. Many did this in the most scornful manner. Others were so exasperated by the offer of salvation, the offer of pardon for rejecting the Lord of glory, that they turned upon the bearers of the message. There was 'a great persecution.' Acts 8:1 Many both of men and women were thrust into prison, and some of the Lord's



messengers, as Stephen and James, were put to death." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 308.

Before it ever happened, Jesus foretold that this would be the response to the second call, and it was. The event exactly fulfilled the prediction.

Until the second call had been given, both Christ and His apostles remained in the Jewish Church, but just so soon as the rejection of the second call was complete, then just so soon did they forever leave that church. Her day of opportunity was past. Now the call would go to another people. Of this it is written in the continuation of the above statement:

"Thus the Jewish people sealed their rejection of God's mercy. The result was foretold by Christ in the parable. The king 'sent forth

his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.' The judgment pronounced came upon the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem and the scattering of the nation." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 308, 309.

The third call to the feast represents the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles. The king said that the wedding is ready, but they which were bidden are not worthy. So He instructed His servants to go therefore into the highways, and as many as they found to bid to the marriage.

Mention was made earlier in this chapter of the system of Bible revelation wherein the fate of one class is carried through to its conclusion before we return back a little in time to see the emerging alternative group. So here we are carried through to A.D. 70, where the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman armies is portrayed after which we turn to the giving of the gospel to the Gentiles which began in earnest upon the termination of the 490 years in A.D. 34.

Thus the call turned to the highways and the hedges and another class was given the invitation the Jews had spurned.

With great patience, God had waited for the work to be completed through the Jewish people, but He had been disappointed. Next, He looked for it to be finished through the Apostolic Church, but again He was disappointed, for, after having reached a certain glorious peak, they fell away into the deep apostasy of the Dark Ages, during which period the Church bore the same dark burden of desperate oppression as was suffered by Israel under Babylon in Daniel's day. Speaking of the relentless persecution which began in the apostolic era and ended a short while before 1798, the pen of inspiration wrote:

"God's church on earth was as verily in captivity during this long period of relentless persecution as were the children of Israel held captive in Babylon during the period of the exile." *Prophets and Kings,* 714.

Under such conditions the consummation of the marriage of the Church with Christ was impossible. The union of Christ with His people can only be made by a movement of those who are totally free, and therefore, the finishing of the great controversy can be accomplished only by a people completely liberated from bondage. This is a truth the power of which must be seen and understood by each one of us. Then we shall comprehend why it is that the 144,000 must and do attain to a state of sinless perfection.

This happy conclusion to the marriage would have been realized in the days of the apostles if the believers in Jesus had truly made an end to all sin and brought in everlasting righteousness, but instead, they carried over into the Christian Church quite a number of the

concepts which belonged to Babylon and should have been left behind forever. For further study on this point, see *Entering into God's Sabbath Rest,* by F. T. Wright, 130-204.

This mixing of Babylonian and Christian concepts crippled the servants, robbed the Church of God's power, and thus prevented the complete gathering from the highways and the byways of the Gentile harvest. This in turn prevented the examination of the assembled guests by the King of glory, which is the investigative judgment of those who profess to be God's people. Therefore, this first fulfillment of the prophecy is incomplete, and the whole drama had to be re-enacted. Again there had to be the making of the marriage; again there had to be two calls to the bidden ones; again there had to be the final rejection of the bidden ones, the call to whom will be extended to another class; and again there will be the final destruction of the bidden ones and those who came improperly clad to the wedding.

This time, fully emancipated from all Babylonian concepts, delivered from all sin, and filled with the awesome power of the latter rain, the King's servants will be entirely successful in gathering the guests. The final call and warning will be literally carried to every individual of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. There will not remain a single living person who will have failed to make his decision one way or the other.

The guests will be gathered, the investigative judgment of the living shall take place, the rejecters of God's gracious invitation will suffer destruction, the marriage of the Lamb with His people will be consummated, and thus the end will come.

It is in this second complete and final fulfillment of this prophecy that we are most interested and most vitally concerned, and to the study of which we will devote the next chapter.

Chapter 7

The Marriage Prophecy - Part II

Before He, who is King of Kings and Lord of Lords, can return in the clouds of Heaven, there must be the consummation of the marriage between Christ and His Church. In other words, before the end of probationary time can take place, God must have a church upon this earth, "not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing". *Ephesians* 5:27. An end must have been made of all sin in every one in this church forever, and everlasting righteousness must have been brought into every one of the members.

Otherwise they could never endure the time of Jacob's trouble which follows the close of probation and also precedes the second advent of Christ. And if they should fail then, and thus place themselves where Satan "could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete." *Great Controversy,* 618. For Satan's triumph to be complete is but to say that God's cause would be defeated as completely. Therefore, the steadfastness of God's people in this final crisis and conflict is a serious matter.

So there has to be a marriage and this will be consummated before Jesus leaves the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary. The fact of this is stated in *Early Writings,* 280. Having brought us down in the unrolling of the scroll to that time when probation has closed, it says:

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

In achieving this condition of spotless perfection, God has the major responsibility, but He cannot fulfill His part unless the human

side of the covenant fulfills theirs. We can be assured that there is neither failure nor delay on God's part. If those problems assert themselves, as they certainly have, the fault lies entirely with us.

All the power and resources of heaven are set for the consummation of this marriage. So far, its achievement has not been successfully reached and for this reason time tarries. But nothing of the failure can be attributed to the Lord, for every provision on heaven's side has been more than adequately made up.

This truth is stressed a number of times throughout the prophecy. Firstly, we are told that the King *made* the marriage for His Son. This means that He did not merely intend to make it, or that He made a good start without bringing the work to completion, but that He actually made the marriage. And thus it was that He could positively say, "All things are ready! Come to the marriage!" A careful reading of the prophecy shows the delay to be caused, not by any unreadiness or slackness on the Lord's side, but by the persistent refusal of His people to come at His invitation. "To come" in this setting is not the physical walk to a designated geographical location, but the work of soul preparation involved in the putting away of sin from the life, which sin in the life is the element which keeps the two parties in the marriage separate from each other. In this separation, it is not He who walks apart from us, but we who walk apart from Him.

But, as already stated, the work of God cannot be ended and Christ return without there first being the consummation of the marriage through the complete perfection of the believers in Jesus.

All things were ready when Jesus ministered on earth, and the Lord told them so, but the Jews refused to come despite their earnest claims to be the one and only chosen nation. The Lord, after doing all He could do to restore the relationship between His people and Himself, then gave the opportunity to the members of the early Christian Church, but they too failed to gather the guests, and come to the marriage. Instead, they walked further and further from the side of their divine Leader until the deep darkness of the great Babylonian apostasy encompassed and imprisoned them.

Thus ended God's noble and commendable attempt to consummate the marriage between humanity and divinity at this particular time in history. This left Him with no other choice but to patiently wait until another day of opportunity had arrived.

That precious new day of opportunity could not be set up until the power of the Papacy was broken, for it is only with a people free from the bondage of sin that the marriage can be finalized. Therefore, it must be plainly seen that there could be no consummation of the marriage during the long captivity of the Dark Ages. So God

waited with infinite patience until the time came when He could again make the marriage for His Son. The best which could be done then was to hold things together so the Church could not be destroyed entirely, while at the same time working toward the creation of a situation wherein the marriage could again be made and the guests called to it for the consummation.

And in 1844 such an objective was realized. There again, the marriage was made by the King for His Son and guests were bidden to it, through the proclamation of the Midnight Cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming; go out to meet Him." *Matthew* 25:6.

Everyone who is familiar with the history of the rise of the Advent Movement will know that the marriage was made in 1844. There are explicit statements confirming this. However, we will spend a little time establishing this as a fact beyond contradiction.

In the book *Early Writings* is given a description of what took place in the heavenly sanctuary at the close of the 2,300 years which ended on October 22, 1844. This is a more detailed description of *Daniel* 7:9, 10 which says, "I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire;

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened."

The Most Holy or second apartment of the heavenly sanctuary is the judgment room so that here in *Daniel* at the right point in the sequence of events in this prophecy, the Ancient of Days, who is God the Father, is seen taking His place in that room. This event occurred at the close of the 2,300 years of *Daniel* 8:14.

In the passage from *Early Writings* under consideration, the Father and the Son are seen sharing a throne which we soon learn is in the Holy Place or the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. This is in harmony with the vision of John in *Revelation* 4 and 5, where the Father and the Son are seen together in the apartment wherein were the seven golden candlesticks which we know were always in the first apartment of the sanctuary. It is in harmony too with *Hebrews* 1:3 and 8:1 where Jesus is shown as being seated on the right hand of the throne in the heavens.

But, at the ending of the 2300 years in 1844, the ministry of the Holy Place gave way to the ministry in the Most Holy Place which required a moving of the Father and the Son to this apartment. This is pictured as quoted above in *Daniel* 7:9, 10, and also in verse 13

where, the Son of Man is brought before the Ancient of Days to receive His Kingdom.

In closer detail the scene is described thus in *Early Writings,* 55, "I saw the father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down." For what purpose? The answer is to make the marriage for His son.

This is evident from the following statement. "Then Jesus rose from the throne . . . Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, 'Wait here; I am going to my Father to *receive* the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.' " *Early Writings,* 55.

If in coming out from what He was going into, He returned from the wedding, then He must have been going into the wedding which His Father had gone ahead to prepare for Him.

This fact is most plainly stated in *Great Controversy,* 427. "The proclamation, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh,' in the summer of 1844, led thousands to expect the immediate advent of the Lord. At the appointed time, the Bridegroom came, not to the earth, as the people expected, but to the Ancient of Days in heaven, to the marriage, the reception of His kingdom."

These references make it very clear then that the marriage was made by the Father for His Son in 1844. This involved the creation of a people who were classified as the "bidden ones".

But who were they? How shall we identify them?

They were those who met the parallel specifications of those who were the bidden ones in 457 B.C. They had been in bondage to spiritual Babylon, but had responded to the message of the second angel to come out of her to do the work of rebuilding the glorious sanctuary truth, just as the small remnant had come out of Babylon to rebuild the sanctuary in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah. They were the ones who had been bidden to the marriage. They had given heed to the call of the Midnight Cry, "Behold, the Bridegroom is coming: go out to meet Him." *Matthew* 25:6.

This is to say that in 1844 God brought His people to the same point of opportunity and advantage as that to which He had brought them in 457 B.C., when He had appointed to them a specific period of time, namely 490 years, in which to make an end made of sins, and bring in everlasting righteousness.

In 1844 He called upon them to do the same work without specifying the allotted portion of time which would be appointed them. This time, it was described in these words: "But in the days of the sounding of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, the mystery of God would be finished." *Revelation* 10:7.

The finishing of the mystery of God is the finishing of the work of Christ being fully formed within each believer, as it is written: "To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." *Colossians* 1:27.

Is not this the making of an end of sins and the bringing in of everlasting righteousness? And when that work is done, then will not every separating barrier between God and man have been removed? Will not this mean that the marriage will have been consummated as the union is completed?

The finishing of the mystery of God is the consummation of the marriage.

In 1844, everything had been brought to a point of readiness wherein this work could speedily have been done. The power of the Papacy was broken, the people were free as never before, the glorious light of the everlasting gospel was shining upon them, and the King had already come in for the inspection of the characters of the righteous dead.

The marriage was made. All things were ready and all that was left was for the people of God to make speedy work of having the mystery of God finished in them, so that Christ could come and receive them to His kingdom.

But, exactly as pictured in the prophecy, they did not come when they were originally bidden. Instead there came a sad falling away, time tarried, and the Bridegroom and His Father were kept waiting and waiting.

"Had Adventists, after the great disappointment in 1844, held fast their faith and followed on unitedly in the opening providence of God, receiving the message of the third angel and in the power of the Holy Spirit proclaiming it to the world, they would have seen the salvation of God, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts, the work would have been completed, and Christ would have come ere this to receive His people to their reward." *Evangelism,* 695.

This was penned in 1883 and shows clearly that the bidden ones should, before that, have gone into the marriage, but they did not.

Therefore, just as the prophecy indicates, and just as had been necessary in the first fulfillment in regard to the Jews, the King had to send a special call to those who had been bidden. Insomuch as there have been numerous stirrings and messages among the people of God, our task is to identify just what event actually fulfilled the prediction.

The prophecy calls for the sending by the King of His servants to His people, the bidden ones, with a call to come to the marriage.

Such a message must reveal much more than the knowledge of what they should be, but also had to explain to them how to attain to the divine standard of perfection, and, as well, introduce to them the almighty power of the gospel, by A which alone the work could be effective.

could be effective. These necessities were brought home to my mind with



It was in the autumn of 1844 that the marriage was made by God for His beloved Son for the last time. Then it was that the Everlasting Father left the Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, and entered the most holy place, into which Jesus, our great High Priest, followed Him. At the same time on earth, conditions were established by which all sin could be removed from the believers. The papal bonds had been broken, the people had religious freedom, and the needed light was shining through to enable them all to make a complete and final end of all sin and sinning. Though not yet consummated, the marriage had been made.

telling force one night in Johannesburg, South Africa. On this occasion, I was presenting a study on *Romans 7* and 8. Methodically, I had explained the sin problem as a situation wherein the sinner is in

helpless bondage to the sin-master. I demonstrated from the Scriptures that we unwillingly commit sin because we have no power to do otherwise until we are set free from this slavery. I pointed to the plight of the hapless Hebrews in Egypt as an illustration of our spiritual problem, thus revealing what we ought not to be, and what we should be.

This part of the presentation had occupied forty-five minutes, and I suggested a break of fifteen minutes before continuing.

Immediately, one man in the audience spoke up:

"The other Sabbath, the pastor preached a sermon in which he spelled out the sin-problem just as you have done. He told us the law of God could be kept to perfection and that this is the level at which it must be kept by those who will be given a place in Paradise restored. But that is as far as he went before sitting down, his sermon being ended.

"I immediately stood to my feet earnestly pleading with him not to stop at this point, but to go on and tell us how to achieve this standard of excellence.

"Slowly the preacher rose to his feet again and confessed that he had told them all that he knew, that, while he understood that perfection is attainable, that sin is to be forever ended, and perfect righteousness everlastingly brought in, he could not explain how it could be achieved."

The man then challenged me with these words: "Will you, like that preacher, offer us the experience of righteousness, but fail to explain to us how it is to be attained?"

How thankful I was that the fourth angel's message, which is the call to the marriage, clearly explains the simple step by step procedure whereby the righteousness of Christ becomes the righteousness of the saints. I assured my questioner that the living message which I bore contained all the answers he needed, and which would be presented in the next study. So they were, and he went home a very happy man that night.

Before we proceed any further, it is critically important that we understand what constituted the first call to the bidden ones subsequent to the making of the marriage in 1844. It is a very easy matter to do this, for there is only one event which qualifies, namely the presentation of the message of Christ our righteousness through God's delegated messengers, Elders Waggoner and Jones, between 1888 and 1893.

The call to come to the marriage can be no other than an appeal on God's part to His people to eradicate from their lives that which divides them from Christ—namely, their sinfulness, as it is written: "But your iniquities have separated you from your God; and your

sins have hidden His face from you, so that He will not hear." *Isaiah* 59:2.

God requires nothing from His people unless He supplies the means for its achievement. All His commands are accompanied by His enablings. "As the will of man co-operates with the will of God, it becomes omnipotent. Whatever is to be done at His command may be accomplished in His strength. All His biddings are enablings." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 333. Paul clearly understood this and directs our attention to it in these words:

"Now may the God of *peace* Himself sanctify you completely; and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

"He who calls you is faithful, *who also will do it." 1 Thessalonians* 5:23,24.

Therefore, any call to the marriage must be a clear explanation of the sin problem, must reveal the practical procedures by which our escape can be made, and must make available the power for the effecting of our deliverance. In all, God's holy law must be enthroned in its rightful place. When this is done, there will be salvation from the mistake so commonly made in regard to the role of the law, which is the tendency to reason that if the breaking of the law robs us of righteousness and health—which it certainly does—then the keeping of the law will restore these things to us—which it does not!

If the law is preached to us without the saving power of the gospel being revealed as the means whereby its lofty standard can be reached, the listener becomes depressed with discouragement, and his soul becomes darkened with despair.

This is what happened to Adventism during the years subsequent to their becoming Laodicean from 1858 onwards. Destitute of the faith which works by love and purifies the soul, of the white raiment of Christ's righteousness, and of the eye salve of spiritual discernment, they had preached "the law until we are as dry as the hills of Gilboa that had neither dew nor rain." *Review and Herald,* March 11, 1890. For a more detailed analysis of the general condition of Adventism between 1858 and 1888, study *The Destiny of a Movement,* 156-163, by F. T. Wright.

I ask you now to look carefully at that period, the years between 1858 and 1888, to see if there was any call to the bidden ones during that interval of time. Can you find a message being carried by God's personally chosen messengers, not to the world, but to the church, the bidden ones? If you can locate a message directed to the bidden ones, was it the living power of the gospel of Jesus Christ, His righteousness, the call to put away all sin, to finish transgression, and to bring in everlasting righteousness?

Search as you might, you will find no such event taking place. The call to the bidden ones was not sounded between 1858 and 1888.

There is but one event which could possibly meet all of these specifications, and that was the sending by the Lord of His servants, Elders Waggoner and Jones, to the bidden ones, the Advent people, between the years 1888 and 1893, with the message of the everlasting gospel as the power of God to save from sin.

Compare the specification of the prophecy which reads as follows: He "sent out His servants to call those who were invited to the wedding", *Matthew* 22:3, with these words describing the coming of the men and the message in 1888: "The Lord in His great mercy sent a most precious message to His people through Elders Waggoner and Jones." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 91.

The event exactly matched the prediction. This was the first call to the Advent people. Note how the twelve and the seventy disciples were bidden to bring their message only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel, which they did. In like manner Waggoner and Jones bore their message to the Advent people. They were not evangelists to the world, but to the Church. They had not chosen that it should be that way. It was the Lord who had decreed that it should be thus, and they were simply obedient to His will.

But how sad the outcome!

Looking with prophetic vision down the stream of time, Jesus had said, "They were not willing to come." *Matthew* 22:3. And He was exactly correct in His forecasting as He, the greatest of all the prophets, could only be, for the Advent people were not willing to respond to the gracious invitation.

A great deal of argument and debate has arisen as to whether the Church of 1888 did in fact reject the message sent to it. The Seventh-Day Adventist Church organization of today in fact claims the message was never rejected in the end, but rather that out of the crisis arose a healthier and a better church. To support this view, they point to the fact that there were indeed some who did *receive* it, that there was no official decision taken by majority vote to reject the message, and that a large section were uncertain as to which stand to take.

But such argument is only a determined effort to cover up the real story of that day and thus to avoid a facing up to the consequences and the humiliation of the repentance and confession which such a recognition of the true state of affairs would require.

We will not enter into any lengthy argument here to substantiate the fact of this for there is no need. That the purpose of God was frustrated is evident on three counts.

In the first case, there was the prophetic prediction that the bidden ones would not come to the marriage. Long before it ever happened, God had stated prophetically that the people would refuse to accept the call. God who, knowing all things from the beginning and is therefore never caught by surprise, declared far in advance what they would do. And, despite the clear warning, they went right on and did that very thing. They utterly refused to accept the light, which refusal is nothing short of rejection.

In the second case, when it did happen, the Lord through His servant gave, in unmistakable language, His evaluation of what really took place in Minneapolis during the years 1888-1893. He said, "The prejudices and opinions that prevailed at Minneapolis are not dead by any means." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 467.

Prejudice and opinion are never found at work on the side of the Lord. Never! They are the weapons of the enemy of all righteousness whereby he seeks to vanquish the truth. There are times when he is very successful, and in fact it seems to be most of the time. The word "prevailed" means to gain the upper hand, to be the victor in the contest. Therefore it is plain that the victory in 1888 was not gained by the Lord and His message, but by the enemies of that message. There is just no other meaning that could be taken from this statement.

True, men will take evidences from the history of what happened, and will reason from those evidences as men will, in an attempt to make the record appear to be different from the Lord's evaluation of it. But when the Lord has spoken and told us that it was prejudice and opinion which prevailed at Minneapolis, then that is the last word on the matter. Let all argument cease and let us in humility confess the fact of it and ask in sincerity as to how we can recover the ground which has been lost.

But this is not the only word from the Lord to this same effect. Again we read, "An unwillingness to yield up preconceived opinions, and to accept this truth, lay at the foundation of a large share of the opposition manifested at Minneapolis against the Lord's message through Brethren Waggoner and Jones. By exciting that opposition Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost. The light that is to lighten the whole earth with its glory was resisted, and by the action of our own brethren has been in a great degree kept away from the world." *Selected Messages* 1:234, 235,

Again, what language could be plainer than this. It was Satan who was the successful one in this struggle to bring the light and the effi-

ciency of the last warning to a perishing world. This was not due to any failure on the Lord's part, for when His plans are obeyed, "there can be no such thing as failure, loss, impossibility, or defeat..." *Desire of Ages,* 490. The failure is on the part of the human element alone, and this is what kept the message from being received and accepted as it was His plan that it should have been.

Now in the third case, the simple witness of time has declared that it was never accepted by the Church in sufficient proportion to make it a victory for the Lord. If it had been, then the loud cry would long ere this have been sounded, and today the faithful would be in the kingdom.

But we are not.

Nothing is to gained by refusing to frankly confess that the message was rejected back there, that the first call to the bidden ones was rejected just as God foretold it would be.

So then, does this mean that we are locked in a situation from which there is no escape? No, it does not, for, as individuals, each one can repent as the entire Church could and should have done.

This has been but a brief discussion of the first call to the bidden ones and their rejection of it. It is recommended that a careful study be made of *The Destiny of a Movement,* by F. T. Wright. In this book, evidences are assembled which convincingly demonstrate that the guests refused to come when called.

It must be emphasized that the failure to accept the first call does not bring the Church to the fatal point where the Lord says to His servants, "They which were bidden are not worthy. Pass them by and go to another class of people."

It does not bring the church to this point because there yet remains the second call, and until it is given, the Church continues to be the divinely acknowledged people of the Lord, from which no one should yet separate. Just as Christ and the Apostles remained with the Jewish Church, despite the depth of her apostasy, until, but not beyond the rejection of the second call, so there was to be no separation from the Church until the second call had been completely rejected.

That it would be rejected is certified by the prophecy describing the way the Church would treat the second call. It is the tragic picture of a much more scornful and violent reaction than that with which the first call was received. One class of bidden ones would become violent, while the others would make light of the message, and go about their own affairs.

The advent of the second call is the final opportunity for the Church to respond to the invitation to come to the marriage of divinity with humanity. There will never be a third call to them; never an-

other opportunity. From that time when the second call has come and has been rejected, there never will be a third call to the Church, which will then be as completely on her own without God as the Jews ever have been from A.D. 34 onwards.

The question now remains as to whether or not that second call has come to the present day bidden ones, the members of the Seventh-day Adventist Church. To discover the answer we have but to survey the period between 1893 and now to see if God has again sent forth other servants with the true message of Christ and His righteousness to make an end of sin, and to bring in everlasting righteousness.

As is to be expected, a number of different movements have arisen, each one of which claims to be sent by God, but a careful examination of each reveals that only one of them meets the specifications of the prophecy. That one alone comes with the gospel, the living power of God to make a complete end of sin and establish everlasting righteousness in its place.

One of the movements which fails to qualify, really preaches the law, but without presenting the gospel as the means by which it can be obeyed. Others have special positions on prophecy and doctrines, which are certainly not in harmony with the fourth angel's message and movement. These arise with great promise, but sooner or later come to nothing.

In the meantime, between 1888 and 1950, the books by Elders Waggoner and Jones in which are preserved the messages God sent through those men, had disappeared from all sight. The names of those two men were unknown in the churches, and their sermons were never referred to. What happened in Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A., was forgotten. Obviously, the Church leaders wanted it that way.

But with the coming of 1950, the sleeping message could no longer be hidden from sight. Things began to happen, and a crisis developed which reached its climax in 1962. In fact, a great deal of history is packed into the period between 1950-1962. It is far more than could be reported in the limited scope of this volume, and it is intended that a much more comprehensive work be produced to cover this period.

We will give here, therefore, only a brief summary of these events with something of their significance.

At the beginning of the decade, 1950-1960, two missionaries, Elders Wieland and Short, approached the General Committee of Seventh-day Adventists, and expressed their concern in regard to developments in the Church, and stated their conviction that there was

an urgent need to revive the actual message of 1888 and make it available to the Church.

Upon instruction to put the matter in writing, they produced a volume entitled, *1888 Re-Examined,* the specific argument of which emphasized the fact that the mighty power of God could never be seen in the Church till the mistake of 1888 was acknowledged and rectified.

By the reply of the leaders, it is evident that they clearly understood the nature of the appeal, and as equally and clearly rejected it.

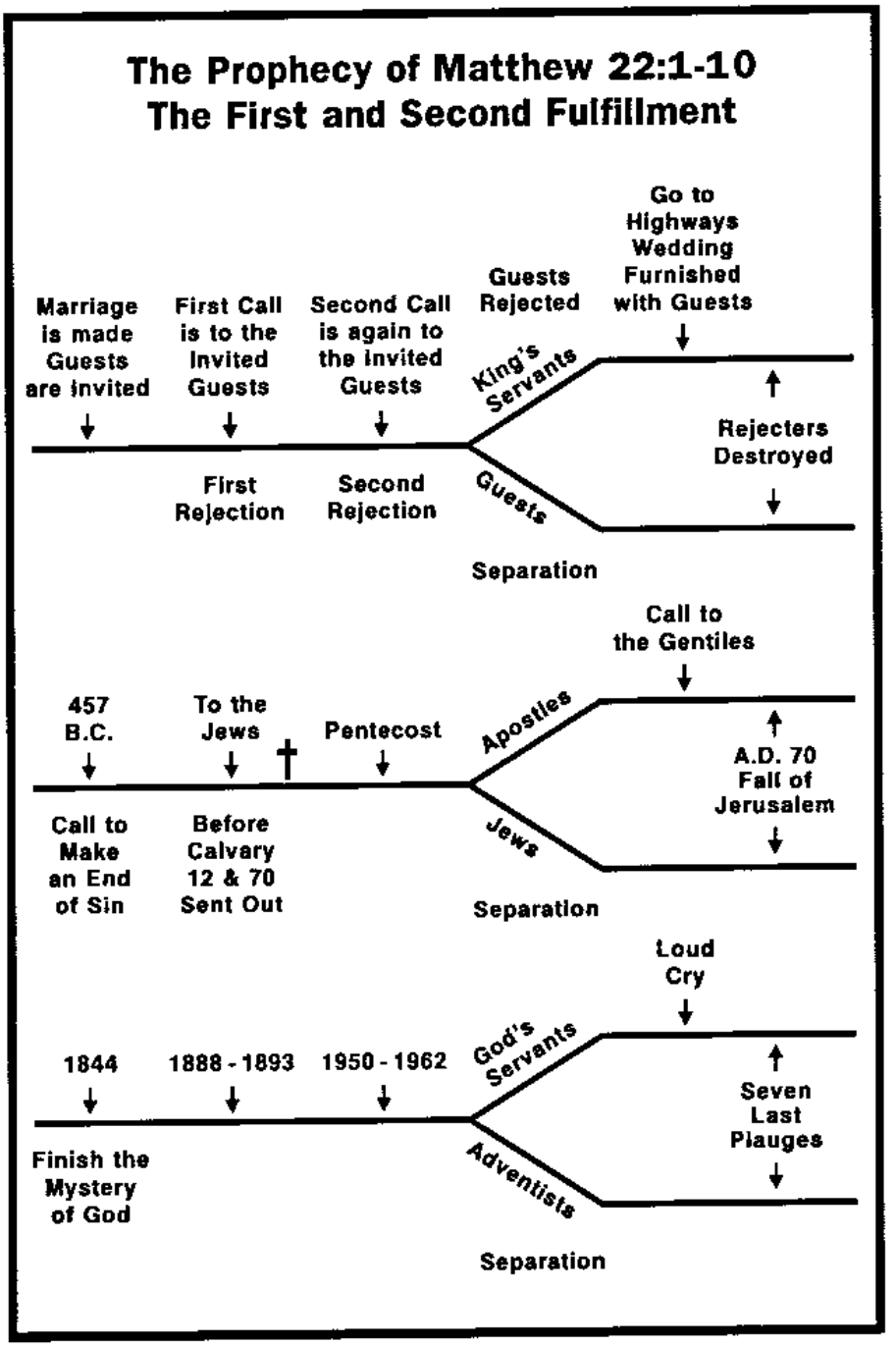
Wieland and Short virtually let the matter rest there but the Lord did not, for at the same time as the leaders were faced with this question, the Lord so organized events that at the level of the lay people, the message itself began to simultaneously sound again in different lands.

Throughout the world, there were those who had been longing for deliverance from sin, and these eagerly grasped the proffered blessing, but among the leaders in the church, the response was swift and decided. They saw in it something they considered dangerous exactly as had been prophesied they would:

"There is to be in the churches a wonderful manifestation of the power of God, but it will not move upon those who have not humbled themselves before the Lord, and opened the door of their heart by confession and repentance. In the manifestation of that power which lightens the earth with the glory of God, they will see only something which in their blindness they think dangerous, something which will arouse their fears, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Because the Lord does not work according to their expectations and ideal, they will oppose the work. 'Why,' they say, 'should we not know the Spirit of God, when we have been in the work so many years?' Because they did not respond to the warnings, the entreaties, of the messages of God, but persistently said, 'I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing.' " *Review and Herald,* December 23, 1890.

As zealous for the cause of God as they were misguided in that zeal, they began to apply various forms of pressure in order to keep the light from entering the churches. Anyone who possessed and read the writings of Elders Waggoner and Jones was labelled heretic, schismatic, and dangerous. To be seen talking with this class was to place yourself under suspicion of being one of them.

The conflict became more and more intense, until quite a number were stripped of their positions, and disfellowshipped from Church membership. Families were divided, old friendships were terminated, and deep divisions were created. It was a period when you had


The Prophecy of Matthew 22:1-10
The First and Second Fulfillment
Marriage is made Guests are invited
First Call is to the Invited Guests
Second Call is again to the invited Guests
Guests Rejected
Go to Highways Wedding Furnished with Guests
King's Servants
Rejecters Destroyed
Guests
First Rejection
Second Rejection
Separation
457 B.C.
To the Jews
Pentecost
Call to the Gentiles
Apostles
A.D. 70 Fall of Jerusalem
Jews
Call to Make an End of Sin
Before Calvary 12 & 70 Sent Out
Separation
1844
1888 - 1893
1950 - 1962
Loud Cry
God's Servants
Seven Last Plauges
Adventists
Finish the Mystery of God
Separation

to know what you believed and just where you stood, or you would be swept away in the general confusion, as so many were.

But not all adopted the role of persecutor, for there were those who rejected the invitation "in the most scornful manner." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 308.

This class made light of the call, and chose not to pay any attention to it, but went their own way, one to the cultivation of his farm, the other to the bartering of his merchandise. At no time was this attitude more manifest than when the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists met in 1962.

As the time for this session approached, those of us who loved the message and stood loyally for it regardless of the cost to ourselves, saw with increasing clarity that this conference represented the last hope that the church would accept the message. During the previous twelve years, we had seen the light rejected at every level except the General Conference in session. Should the delegates from all over the world elect to support the stand taken at every lower level during those twelve years, the rejection by the bidden ones would be complete, and the Seventh-day Adventist Church would forever cease to be the people of the Lord. They would be exactly as the Jews were at the end of the 490 years, for the same reasons.

With the deepest concern both for the truth and the Church we loved so dearly, we united in earnest prayer that, under the ministry of the Holy Spirit, the delegates in session would recognize what they should do in order to be right with God. In addition, there were those of us who were able to attend that critical session, and appealed in person that the matter of the message be given its rightful place.

But the matter was completely ignored. There was no discussion of the issue, no call for repentance, and no acknowledgement that their appalling spiritual destitution was due to their continued walking in the pathway of rejection laid down by their spiritual forbears. By so doing they rejected the second call to them, the bidden ones, in the most scornful manner.

The rejection was complete. The second day of opportunity had come and gone forever, and there would never be a third.

From that day to this, the true 1888 message, the message of living righteousness, cannot be found within that Church except as it is brought to individuals from outside of that Church.

In whatever way one may question the channels, methods, and instrumentalities the Lord used to bring the second call to the marriage, the fact is clear that the issues involved in the second call were held before the Church with more than sufficient clarity and pressure as to compel the Church to give an equally clear and definite answer.

And at every official level from the topmost to the lowest, the answer was clear, definite, and unequivocal—the Church had no time for the message.

Of course, the leaders of the denomination claim that they have never rejected the light, and that they truly believe in and earnestly proclaim the Lord our righteousness. True, in an effort to disguise and confuse the issue, she today has set forth another message which she claims is the message of 1888, and then points to her acceptance of that as proof that she never rejected the real message. But those who know and have experienced the power of the message of living righteousness sent in 1888 and again today, are not deceived.

With the finality of its answer to the question put to her for the second time as to what she would do with the invitation to the marriage, this Church has placed herself exactly where the Jews placed themselves in A.D. 34.

This development is an extremely important one in the progression of last day events. In harmony with His principles of working, the Lord could not turn to another class of people to give the loud cry until the Church had confirmed her refusal to do their work.

That question is now settled. The Lord therefore commissions another class of people to do the work which the bidden ones might have done but have now irrevocably declared they will not.

In the prophecy it is made abundantly clear that the Seventh-day Adventist Church will never give the loud cry in the power of the latter rain. Just as in the chapter entitled, The Four Angels, we saw that another movement succeeds the third, so here it is clearly shown that not the bidden ones, but the servants who gave the final call, are the ones who become that fourth movement.

Here is the prophetic word to tell us so. "Then He said to His servants, The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

" Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.' " Matthew 22:8,9.

Those whom God is leading and directing are His people, His Church. Who at this time is He leading? Is it the bidden ones who have rejected His call for the second time? Or is it the servants who gave the second call?

There is no question about the answer. The bidden ones are not the ones to whom the King gives instructions nor the ones whom He is leading. Instead, it is the little company of servants to whom this high honor is extended. They are the ones to whom the King issues His commands, while He only talks about the bidden ones who have distanced themselves from Him. They continue to follow their own

way apart from him. It is to be noted here that further study in the prophecies will show that not all the servants who took part in the giving of the message to the bidden ones will come through to the final work. Many are shaken out and left by the way.

The call to those in the highways and the hedges is the *representation* of the loud cry given in the power of the latter rain. There is no problem deducing this because of the fact that it is the last message ever to be given. By this means the guests are gathered to the marriage, and, just so soon as they are, the judgment of the living takes place symbolized by the entrance of the King to examine the guests. With this event, human probation ends. While those who are clad in the wedding garment remain in the marriage chamber, those who are dressed in the robe of their own works are expelled and consigned to destruction.

This prophecy would seem to indicate that the gathering in from the highways, which is the going forth of the loud cry, takes place immediately after the rejection of the second call. However, other prophecies such as that of the Ten Virgins and the Shaking show that a period of time elapses between the final rejection by the bidden ones of the second call, and the commencement of the loud cry. During that interval, the Lord prepares the little company for their tremendous work of giving the last message of mercy to a perishing world.

Today we are in that period. Soon will come the image of the beast and the beginning of the loud cry. By the sure word of prophecy it is certain that it will be, not the bidden ones, but those servants who will give the loud cry.

By this prophecy, we are able to tell at what point we have arrived in the unfolding of last day events. In 1844, the marriage was made, and the bidden ones were invited but failed to come. In 1888, through His servants, Elders Waggoner and Jones, the first call to those who had been bidden to the marriage was issued and rejected. The second and final call to the bidden ones was made between 1950 and 1962, and again was flatly rejected, with the result that the Seventh-day Adventist denomination forever ceased to be the Church of God.

All these events are now in the past. Today, other servants are God's channel of light during this tarrying time, and the next event will be the outpouring of the latter rain and the giving of the loud cry. By these revelations each of God's people can know with certainty just where to take his stand.

Chapter 8

Babylon the Great

Every true believer in Jesus looks and longs for the happy day when the forces of darkness shall have been forever vanquished, and the kingdom of righteousness established eternally in a world where there "shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying; and there shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away." *Revelation 21 A.*

But this day cannot come until the purpose of the great controversy has been fully and permanently achieved. The law of God must be so vindicated as the only way of life, that evil will never again have the least opportunity to intrude itself. The only way to arrive at this total rejection of evil and unreserved acceptance of righteousness, is to reveal God's lovely character at its radiant best, while exposing wickedness at its ugly worst. For a fuller study on this point, see *The Seven Angels,* by F. T. Wright, Chapters 14-18.

Certainly, this climactic condition of things has not yet fully developed, but, be assured, the day of its coming to complete maturity is steadily approaching. Moment by moment, mankind is sinking steadily into the last great pit of apostasy, while, on the other hand, the true people of the Lord are being separated from the world and its corruptions. It is in the light of these purposes that we must study the setting up of the image to the beast on the one hand, and the perfecting of the saints on the other.

So, the battle lines are being drawn up. While the devil is marshalling his forces, the Lord is also preparing His. This is an encouraging picture especially when we are able to recognize these events as fulfillments of prophecy, and know they will surely come to pass.

Unfortunately, the resolution of these issues is taking much longer than it should have done, for God certainly did not need six thousand years in which to solve the sin-problem introduced into the universe by Satan. The fault lies with us, His people, who because of unbelief have caused delay after delay. Generations have come and gone, and movements have been raised up only to fail over and over

again. Thus what might have been has never yet eventuated. Though delayed however, the promise of complete and eternal victory is assured.

For this reason the four winds of strife are held in check until this preparation is complete. Then every element of strife will be totally set free to confront every element of good in the last great conflict between the beast and his image on the one hand, and the armies of the living God on the other. This will be the final and the finishing conflict which will bring down the curtain on this world's history and usher in the glorious second advent of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. It is a conflict in which everyone living at the time will be inescapably involved. None will be permitted to adopt a neutral, uncommitted position. In this conflict every man, woman, and child throughout the entire earth will be compelled to take a stand on the one side or the other. There will be no neutrals then. The very force of the pressures of the great conflict will demand this be so, and each must and will have to give his answer to accept one way or the other. Therefore the subject of that conflict must be one which is of vital interest to all who live upon the earth at this time.

The issues in this warfare are spiritual, but this is not to say that the weapons of force are not going to be employed by those who are accustomed to gaining their ends by these means. But on the side of the truth of God, the weapons will be spiritual and not carnal, and God through His Church, will resist the powers of darkness by the proclamation of the mighty message contained in the first part of *Revelation* 18.

As we are interested in the order of last day events here, let us look at this Scripture from that point of view. Considerable light is thrown on the matter by comparing it with a very similar message which is found in *Revelation* 14:8 where we read, "And another angel followed, saying, 'Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she has made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' "

This is the message of the second angel, and "The second angel's message of *Revelation* 14 was first preached in the summer of 1844 . . . ." *Great Controversy,* 389. Its proclamation followed the sounding forth of the first angel's message which went before it, and declared the result of the rejection of the first angel's presentation of the everlasting gospel and the warning of impending judgment. Note carefully the difference in the wording between these two messages. In the first angel's message the proclamation was that *the hour* of God's judgment had come, which is another thing than saying, "God's judgment is come,"

The first statement, *"the hour* of the judgment is come," does

not say that judgment has actually come, but that we are within *the hour* when it will come. Therefore, this message declares the imminence of the judgment, but not the actual arrival of it.

The other statement, "The judgment is come", cannot be truthfully preached until the judgment has actually commenced. Thus, between 1831 and October 22, 1844, it was proper to preach that "the hour of God's judgment is come", but since that time, it has been proper to announce that, for the righteous dead, the judgment itself has come.

This distinction must be clearly established in our minds in order to understand the difference between the first and second angel's messages. Reference to the second angel's message shows that it was written in the present tense. It declares, not that the hour of Babylon's fall is come, but that she is fallen. Therefore that message could not be proclaimed until it could be proclaimed in truth. That is to say that first Babylon must fall, and then, and only then, could go forth the message, "Babylon is fallen."

The judgment of the dead commenced in October, 1844, at the end of the 2,300 year prophetic period, but the message announcing that the *hou r* of God's judgment had come was preached for thirteen years before that, as it was quite proper to do. As a result of the rejection of that message, Babylon fell.

"The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message . . . ." *Great Controversy,* 389. So fell the Babylon which was under the test and trial of God's truth at that time. And immediately after it had fallen, the Lord commissioned the second angel to announce the fact of it and to call the true people of God out of the fallen churches.

But, let this point be noted with care—it is a simple fact of history that that message did not go until it could be proclaimed as present truth. And it would never have been truth to say that Babylon is fallen, if that event was still future. God does not lie in His messages. They speak the truth. Therefore, when He sends a message that Babylon is fallen, then that message does not come until Babylon is fallen.

So then, this brings us to the point where we can compare with profit the second angel's message of *Revelation* 14:8, and the message of the angel of *Revelation* 18:1-4. At first they may seem to be identical but there is a very vital difference and it is this. The second angel announces that Babylon is fallen, while in *Revelation* 18 the announcement is that Babylon the Great is fallen. It is very much in order here to raise the question as to what difference there is between Babylon and Babylon the Great.

As stated at the outset of this series, it will be assumed that our

readers possess certain background information so that it will be unnecessary to go back through all that here. But a few basics will be repeated. Babylon is the Bible name given to apostate and corrupt forms of religion at war with God, just as the term Israel is the identifying name given to the loyal and true people of God. And, in the New Testament period through to the second advent of Christ, these two, Babylon and Israel, uphold respectively the same principles, evil and righteous, as were held by the Babylon and the Israel of the Old Testament.

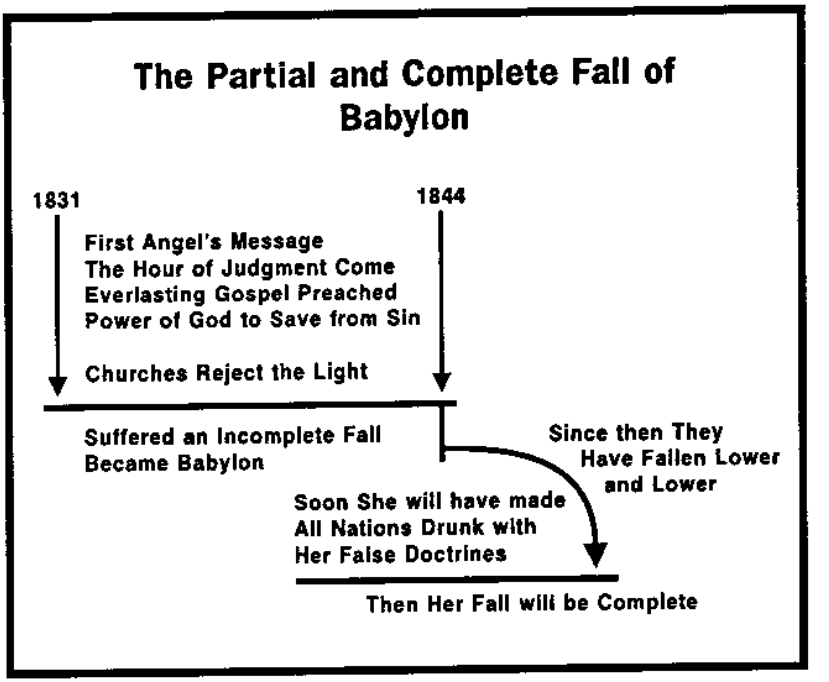
The Papacy as well as ancient Rome, held the principles of Babylon and in unrighteousness warred against God and His truth in the person of His saints. But they were not the Babylon which fell in 1844, for they had been in a fallen condition for centuries before that time. The Babylon which fell at that time was the Protestant churches to whom God had sent the light of truth and who flatly refused to receive that truth.

"Babylon is said to be 'the *mother* of harlots.' By her *daughters* must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world. The message of *Revelation* 14, announcing the *fall* of Babylon must apply to religious bodies that were once pure and have become corrupt. Since this message follows the warning of the judgment, it must be given in the last days; therefore it cannot refer to the Roman Church alone, for that church has been in a fallen condition for many centuries." *Great Controversy,* 382, 383.

So, since 1844, the membership of Babylon has been increasing and its depth of sinfulness has also been developing as we read in the followingstatement.

"But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that 'Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made *all nations* drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination." *Great Controversy,* 389.

But the churches cannot continue to fall forever. *There* must come a time when the two sides are developed and the last confron-



tation takes place. This means that Babylon will have come to a point of unity where it has stopped the infighting and is prepared to face God's people in the last battle. It is also a fact that the message of *Revelation* 18 is the last message given to a perishing world as the following statement says.

"*Revelation* 18 points to the time when, as the result of rejecting the threefold warning of *Revelation* 14:6-12, the church will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel, and the people of God still in Babylon will be called upon to separate from her communion. This message is the last that will ever be given to the world; and it will accomplish its work." *Great Controversy*, 390.

So this is the picture. Up to 1844 there already existed a Babylon comprised of at least the Roman Catholic Church. After 1844, Babylon's membership increased to include the Protestant churches. But Babylon's fall was not then complete. It has continued to fall lower and lower until, at the end, it will be at its lowest point. Now, according to the statement just quoted, the Babylon of *Revelation* 18, which is Babylon the Great, "will have fully reached the condition foretold by the second angel." So the last saving message is given by the last of God's true churches to this lowest and last of all Babylons, Babylon the Great. And how appropriate that this term should be ap-

plied to it, for this last Babylon exhibits the greatest unity and greatest hostility towards God of any Babylonian group in history.

Now the message of the *Revelation* 18 angel is concerned with Babylon the Great and announces, not that the hour of her fall has come, but that she is fallen. Therefore, in the light of the above facts regarding the first and second angel's messages, it is evident that the message of the *Revelation* 18 angel cannot and will not go under God's direction and leadership until the fact of it is accomplished and it can be stated in very truth that Babylon the Great is fallen.

This immediately raises the question as to whether this is already present truth or is it a situation yet to be reached. If Babylon the Great is not yet fallen, what further depths of apostasy must yet be reached before this becomes the case?

From *Great Controversy,* 603, we learn that that message was still future at the time of the writing of the last edition in 1911. After quoting the scripture from *Revelation* 18:1, 2, 4, the text goes on to say, "This scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of *Revelation* 14, (verse 8) is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844."

The time referred to in the above statement is not a moment of time but a period of time. It is the period of time, as yet of unknown length, during which the message goes forward announcing the fall of Babylon and calling on the true people of God to come out of her. It was still future at the time of the writing of the above statement, but for how long in the future? Inasmuch as we know that there will never be another message based on definite time, then we cannot expect that we shall be informed anywhere in the Word of God of the exact date, but we can expect to be told of the exact conditions which will bring Babylon the Great to the place where the message can go forth in truth that she is fallen.

Let us then begin to assemble the information by which we can determine the answer to these questions. On the very next page to that quoted above we read, "Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared, 'Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.' *Revelation* 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her. But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and 'receive not of her plagues.' " *Great Controversy,* 604.

The time brought to view in this prophecy is the time when the

message goes forth that Babylon the Great is fallen, never to rise again. This will be because the sins of Babylon will have reached as high as heaven and she will have filled up the measure of her guilt. In other words, she will have defied God to the uttermost limit. Her rebellion against the Almighty, the Creator of the heavens and the earth, will know no bounds, and will finally be supported by every man, woman, and child in the world, apart from the true people of God.

And we are able to ascertain from the Word of God just what event will bring them to the place where their sins will have reached unto heaven. Here are two statements, which, when read together, give us the information we are seeking. In the first one you will read that the law of God is to be made void when the Sunday law is passed. This is the time of the setting up of the image to the beast as we learned earlier in this book. Then the second statement tells us that the sins of the world will have reached unto heaven when the law of God is made void. So, these words tell us as plainly as it ever could be told that the point of time when Babylon the Great is finally fallen is that point of time when the law of God is made void in the land by the enforcement of the Sunday law, by which act they fill up the measure of their guilt, and their sins will reach unto heaven above. Read the truth of it in these statements.

"A time is coming when the law of God is, in a special sense, to be made void in our land. The rulers of our nation will, by legislative enactments, enforce the Sunday law, and thus God's people be brought into great peril. When our nation, in its legislative councils, shall enact laws to bind the consciences of men in regard to their religious privileges, enforcing Sunday observance, and bringing oppressive power to bear against those who keep the seventh-day Sabbath, the law of God will, to all intents and purposes, be made void in our land; and national apostasy will be followed by national ruin." *Review and Herald,* December 18,1888.

"The sins of the world will have reached unto heaven when the law of God is made void; when the Sabbath of the Lord is trampled in the dust, and men are compelled to accept in its stead an institution of the papacy through the strong hand of the law of the land. In exalting an institution of man above the institution ordained of God, they show contempt for the great Lawgiver, and refuse His sign or seal." *Review and Herald,* November 5,1889.

In addition to the above there is also the statement from Testimonies 5:451, where the same truth is expressed as follows: "By the decree enforcing the institution of the papacy in violation of the law of God, our nation will disconnect herself fully from righteousness."

To disconnect one's self fully from righteousness is to come to

the place where one can go no further in departing from the living God. This is to fill up the measure of iniquity and guilt and to have one's sins reach to heaven itself. And when will this be accomplished? It will be accomplished by the making of the *decree* which will enforce the worship of the institution of the Papacy which we know to be the enforcement of the Sunday law.

It is of course apparent that at the time of the writing of this study, that event is still future. Not yet have the churches secured the power of the law of the land in the United States first of all, to enforce their decrees and to sustain their dogmas. But that time is coming with the utmost certainty, and as surely as it comes, then as surely will the fall of Babylon the Great be complete. And then, just so surely will the time have come when the message announcing that fall will ring out under the direction of the angel who lightens the whole earth with his glory. It will go then as a present truth in very fact.

As stated previously in this series, the point of time when the image of the beast is set up is a positive land mark. It is a point of time when a stage of committal by both the world and the true Church of God is reached from which there can be and will be no turning back by either party. It is a point to which the devil is now developing the apostasy in the churches under his control and it is also a point toward which the Lord is developing a faithful remnant to fight His battles in that decisive day. These two lines of development will come to the same focal point at the same time and already both are well advanced in their development. There is but little yet to be fulfilled before that critical hour is reached. Already the unity of the churches, an event which immediately precedes the enforcement of the Sunday law and of which we learned in chapter one of this series, is very near to being a fully accomplished fact, and when it is an accomplished fact, then the image of the beast will be formed, the sins of Babylon the Great will have reached unto heaven, the cup of iniquity will be full, and her fall complete. Then the time will have come for the message to go forth, "Babylon the great is fallen."

This proclamation is a most important development in the general giving of the loud cry, and it will be given with a power which will lighten the whole earth with the glory of the angel. This is made very clear in the following statement:

"I saw angels hurrying to and fro in heaven, descending to the earth, and again ascending to heaven, preparing for the fulfillment of some important event. Then I saw another mighty angel commissioned to descend to the earth, to unite his voice with the third angel, and give power and force to his message. Great power and glory were imparted to the angel, and as he descended, the earth was light-

ened with his glory. The light which attended this angel penetrated everywhere, as he cried mighty, with a strong voice, 'Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.' The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry. And the people of God are thus prepared to stand in the hour of temptation, which they are soon to meet. I saw a great light resting upon them, and they united to fearlessly proclaim the third angel's message." *Early Writings,* 277.

Then it is plain and clear that the order of events is that, just as soon as the powers of church and state combine to enforce the decrees of the church in respect to the Sunday law, then the fall of Babylon is complete. This will be the signal for the descent of the mighty angel of *Revelation* 18:1-4, who joins the powerful work of the third angel as his ministry swells to a loud cry.

Chapter 9

The Message Swells

It is most important to understand that, "The work of this angel [that is, the *Revelation* 18, or fourth angel] comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry." *Early Writings, 277.*

So then, before the image of the beast is set up, and the fall of Babylon the Great is thereby completed, such outpourings of spiritual power will take place as will cause the message of the third angel to swell to the loud cry. This means that we do not have to wait until the passing of the law enforcing Sunday worship, for the first outpourings of spiritual power. Thus, the people of the Lord will be increasingly endowed with fitness to meet the mounting crisis in the world and in the churches. At the same time, as I will shortly demonstrate, these manifestations of divine power through God's faithful children, will be a significant factor in bringing about the fall of Babylon the Great.

The same thought of the third angel's message swelling to the point where the entire earth is filled with the glory of the angel, is expressed in a number of statements such as the one following:

"The third angel, flying in the midst of heaven and heralding the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus, represents our work. The message loses none of its force in the angel's onward flight, for John sees it increasing in strength and power until the whole earth is lightened with its glory. The course of God's commandment-keeping people is onward, ever onward. The message of truth that we bear must go to nations, tongues, and peoples. Soon it will go with a loud voice, and the earth will be lightened with its glory. Are we preparing for this great outpouring of the Spirit of God?" Testimonies 5:383.

It is also evident that the forming of the Sunday law is not something that will steal upon us so secretly that we will not know of its coming before it is actually made. On the contrary, it will be seen to

be approaching, and when it is, the third angel will exhibit a power unseen before. The following statement verifies this:

"Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been—the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before." *Great Controversy,* 605, 606.

This picture of a message growing in power, brightness, and spiritual force, is further witnessed to in these words written in the context of what took place around Pentecost:

"And today God is still using His church to make known His purpose in the earth. Today the heralds of the cross are going from city to city, and from land to land, preparing the way for the second advent of Christ. The standard of God's law is being exalted. The Spirit of the Almighty is moving upon men's hearts, and those who respond to its influence become witnesses for God and His truth. In many places consecrated men and women may be seen communicating to others the light that has made plain to them the way of salvation through Christ. And as they continue to let their light shine, as did those who were baptized with the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, they receive more and still more of the Spirit's power. Thus the earth is to be lightened with the glory of God." Acts *of the Apostles,* 53.

It will be readily discerned that, seemingly, we are confronted with two contradictory pictures in regard to the sounding of the final warning. One of these reveals a message given in the power of the latter rain which cannot go forth until the fall of Babylon is complete. Such is the picture given by *Revelation* 18:1-4. The impression is thus gained of the fourth angel being absolutely silent until Babylon's fall has reached its uttermost limits, whereupon he suddenly gives voice to his message under full power. It is a seeming leap from nothing to everything which seems to direct our minds back to the sudden descent of the Holy Spirit both at Pentecost and at the Midnight Cry during the summer and autumn of 1844.

In seeming contradiction to this concept, we are faced with other statements which picture a swelling of the great light of the message up till the time when the work of the fourth "angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry." *Early* Writings, 277.

These other statements give no support for the idea of going from nothing to everything, but rather support the idea of growth until the time of surging growth takes place due to a considerable increase in the amount of rain. There will also be continued growth during the loud cry.

The facts are that both sets of statements are correct. Prior to the sudden outpouring of the latter rain, there will be a mighty swelling in the power of the third angel's message, without which Babylon would not completely fall. This swelling in the work of the third angel is essential for achieving either the salvation or the utter desolation of earth's last dwellers. This situation will be developed through the application of the principle that gospel truth either hardens or it softens. Never does it leave a person the way it found him.

"Let ministers and people remember that gospel truth hardens when it does not save. The rejection of light leaves men captives, bound about by chains of darkness and unbelief. The soul that refuses to listen to the invitations of mercy from day to day can soon listen to the most urgent appeals without an emotion stirring his soul." *Testimonies*5:681.

Pharaoh of Egypt provides an excellent example of this principle. When Moses first arrived in the monarch's presence, the king was far from being the hardened, ruthless potentate he had become by the time he had rejected ten loving appeals from the Sovereign of the universe. Each entreaty rejected produced an evil effect on Pharaoh's character until he had completely sold himself to Satan.

"God destroys no man. Everyone who is destroyed will have destroyed himself. Everyone who stifles the admonitions of conscience is sowing the seeds of unbelief, and these will produce a sure harvest. By rejecting the first warning from God, Pharaoh of old sowed the seeds of obstinacy, and he reaped obstinacy. God did not compel him to disbelieve. The seed of unbelief which he sowed produced a harvest of its kind. Thus his resistance continued, until he looked upon his devastated land, upon the cold, dead form of his first-born, and the first-born of all in his house and of all the families in his kingdom, until the waters of the sea closed over his horses and his chariots and his men of war. His history is a fearful illustration of the truth of the words that 'whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.' *Galatians* 6:7. Did men but *realize* this, they would be careful what seed they sow." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 84, 85.

The same outworking is to be seen in the development of the deepest apostasy in the Jewish leaders who resisted and rejected Christ's ministry of love. When the Saviour appeared on earth, these men were far from being filled with the fanatical pride and seething hatred which controlled them as they screamed to Pilate to crucify

the blessed Saviour. Each day on which they had come in contact with the divine character of Jesus, their refusal to yield and repent had a fearful hardening effect on them, until, by the time Jesus stood in Pilate's judgment hall, those men were in the deepest apostasy.

While many of the priests and people were still open to receive the light, those leaders who had rejected and warred against Christ, received no benefit from the former rain whatsoever. Their first step was taken in the hardening of their hearts when they refused to submit to the convicting power of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of John the Baptist. Once they had taken that step, they never ever afterwards placed their feet in the right pathway again, as the following statement declares:

"I was pointed back to the proclamation of the first advent of Christ. John was sent in the spirit and power of Elijah to prepare the way of Jesus. Those who rejected the testimony of John were not benefited by the teachings of Jesus. Their opposition to the message that foretold His coming placed them where they could not readily receive the strongest evidence that He was the Messiah. Satan led on those who rejected the message of John to go still farther, to reject and crucify Christ. In doing this they placed themselves where they could not *receive* the blessing on the day of Pentecost, which would have taught them the way into the heavenly sanctuary. The rendering of the veil of the temple showed that the Jewish sacrifices and ordinances would no longer be received. The great Sacrifice had been offered and had been accepted, and the Holy Spirit which descended on the day of Pentecost carried the minds of the disciples from the earthly sanctuary to the heavenly, where Jesus had entered by His own blood, to shed upon His disciples the benefits of His atonement. But the Jews were left in total darkness. They lost all the light which they might have had upon the plan of salvation, and still trusted in their useless sacrifices and offerings. The heavenly sanctuary had taken the place of the earthly, yet they had no knowledge of the change. Therefore they could not be benefited by the mediation of Christ in the holy place." *Early Writings,* 259, 260.

The same principles operated in the sounding of the three angel's messages in 1844.

"Those who rejected the first message could not be benefited by the second; neither were they benefited by the midnight cry, which was to prepare them to enter with Jesus by faith into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. And by rejecting the two former messages, they have so darkened their understanding that they can see no light in the third angel's message, which shows the way into the most holy place. I saw that as the Jews crucified Jesus, so the nominal churches had crucified these messages, and therefore they



have no knowledge of the way into the most holy, and they cannot be benefited by the intercession of Jesus there. Like the Jews, who offered their useless sacrifices, they offer up their useless prayers to the apartment which Jesus has left; and Satan, pleased with the deception, assumes a religious character, and leads the minds of these professed Christians to himself, working with his power, his signs and lying wonders, to fasten them in his snare." *Early* Writings, 260,261.

God intended that the outpouring of the former rain would have fitted the members of the Church for translation, but the Church drifted instead into apostasy.

Likewise, God planned that the mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit by which the Midnight Cry was given, would have fitted the Advent people for translation as is clearly stated in these words:

"The history of ancient Israel is a striking illustration of the past experience of the Adventist body. God led His people in the advent movement, even as He led the children of Israel from Egypt. In the great disappointment their faith was tested as was that of the Hebrews at the Red Sea. Had they still trusted to the guiding hand that had been with them in their past experience, they would have seen the salvation of God. If all who had labored unitedly in the work in 1844, had received the third angel's message and proclaimed it in the power of the Holy Spirit, the Lord would have wrought mightily with their efforts. A flood of light would have been shed upon the world. Years ago the inhabitants of the earth would have been warned, the closing work completed, and Christ would have come for the redemption of His people." *Great Controversy,* 457, 458.

But the Lord will not fail. He will make a total and final end of sins, and will bring in everlasting righteousness, by exposing sin at its ugly worst side by side with righteousness at its shining best.

It will be through the messages carried by the three angels, and

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^——————————STEPPING UPWARD

In the kingdom and work of God the opportunities for greater attainment will never cease. There is no stopping place, no level at which we can say that now we know everything that there is to be known, have done all that there is to be done, and have attained to infinity of excellence. Thus, unfolding light which shines more and more unto the perfect day, is revealed through never-ending sets of ascending steps by which we are elevated from one level of life and light to the next.

So it is that in the closing up of the work, increasing light is a vital factor necessitating the ministry of a number of angels, each one of whom adds his contribution to those who have preceded him. Thus the message will swell to the loud cry.

the fourth angel, that this victory shall be gained. Therefore, we need to understand the roles of the angels in bringing Babylon the Great to the place where her disguise is swept away, and she stands exposed for what she is, the ultimate manifestation of evil, "the mother of prostitutes and of the abominations of the earth". *Revelation* 17:5.

This was to have been accomplished by the presentation of the first, second, and third angel's ministries shortly after 1844, but by 1858, the Advent people had sunk into the Laodicean condition, in which state they were destitute of the gospel, and therefore had no power with which to unmask Babylon the Great. So time tarried, the end of all things being delayed.

Then, in 1888, came the advent of the fourth angel. See *The Seven Angels,* chapter eleven entitled, "The Fourth Angel". This angel's message is a restatement of the messages of the first, second, and third angels, which come with even greater force, depth, and clarity than during the first presentation.

Of necessity, the angel had to firstly do his work among the Advent people before he could proclaim his truths to the world. This is because the Advent people who should have been thoroughly conversant with the message, had lost it so completely that they were unable to recognize it for what it is—the third angel's message in verity, and had to ask Sister White to identify the message for them as she wrote:

"Several have written to me, inquiring if the message of justification by faith is the third angel's message, and I have answered, 'It is the third angel's message in verity.' " *Review and Herald,* April 1, 1890.

"This message was to bring more prominently before the world the uplifted Saviour, the sacrifice for the sins of the whole world. It presented justification through faith in the Surety; it invited the people to receive the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family. All power is given into His hands, that He may dispense rich gifts unto men, imparting the priceless gift of His own righteousness to the helpless human agent. This is the message that God commanded to be given to the world. It is the third angel's message, which is to be proclaimed with a loud voice, and attended with the outpouring of His Spirit in a large measure." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 91.

That is exactly the message which possesses the capacity to finish the work by bringing all men to make their final decision. Of the appearance of that message in 1888, it is written:

"The time of test is just upon us, for the loud cry of the third angel has already begun in the revelation of the righteousness of Christ, the sin-pardoning Redeemer. This is the beginning of the light of the angel whose glory shall fill the whole earth." *Review and Herald,* November 22, 1892.

But, while the message of the loud cry was sounding in the Seventh-day Adventist Church, the loud cry had not yet begun out in the world, nor do we see the message swelling toward the loud cry outside of the Church. What we do see is the first steps of what would have become the loud cry at full power. That development should have fully taken place subsequent to the advent of the fourth angel between 1888 and 1893, who, having taught the message to the Advent people, would lead them to give the final warning to all mankind.

The plan was never implemented due to the stubborn unbelief of the ministry followed by the people, which means that we have yet to see the first four angels doing their appointed ministries by which the end will be brought about.

At the time of writing this book, the fourth angel has returned as the teacher of righteousness to the tiny remnant of the Advent people who have proved themselves faithful to their divine Leader. With eager expectation, we, the faithful ones, wait with longing for the outpouring of the latter rain.

Furthermore, the message of the third angel must be swelling to the loud cry at the time leading up to the entry of the *Revelation* 18 angel into the sphere of activity.

Therefore, we are to expect to see more and still more of the Holy Spirit being poured out under the ministry of the third angel, even though there are no visible sightings yet of the actual enforcement of the Sunday laws.

In summary then the sequence leading up to the entry of the powerful *Revelation* 18 angel in latter rain power to the outside world to whom is given the final warning, is as follows:

Firstly, the mighty angel comes down and reveals the message of the third angel in verity to the spiritually responsive among the Advent people.

This inevitably leads to the faithful ones becoming cast out from among and by their former brethren.

The fourth angel continues his work of educating the faithful ones. His work is made much more effective by their being separated.

The time comes as the apostasy in the world around God's children deepens, that they will be constrained by the Holy Spirit to proclaim the truth of Christ and His righteousness. This will be a quiet

work at first, but, under the Holy Spirit's guidance and blessing, will swell toward the loud cry.

At the right moment, just when the image of the beast is set up, the fourth angel will join the third as the message of the latter swells into the loud cry.

It is then that the last great battle in the great controversy will begin in earnest, and will not end until a full and final decision is reached by everyone on earth.

Chapter 10

A Worldwide Union

Babylon is a power which is not limited to a single geographical location, but is found throughout the length and breadth of the earth. Therefore, she will manifest the same spirit, and work toward the same ends in every part of earth as, having gained control of all the governmental powers in the various nations of the world, she will be able to do. So it will be that the image of the beast will be formed in every locality where men dwell, and the complete fall of Babylon the Great will be global in magnitude. What a collapse that will be! The falling will begin in the United States of America, where the image of the beast will first be formed, followed by country after country putting the image to work in territory after territory, and thus bringing about their falls, each in their turn.

It is difficult enough to accept the eventuality of the total deprivation of personal freedom to worship God according to the guidelines of an enlightened conscience even in the so-called Christian nations, in this age when personal freedom is regarded as an inalienable right, but it is much more difficult to believe it will happen within those nations where the Christian God is not recognized at all.

Consider first of all the mammoth difficulty of great Babylon's assembling all the so-called Christian nations in one united body under her sole leadership and control. While it is true that the Pope of Rome enjoys more respect than ever before from many both of Catholic and non-Catholic persuasion, there are deep divisions within the Church itself. She is not yet able to present a united front to the world. There are many who have not forgotten the Protestant Reformation, and there are other religions which are anti-Catholic.

Yet, all these differences will be dissolved as the terrible pressures are brought to bear on the peoples of the earth. They will not agree on every fine detail, but will unite with each other "upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common." *Great Controversy,* 445.

It will be a time of dreadful suffering, for:

"Every century of profligacy has treasured up wrath against the day of wrath; and when the time comes, and the iniquity is full, then God will do His strange work. It will be found a terrible thing to have worn out the divine patience; for the wrath of God will fall so signally and strongly that it is presented as being unmixed with mercy; and the very earth will be desolated. It is at the time of the national apostasy, when, acting on the policy of Satan, the rulers of the land will rank themselves on the side of the man of sin—it is then the measure of guilt is full; the national apostasy is the signal for national ruin." *Selected Messages* 2:372.

It will be a horrific reaping such as no pen could portray nor voice describe. Committed to the concept that the objective is so essential for mankind to even survive, that the end justifies even the most unlawful means which may be employed to secure it, the various factions dividing Christendom will seize upon any solution which promises deliverance. The churches will claim that only a "return to obedience to God", will suffice to save them, and under the increasing desperation of their life-threatening situation, even those so-called Christians who had previously warred against the Papacy, will give the system their unqualified support.

So too will the nations who do not in any way recognize any God but their own, cast in their lot with the Papacy. I think of such mighty earthly powers as Russia and China, and lesser such forces of Vietnam, Korea, and Cuba. Then there is the Moslem world where Christianity is held to scorn. Think of Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and many more. Look upon the incredible depth of hatred of the Jew and the Arab against each other. All these have manifested what seemed to be implacable hatred against Christianity and for one another. So bitter and enduring has been the hostility against each other, that it is most difficult to believe the day would ever come when all of them at the same time will be united in the common cause of setting up the image of the beast.

Despite the seeming impossibility of there being one union of every one of Satan's forces, the Word of God unhesitatingly predicts that there will be one vast confederacy of evil, all the members of which will be working under a single head toward the same objectives. This being so, we must consider the evidences contained in the prophecies. Familiarization with these will save us from delusion, our understanding being established, not by what we might believe will happen, but by what the Lord, through the Scriptures, says will happen.

So we take our unaided eyes off the confusing and discordant world scene, and look instead upon the Word of God and ask that Word by His Spirit, the grave question which is before us, and, in

that Word, we shall find that nothing less than the whole world will give its allegiance to the Papacy. Every nation, kindred, tongue, and people on the face of the whole earth will do this and nothing less. It matters not that the witness of sight and circumstances may appear to deny this at the time when this is written. The fact is that the Lord has said that it will be so and therefore that is how it will be. God has spoken, and it is only a matter of time before that which He has spoken will most certainly be fulfilled.

Let us turn to the Word of God and see the truth of it written there. In *Revelation* 13:8, after reading of the restoration of the Papacy to power, comes this statement, "And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

In this verse are brought to view two classes. There are those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and obviously they are the ones who serve God in spirit and in truth in every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. These are the only exceptions given. All the rest of those who dwell on the earth shall worship the beast. In that day, we shall be numbered among the one or the other of these two classes whether we like it or not. Either we shall be among those who have their names written in the book of life and therefore have the power to resist the beast and his image, or we shall be worshipers of that beast and his image.

How this will be is made plain from previous verses in the chapter. In verse 4, it is evident that a situation arises wherein the beast is able to make such a display of power as to intimidate the rest of the world to the place where they say, "Who is like the beast? Who is able to make war with him?" This is but another way of saying that the beast is too powerful to give anyone the slightest hope of victory in any contest with him. And so it is then that, "he was given authority over every tribe, tongue, and nation." verse 7, as a result of which all who dwell upon the earth shall worship him willingly or unwillingly except for those whose names are written in the book of life.

We look upon the world today and we see that the nations of the earth are divided in their attitude to the Papal power with the larger proportion of the earth's people in positive, open hostility to the Papacy, and we ask as to how it could ever be that such could come to the place where they would worship this potentate.

But when we do look upon that scene as it is today and draw the conclusions we do, we do so without realizing that our conclusion is dependent upon our holding a certain concept as to what worship is. We naturally think of worship as being a willing reverence of the one whom we worship—of being something that is given because we

want to give it. Without a doubt this must be true so far as the worship of God is concerned, for it is the only kind of worship acceptable to Him, but it is not true so far as the worship of the beast and his image is concerned. This is a worship which is forced from the worshiper because the power of the potentate is of such magnitude as to command that worship be given whether the person desires to give it or not.

For every truth in the New Testament there is a type in the Old, and the type of the enforcing of Sunday worship on the part of modern Babylon is to be found in the enforcement of the worship of the golden image on the plains of Dura in the days of King Nebuchadnezzar.

He was the pope of that day, and he it was who called the people of every nation to the worship of his golden image, in response to which call, the people or their representatives came, for they dared not stay away. The conditions explicitly stated in that call were: Obey or die.

In *Revelation* 13, we read that the death penalty hangs over the head of all those who do not worship the beast and his image. This is but the antitype of the type found in the days of King Nebuchadnezzar, for he threatened with death all those who refused to bow down before the golden image. As it was then, so it is again today.

At that time there were gathered together the rulers of the people of all the nations of the whole world over which Babylon then had power. And every one of them was required to worship the power of Babylon under pain of death. Knowing well the spirit of rebellion which dwells in the hearts of the conquered, we can know that many of those who bowed that day bowed, not because they had a mind to worship the golden image, the symbol of the power of Babylon, but because they had a mind not to go into the burning fiery furnace. They worshiped, it is true, but not because of any love for Babylon, but rather because of fear of her power, and because they were so held in the grip of her power that they had no option but to obey or to perish.

That which has been will be. Therefore the hatred which these nations possess for the Papacy and the western world which protects and fosters the Papacy, is not evidence at all in the case for not believing that the Papacy will gain the worship of the whole world. She will do so because she will obtain the power to do so. A situation will develop through the power of spiritualism and the power of the United States under the leadership of spiritualism, which will give back to the Papacy the supremacy of the world.

On the plains of Dura there were two classes of people standing before that image and two only. They were the people of the whole

world who bowed before the image, and there were the faithful few, only three in number, who had no fear of the power of Babylon and whose names were written in the Lamb's book of life. These alone did not bow before that image, and so it will be again. A faithful few will know the power of God, and thus will be able to stand against the power of Babylon the Great.

It is the third angel who gives the specific warning against the worship of the beast and his image and against receiving his mark in his forehead or in his hand. To whom does he give this warning? The answer must be to those who are in danger of doing the very thing against which this warning is given. It therefore must be that the angel will go wherever the people of the earth are in peril of making so terrible a mistake. If there is no danger to any particular people from this peril, then he will not take the specific warning against the beast and his image to them, but will sound another warning to cover the particular peril in which they stood. That is to say, if, in the last days, Russia and China will not worship the beast and his image, then there would be no point in warning the people of those lands against something with which they would never be faced. Therefore, the third angel would not go to them.

But the third angel does go to them. This is made certain by the word of the prophecy which states that "a third angel followed them," that is, the other two angels. Of the first of the other two it is specifically stated that he goes to "every nation, tribe, tongue, and people" with his message. Therefore, if the third angel follows him, it can only be that he too takes his message to every nation, kindred, tongue, and people and warns every such person of their danger of worshiping the beast and his image. This can only mean that the beast shall be worshiped by people of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people, for otherwise the warning would not go to every such person. If there was to be another test to the people of other lands, then a different angel would carry a different warning to them.

Here now are some specific statements which tell in just so many words that the crisis will be the same in every part of the world.

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example. . . . Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." *Testimonies* 6:18, 395.

These statements need no comment as their message is too plain to be misunderstood. Along with them go the following: "History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the



From the remotest parts of the earth, to its most densely populated areas, the warning of the third angel will sound against the worship of the beast and his image. This means that the test imposed by this evil power will have penetrated every corner of the globe before the third angel sounds his warning there.

week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation.

"The *decree* enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world. . . .

"Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to con-

sume them. So it will be now. The Papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God's servants in the conflict with paganism." Signs *of the Times,* May 6, 1897.

"The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head—the papal power—the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses." Testimonies 7:182. Inasmuch as the subject matter of this statement is the world, then the people who will unite, even though they now are at war and variance with each other, must be the people of the whole world, not a part of it. They will have one head and that will be the Papal head, Babylon the Great.

Thus "there will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces. . . .

"In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah." *SDA Bible Commentary 7-.983.*

The question is: How many of earth's inhabitants are included in the classification? And the answer is: "all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah."

We are apt to limit the classification of those who are in apostasy from God and His law, to the members of religious organizations who were once loyal to God, but, in the meantime have turned away from Him, when we should see all people on the earth included.

But let us not forget that there was a time when the first men upon the earth were loyal to God and from that loyalty everyone who does not today love the Lord has apostatized. Therefore, every man, woman, and child upon the face of the earth who does not serve the Lord, is an apostate from the law of Jehovah and all such will stand united in the last great conflict in the worship of Babylon the Great. There is to be, "a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces." The word "universal" means "worldwide", and in this universal or worldwide bond of union, there is to be, not two or three different camps, but one great harmony, one confederacy of Satan's forces.

These statements leave no doubt whatsoever as to the fact that the same image to the beast will be made in every other land as it is in America. It leaves no doubt but that Russia and China will be among those nations who will join in this last great apostasy, not so much because they have a mind to do so, but because they will have a mind to escape the punishment that Babylon will surely inflict on all those who do not submit to her authority. They will do so, not because they want to largely, but because, not having the power of God

in them as did Meshach, Shadrach, and Abed-Nego, they will have nothing with which to resist and overcome the power of Babylon the Great. They will do so because they will have no choice except to perish.

But should it be that there are still some who cannot accept that China and India for instance, will bow to the Papal power, then here is a statement actually naming these two lands as countries where the test of the beast and his image will be imposed upon the people.

"Among earth's inhabitants, scattered in every land, there are those who have not bowed the knee to Baal. Like the stars of heaven, which appear only at night, these faithful ones will shine forth when darkness covers the earth and gross darkness the people. In heathen Africa, in the Catholic lands of Europe and of South America, in China, in India, in the islands of the sea, and in all the dark corners of the earth, God has in reserve a firmament of chosen ones that will yet shine forth amidst the darkness, revealing clearly to an apostate world the transforming power of obedience to His law. Even now they are appearing in every nation, among every tongue and people; and in the hour of deepest apostasy, when Satan's supreme effort is made to cause, 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond,' to receive, under penalty of death, the sign of allegiance to a false rest day, these faithful ones, 'blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke,' will 'shine as lights in the world.' *Revelation* 13:16; *Philippians* 2:15. The darker the night, the more brilliantly will they shine." *Prophets and Kings,* 188, 189.

This prophecy paints a most encouraging picture of faithful believers in Jesus standing unmoved in the dark corners of the earth where the Papacy will fight to achieve undisputed authority. We are assured that the darker the night and the deeper the apostasy, the brighter these lights will shine.

Thus the fall of Babylon the Great begins in the United States first of all but, what is done there is but the beginning of a wave which will sweep around the entire world until every nation has followed in her train. These movements will be so rapid that, as they engulf nation after nation, and people after people, they will soon come to the last one with the exception only of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

When that time comes, then the close of probation will also come. Beyond that point of time, there will be no more day of grace for anyone. Then it is that the God of heaven will arise in vengeance and the plagues on Babylon will be poured out without measure into the cup of His indignation. "The substitution of the laws of men for the law of God, the exaltation, by merely human authority, of Sunday in the place of the Bible Sabbath, is the last act in the drama.

When this substitution becomes universal, God will reveal Himself. He will arise in His majesty to shake terribly the earth. He will come out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the world for their iniquity, and the earth shall disclose her blood and no more cover her slain." Testimonies 7:141.

It is coming, surely coming upon the earth, this one, last, vast universal bond of allegiance to the Papal power. Those alone will have the power to stand then who have received within themselves the power of the living God today. We know what is coming upon the earth and upon the people of God. It is coming. The time has been long delayed but it will come as surely as the night follows the day. When the night comes, it will be too late to be making preparation for it then. Today is the day of preparation. Let us make sure and certain work of it in the fear of the living God who alone can meet and vanquish the power of Babylon the Great.

Chapter 11

The Great, Final Test

Through our study so far of last day events, we can clearly see that the fall of Babylon the Great coincides with the setting up of the image to the beast, the event which will have been accomplished when the united churches shall have secured the authority of the civil powers to make and enforce the observance of the first day of the week as the day of worship in the place of the seventh-day Sabbath. It will be in the United States of America that these oppressive laws will first be established, but every nation on the face of the earth will quickly follow the American lead, until the people of the whole world shall have given their allegiance to Babylon the Great.

It is now time to study more closely the development of the test to which the people of God are to be subjected, beginning when Babylon's fall is complete. The question is: Does this test come with full pressure and weight upon them the moment the Sunday law is passed or does it come with progressively increasing pressure as the struggle develops toward the climax? This is a very important question, for the accurate placement of the great final test determines the position of the judgment of the living, the giving of the final seal of God, and has a great bearing on the relationship of the sealing to the latter rain.

That is to say then that if we have an incorrect understanding of the nature of the great final test, we would locate it at a wrong point of time, a mistake which will very seriously affect our understanding of the other events which will take place during the very last days. Therefore, it is important at this stage that we accurately understand the nature and scope of the great final test, and locate it at its rightful position.

There is one statement which above all others serves as the key to unlock the mystery of the order of last day events from the setting up of the image of the beast down to the close of human probation. This statement reads as follows:

"In the last great conflict of the controversy with Satan those

who are loyal to God will see every earthly support cut off. Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death." *Desire of Ages,* 121, 122.

This statement tells us very plainly that the people of God will be forbidden to buy or to sell because they have refused to break the law of God in order to obey the powers of earth. A moment's reflection will soon reveal that there is only one law which can produce a situation like this—namely, the coming Sunday law. No true Christian will refuse to obey any of the laws of the land which forbid murder, stealing, or such like. The only law the people of God would refuse to obey is the law by which men will seek to enforce Sunday observance in the place of God's expressed command to honor and keep the seventh-day Sabbath.

It is also clear that there can be no refusal of obedience to a law which does not in fact exist. Therefore, the disobedience referred to in this statement can only be manifested after the National Sunday Law is actually passed, which means that this refusal begins at the point of time when the fall of Babylon the Great takes place, which is the time when the mighty angel of *Revelation* 18 descends to lighten the whole earth with his glory, which is also the time for the outpouring of the latter rain, and the sounding forth of the loud cry. The coinciding occurrence of all these events makes this to be an extremely important landmark in the order of future events.

During the lead-up to the time when all these concurrences will take place, the people of God, even though their ministry is swelling toward the loud cry, will be still an obscure people little known to the authorities, if known by them at all. Here is a statement describing this situation in the immediate lead-up to the formation of the image of the beast, and of the decreeing of the death penalty on all those who would not bow to the Sunday law:

"I saw the nominal church and nominal Adventists, like Judas, would betray us to the Catholics to obtain their influence to come against the truth. The saints then will be an obscure people, little known to the Catholics; but the churches and nominal Adventists who know of our faith and customs (for they hated us on account of the Sabbath, for they could not refute it) will betray the saints and report them to the Catholics as those who disregard the institutions of the people; that is, that they keep the Sabbath and disregard Sunday.

"Then the Catholics bid the Protestants to go forward, and issue a decree that all who will not observe the first day of the week, instead of the seventh day, shall be slain. And the Catholics, whose numbers are large, will stand by the Protestants. The Catholics will give their power to the image of the beast. And the Protestants will

work as their mother worked before them to destroy the saints. But before their decree bring or bear fruit, the saints will be delivered by the Voice of God." *Spalding and Magan Collection,* 1.

This statement covers quite a period of time, from when the saints are an obscure people on through the time when the endowment of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power projects them into the very forefront of public interest and influence, and generates such bitter persecution culminating in the passage of the death decree.

So then, if the saints are so little known as to be an obscure people when the Sunday law is passed, then they cannot be the world-problem which men will seek to solve by issuing the decree exalting the first day of the week. Something else must be the factor which will drive men in desperation to enforce this solution on worldwide mankind. What it will be will become evident as we move along, but for now, we can rest assured that it will not be the powerful opposition of God's people which will lead men to bring the Sunday laws into force.

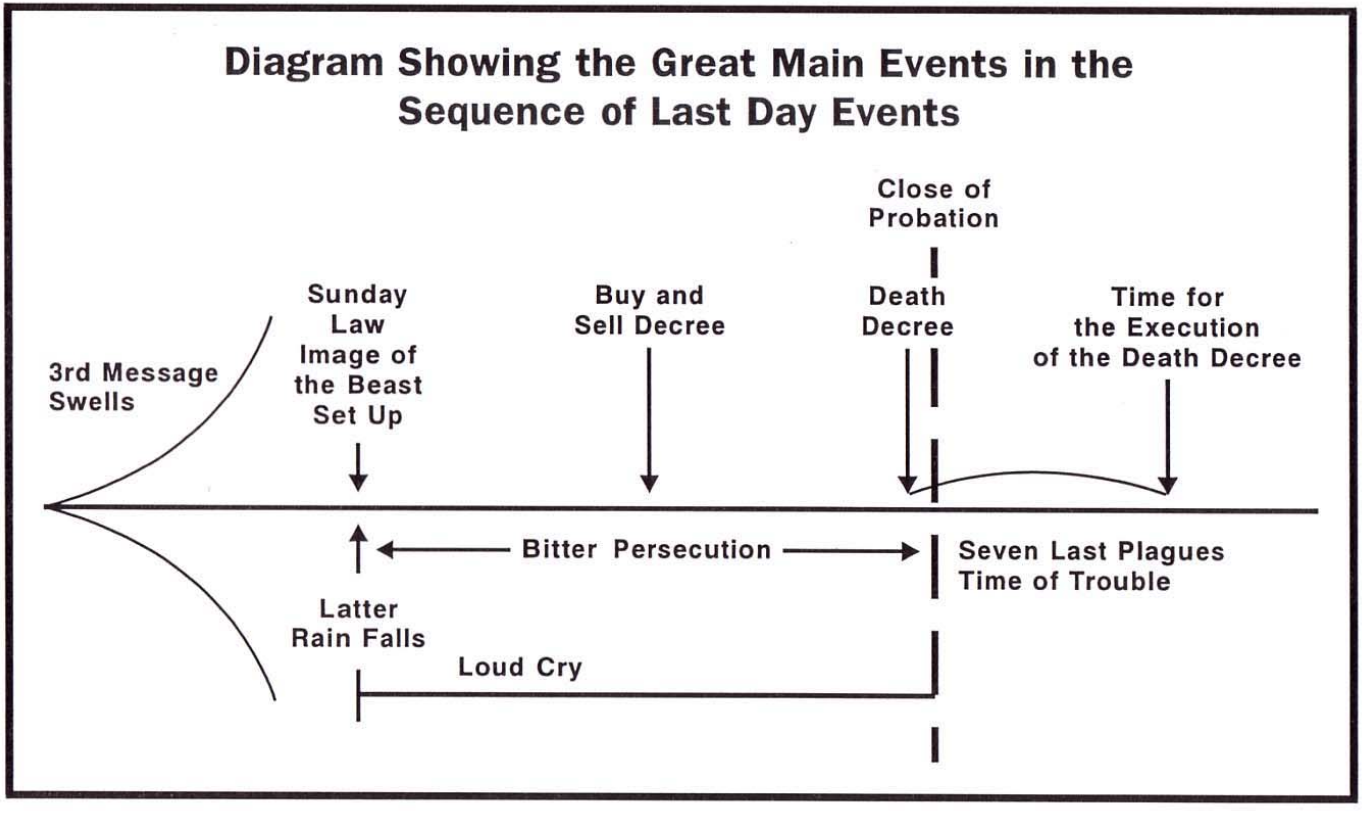
But, once the Holy Spirit begins to manifest Himself in power to the point at least where the people of God become a force threatening to dismember the grand scheme to establish the new world order, then the law will be directed against the Lord's people with ever increasing severity. First of all they will be threatened with fines and imprisonment and, when that fails to terminate their effective protest, the next step will be to pass the buy and sell decree forbidding them to do business of any kind. But this will not prove sufficient to break the loyalty of God's people, and so the world will take the ultimate measures to silence the voice of dissent and reproof. They will pass the death *decree* on all those who will refuse to honor the day instituted by man in place of the Sabbath of God.

It must be evident that all this will occupy a period of time. It will not take place in a moment.

The sequence of events then which is clearly portrayed in this particular statement from *Desire of Ages,* is that first the Sunday law is passed. Then comes the refusal on the part of God's people to obey that law, which brings at some future point of time the passing of the buy and sell *decree.* But this added threat to their survival will not succeed in breaking the sanctified wills of God's faithful ones, whose continued refusal to yield obedience to human edicts will impel the godless authorities into bringing in the death decree.

Thus the test becomes progressively stiffer and stiffer until it reaches the ultimate of its pressure in the passing of the death *decree* against the people of God. This fact is brought to view very plainly in the *The Spirit of Prophecy* 4:444, 445, which reads as follows:

"In the last conflict the Sabbath will be the special point of con-


Diagram Showing the Great Main Events in the Sequence of Last Day Events
Close of Probation
Sunday Law Image of the Beast Set Up
Buy and Sell Decree
Death Decree
Time for the Execution of the Death Decree
3rd Message Swells
Bitter Persecution
Seven Last Plagues Time of Trouble
Latter Rain Falls
Loud Cry

troversy throughout all Christendom. Secular rulers and religious leaders will unite to enforce the observance of the Sunday; and as milder measures fail, the most oppressive laws will be enacted. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church or a law of the land ought not to be tolerated, and a *decree* will finally be issued denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment, and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World, and apostate Protestantism in the new, will pursue a similar course toward those who honor the divine precepts."

It will become apparent as we plunge more deeply into the study of last day events that the people of God are not particularly tested when the Sunday law is first produced. The reason for this lies in the fact that, at that time they will be a people so few in number and of such minor significance in the affairs of this world, that the powers that be will not even be concerned about them in the passing of this law. The Sunday law will be introduced as a measure on the part of the churches to secure to them a power to replace the power which they have lost in their turning away from the living power of the living God. This we learned in a previous chapter and we suggest that you turn again and read chapters two and three in this series.

We shall also learn as we progress, that the first measure taken against the people of God will not be persecution but will be argument. When this fails, then persecution will be generated against them, and when that fails, they will be hauled up before the courts of the land. When that fails, the buy and sell *decree* will be imposed against them, and when that fails, ultimately will come the death decree.

We shall learn too as we progress that the people of God do not find themselves faced with the ultimate test at the very moment when the Sunday law is passed. The key statement already given, shows that it is the result of the refusal of the people of God to obey that law which brings the test upon them.

And as we progress, we shall learn from the evidences of the prophetic word, that the refusal of the people of God to bow to the image will not be a quiet, passive stand, but will be shining Protestantism at its radiant, vocal best—a loud cry! It will not only be a refusal on their part to conform, but it will also be an exposure under the mighty power of the Holy Spirit of the evil nature of what has been done by church and state.

We shall learn that the act of setting up of the image of the beast, having caused the complete downfall of Babylon the Great, brings the world to the point where it is ripe to receive the destructive judgments of the seven last plagues. It is the point of tremendous and ul-

timate crisis to which the world will be brought, and the Lord will not let its peoples perish without one final warning, and a calling of all of God's true children to come out of Babylon before it is forever too late.

The giving of the final warning will be an act of divine love, but it will not be so regarded by those for whose benefit it will be given. In their blindness, they will see in it only something dangerous, and they will brace themselves to resist it. Quite rightly, they will recognize that the loud cry is exposing the true nature and end-result of their propositions for solving all mankind's woes, but they will be so intoxicated by false doctrine that they will not heed the warning given in love and power.

Instead they will become filled with rage which will be directed against God's faithful people, who will be thus threatened with destruction unless they yield their faith and come into line with the rest of the world. In other words, the great final test comes upon the people of God in consequence of their protest against the forming of the image to the beast, not at the point when the image is actually formed.

This is to say then that the order of last day events in brief is as follows: The image is formed and Babylon's fall is complete. The people of God are filled with the power of the latter rain and go forth refusing to obey the laws of the land in respect to the Sunday Law and at the same time exposing the evil heart in the whole plan. This turns the wrath of the devil and his supporters on their heads, exerting tremendous pressure to have them yield their faith. This is the test which mounts in intensity till the ultimate pressure is reached under the death decree, some considerable time after the image is formed. A careful study of *Great Controversy,* 606-609, will make this fact very clear.

Let us then become firmly established on the truth that the great final test does not come at the point of time when the image is set up, but much later as a consequence of the refusal of the people of God to obey the Sunday law.

We need now to locate as closely as we can the timing of the buy and sell *decree* and the death decree in their turn. The buy and sell decree will be located somewhere well on down during the loud cry period sometime after the passing of the Sunday law, but before the imposition of the death *decree.* It is a more severe measure than fines and imprisonment, but less drastic than the death *decree.* It is in fact also a death *decree,* for a person who cannot buy food most certainly will die of starvation after some time.

One might argue that one could live off the land, but at that time,

droughts, fires, locust plagues, and other ravaging forces will have completely eaten up all foods from that source.

But we are able to pinpoint more accurately the position of the death decree in its relation to the order of last day events. It is true that many people hold the view that the death *decree* actually is made after the close of probation. There is, of course, no controversy over the fact that *the date for its execution* is placed after the close of probation, this date being the time coinciding with the fifth and the sixth plagues, both of which fall after the close of probation.

Careful study reveals that the making of the death *decree* and the imposing of its threat upon the people of God, take place just before the close of human probation. It takes place just before the judgment of the living which, in turn, takes place just before the beginning of the time of Jacob's trouble.

We turn now to a number of evidences contained in the written word which establishes the truth that the death *decree* will be legislated just before the close of probation, and imposes the great final test at that point of time.

The first statements which we shall consider confirm the truth that Satan is a deep and thorough student of the Scriptures, who understands "their true import", and therefore knows exactly when the death *decree* will be passed and what will happen when it is.

"Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and receive the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, *for he knows what truth is." Testimonies to Ministers,* 409.

This statement tells us very plainly that Satan knows what truth is. Men upon this earth are being deceived day by day, many of them all the while holding what they think to be the truth. Crises and issues spring up in the Church of God. Sides are taken and men think that they are standing stiffly for God's truth, when in fact they are definitely deceived, but Satan is not deceived because he knows what the truth is.

Satan has always been a very keen student of prophecy. When Jesus was about to appear the first time, he worked to make certain that the Jewish leaders did not understand the prophecies which so clearly foretold the nature of Christ's work and kingdom.

"Satan excited the evil passions of men, in order to fasten his rule upon them. When God's written word was given, Satan studied the prophecies of the Saviour's advent. From generation to generation he worked to blind the people to these prophecies, that they might reject Christ at His coming." *Desire of Ages,* 115.

We know only too well that the Jews were deceived by Satan as to the true nature of the first advent of Christ. But we know too that Satan, as an accurate student of these prophecies, was not. He understood those revelations. He laughed at the folly of the Jews for he knew what the truth was.

"He still appears as an angel of light, and makes it evident that he is acquainted with the Scriptures, and understands the import of what is written." *Desire of Ages,* 124.

"When God's written word was given through the Hebrew prophets, Satan studied with diligence the messages concerning the Messiah. Carefully he traced the words that outlined with unmistakable clearness Christ's work among men as a suffering sacrifice and as a conquering king. In the parchment rolls of the Old Testament Scriptures he read that the One who was to appear was to be 'brought as a lamb to the slaughter,' 'His visage … so marred more than any man, and His form more than the sons of men.' *Isaiah* 53:7; 52:14. The promised Saviour of humanity was to be 'despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief; . . . smitten of God, and afflicted;' yet He was also to exercise His mighty power in order to 'judge the poor of the people.' He was to 'save the children of the needy,' and 'break in pieces the oppressor.' *Isaiah* 53:3, 4; *Psalm* 72:4. These prophecies caused Satan to fear and tremble; yet he relinquished not his purpose to thwart, if possible, the merciful provisions of Jehovah for the redemption of the lost race. He determined to blind the eyes of the people, so far as might be possible, to the real significance of the Messianic prophecies, in order to prepare the way for the rejection of Christ at His coming." *Prophets and Kings,* 686, 687.

So then, it is clear that Satan has an accurate knowledge of the prophecies in the light of which, he instructs his angels as they plan their battle strategy for the final conflict. What he says to his own angels is not designed to deceive them, but to inform them of what in fact will happen as the struggle progresses. Therefore, even though the words reported here in the next statement are the words of Satan to his angels, they are spoken in his sure knowledge of the accuracy of Bible prophecy, and so are the truth. Thus, knowing that the death *decree* will impose the great final test upon the people of God before probation closes, he says:

"When death shall be made the penalty of violating our sabbath, then many who are now ranked with commandment keepers will come over to our side." Testimonies *to Ministers,* 473.

There will be no further changing of sides once probation has closed. Therefore any event, *decree,* enforcement, or infliction of a penalty which produces a shaking out of one side into the other must

occur before probationary time shall close. This statement clearly says that the death decree will produce a large transfer of those who professedly were serving God, into the ranks of the master deceiver. Therefore, the death *decree* which produces this shaking must be written into the Sunday laws before probation closes.

Together with this statement, we have further evidence from Testimonies 5:212, 213: " 'And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.' When this time of trouble comes, every case is decided; there is no longer probation, no longer mercy for the impenitent. The seal of the living God is upon His people. This small remnant, unable to defend themselves in the deadly conflict with the powers of earth that are marshaled by the dragon host, make God their defense. The *decree* has been passed by the highest earthly authority that they shall worship the beast and receive his mark under pain of persecution and death."

This statement describes the conditions which will exist when a certain point of time has been reached—the moment when Michael, our great High Priest, has ended His ministry in the heavenly sanctuary, probationary time has ended, and the great time of trouble has commenced.

When this time of trouble comes,

1. every case is decided;
2. there is no longer probation;
3. no longer mercy for the impenitent;
4. the small remnant make God their defense;
5. the *decree* has been passed by the highest authority that they shall worship the beast and *receive* his mark under pain of persecution and death. In other words the death *decree* has been passed when this time of trouble comes.

There is an objection which is raised against the use of this statement in this way which objection declares that the time of Jacob's trouble begins at some point after the close of Christ's intercession in heaven. But this objection is met and answered by the following statement:

"When Christ shall cease his work as Mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin." *Patriarchs and Prophets,* 201.

Further evidence that the death *decree* will be made before the close of probation is found in the following statement:

"It is in a crisis that character is revealed. When the earnest voice proclaimed at midnight, 'Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out

to meet Him,' and the sleeping virgins were roused from their slumbers, it was seen who had made preparation for the event. Both parties were taken unawares; but one was prepared for the emergency, and the other was found without preparation. So now, a sudden and unlooked-for calamity, something that brings the soul face to face with death, will show whether there is any real faith in the promises of God. It will show whether the soul is sustained by grace. The great final test comes at the close of human probation, when it will be too late for the soul's need to be supplied." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 412.

Unquestionably, the great final test is the test imposed on the people of the Lord by the pressure of the death decree. The statement itself indicates that, as it speaks of the soul being brought "face to face with death."

When does this great final test come?

It comes at that point when the judgment is opened for the living and they will have no further opportunity therefore to change their position. Prior to this point, probation has closed for each individual at death, but such individual closings are not the close of human probation. That time comes suddenly upon all who are still living. And it is at that point of time that the death decree, as the great final test, comes upon all. Each makes his final decision for right or for wrong, and the judgment of the living immediately follows, in which the decision made is forever sealed in each individual either for life or death. Jesus removes the sin from the sanctuary and then steps out to put on the garments of vengeance and come to the earth for the second advent.

Thus this statement plainly teaches that the death *decree* comes before Jesus leaves the sanctuary in heaven.

Another clear evidence that the great final test of the death decree comes before the close of human probation is given to us in the book *Great Controversy,* 615, 616.

"As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. The same argument eighteen hundred years ago was brought against Christ by the 'rulers of the people.' 'It is expedient for us,' said the wily Caiaphas, 'that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' John 11:50. This argument will appear

conclusive; and a *decree* will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. Romanism in the Old World and apostate Protestantism in the New will pursue a similar course toward those who honor all the divine precepts." *Great Controversy,* 615, 616.

This statement begins with events which will transpire when the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy, and religious and secular leaders have combined to enforce Sunday observance. That is when the image of the beast has been formed. The refusal of God's minority to comply generates fearful persecution which reaches its most extreme level in the proclamation that the Sabbath-keepers have been deprived of all protection from the rage of the masses who are given "liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death". This is the structure of the terrible death decree.

Nowthen,whatimmediatelyfollows?

"The people of God will *then* be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble. Thus saith the Lord: We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of *peace.* ... All faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.' *Jeremiah* 30:5-7." *Great Controversy,* 616.

So the sequence is that the death *decree* is followed by the commencement of Jacob's trouble, which means that the death *decree* comes before the close of probation, for, as we read in *Patriarchs and Prophets,* 201:

"When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of [Jacob's] trouble will begin."

There is at least one more statement which adds its weight to the truth that the death *decree* will be passed before probation closes. It reads as follows:

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . [Rev. 13:11-17 quoted.]...

''This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will *receive* the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast." SDA *Bible Commentary* 7:976.

To adequately understand this statement requires that we see the full development of the image of the beast. We must fully grasp the truth that the test imposed on God's people is one which increases in severity from a relatively mild beginning to a peak of maximum pressure. The test will not be complete until the image of the beast has exhausted all his resources for bringing the people of God in particular, and the world in general, to give their full support to the confederacy of evil.

To clarify what constitutes the full range of the test of the image, Sister White firstly quoted *Revelation* 13:11-17. Then she wrote, "This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed."

So then, *Revelation* 13:11-17 contains a description of the elements of the tests emanating from the image of the beast. The first testing comes through the signs and wonders performed by miracle working demons, who come with the capacity to deceive all but the very elect.

Next, the image itself is formed, and imposes the buy and sell decree, and in turn, the death *decree.*

All of this and nothing less, adds up to the complete test of the image of the beast, which the people of God must endure before they can receive the seal of the living God, and then be plunged into the time of Jacob's trouble.

Those who will pass this test "by which their eternal destiny will be decided", must overcome at every point. One victory will not suffice for all the rest. Thus many of those who will number themselves among God's people when the protest against the Sunday Law begins to go forth, will fall away when the first pressures are brought to bear upon them. For them, that will be the end of the testing process, for, if they cannot endure the milder test, they certainly will not be able to withstand the tougher ones. They have been eliminated from the Lord's army, and any further testing is pointless.

But those who pass the first test at the lowest levels, do not then at that point, have their eternal destinies decided. As they come up to each point and overcome, they find themselves facing a tougher test at every higher level of attainment until the full and final pressure of the image beast is brought to bear upon them in the death decree, provided they do not fall at some level on the way up.

The most extensive falling away will be as they approach the ending of this testing period and the storm of persecution is about to burst upon them as it is written:

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of

the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbathkeepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." *Great Controversy,* 608.

So then, according to these statements, the full pressure of the image of the beast including the death decree, will be brought to bear upon the people of the Lord before they are sealed, which means that the death decree is made before probation closes.

This series of statements then makes it very clear that the death decree will be passed just before the close of probation. This must not be confused with the time for its execution. This will be after the close of probation and the date for its execution must be distinguished from the date when it is passed and when its full weight and threat as the great final test is felt by the people of God.

It is indeed vital to our eternal life to understand that when that final test does come, it will be too late to have the lack in our experience supplied. That work is for today. May it be then that every one of our readers will make the most thorough, daily preparation for that event so that not one will be unprepared for it.

Chapter 12

The Timing of the Judgment of the Living

It was stated back in chapter eleven that one's understanding of the timing of the death *decree* must affect one's understanding of the timing of the judgment of the living. The time has now come to determine when the judgment of the living will come to those who are living upon the earth.

Generally speaking, there are two positions held today in regard to this question. There is the position advanced by some that the judgment of the living commences with the setting up of the image of the beast and that only those who have passed its searching scrutiny can receive the latter rain and go forth and give the loud cry. Then, as the message goes forward and souls are gathered in from Babylon, they each in turn are judged, sealed, and filled with the Holy Spirit in latter rain power to join in the giving of the loud cry. This procedure continues until the last person is judged and sealed and the work is completed with the close of human probation. This is one position as held today.

The other position and the one held by this author, is that the judgment of the living comes upon the people of God at the end of the loud cry period when the mission of the gospel is completed. This time will come suddenly upon all, and not one by one as the other position seeks to prove.

There are some who may ask what it matters anyway which position we hold so long as we are ready day by day. But it is not so simple as all that. If it were, then why did the Lord go to so much trouble to give us the sure Word of prophecy if we did not really need it? That Word was given for us to study and to understand; to know when these things would come to pass in their correct order, so that we can rightly relate ourselves to the events of the last days and be found in the very place and position in which the Lord would have us.

Think of the fatal delusion which would fasten upon the mind of one who believed that the reception of the latter rain could only come after he had been judged and sealed with the seal of the living God! It would mean that the very moment in which he received the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, (although it would never be possible for one to receive it who was so erroneously incorrect in his understanding of the truth), he must conclude that he had been judged and sealed and that therefore he was now eternally secure and had the guarantee of his place in heaven.

But the reception of the latter rain cannot indicate that the work in the individual is completed so that he is eternally sealed, for it is the latter rain which brings to completion the work of God's grace in the soul. Note how clearly this is taught in the following quotation:

" 'Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.' 'He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.' In the East the former rain falls at the sowing time. It is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, the tender shoot springs up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit. As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection.

"There is to be 'first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear.' There must be a constant development of Christian virtue, a constant advancement in Christian experience. This we should seek with intensity of desire, that we may adorn the doctrine of Christ our Saviour." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 506.

So then, it is by the power of the latter rain at work over a period of time that the living saints are brought to a state of readiness to pass the judgment which will require spotless perfection of character.

"We are now living in the great day of atonement. In the typical service, while the high priest was making the atonement for Israel,

all were required to afflict their souls by repentance of sin and humiliation before the Lord, lest they be cut off from among the people. In like manner, all who would have their names retained in the book of life should now, in the few remaining days of their probation, afflict their souls before God by sorrow for sin and true repentance. There must be deep, faithful searching of heart. The light, frivolous spirit indulged by so many professed Christians must be put away. There is earnest warfare before all who would subdue the evil tendencies that strive for the mastery. The work of preparation is an individual work. We are not saved in groups. The purity and devotion of one will not offset the want of these qualities in another. Though all nations are to pass in judgment before God, yet He will examine the case of each individual with as close and searching scrutiny as if there were not another being upon the earth. Everyone must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." *Great Controversy,* 489, 490.

The task of lifting a soul from the depths of sinful degradation, to the heights of spotless purity fit for life in the presence of holy heavenly beings, can only be accomplished by God and Christ through the ministry of the Holy Spirit. The work is commenced by the former rain under which ministry it is brought to a certain level short of completeness. The work of finishing the perfecting of the image of God in the saints is then committed to the latter rain. But it is not done in a moment. Instead, it requires a period of time. How long that will be we cannot tell at the present moment, but whatever it will be, it will be adequate for those who diligently avail themselves of the grace thus made available to them. It will be a wonderful experience of growing up into the righteousness of Christ.

''As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, 'the time of Jacob's trouble,' they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel." Testimonies 1:353.

It follows from all this that, if the judgment of the living were to take place before the latter rain falls, then it would have to be an examination of guests in whom the work of God's grace had not been completed in the soul, the moral image of God had not been perfected in the character, and they had not been wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

To confirm this, consider again part of the previously quoted passage from Testimonies *to Ministers,* 506:

"As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate, and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ."

I also recommend a study of *Facing the Judgment,* by F. T. Wright.

So those on whom the latter rain does not fall will not reach this standard no matter how earnestly and diligently they may search for it, for no one else can execute the work of the Holy Spirit but the Holy Spirit. Therefore, the judgment would, as a certain consequence, find all such unfit for translation, and would declare them to be eternally lost.

I trust that my readers understand the difference between those who pass through the grave on their way to heaven, and thus are not wholly transformed into the image of Christ by the latter rain, and those who are alive when the judgment of the living takes place in preparation for which they have been blessed with the fullness of the latter rain by which they have been wholly transformed into the image of Christ!

What is the difference?

The difference is that those who shall be alive on the earth after probation has closed, must "stand in the sight of a holy God without a Mediator". *Great Controversy,* 425. This means that the ministry of Christ in the heavenly sanctuary is terminated. Therefore, any sin still unconfessed and unforsaken, even to the slightest speck, has to

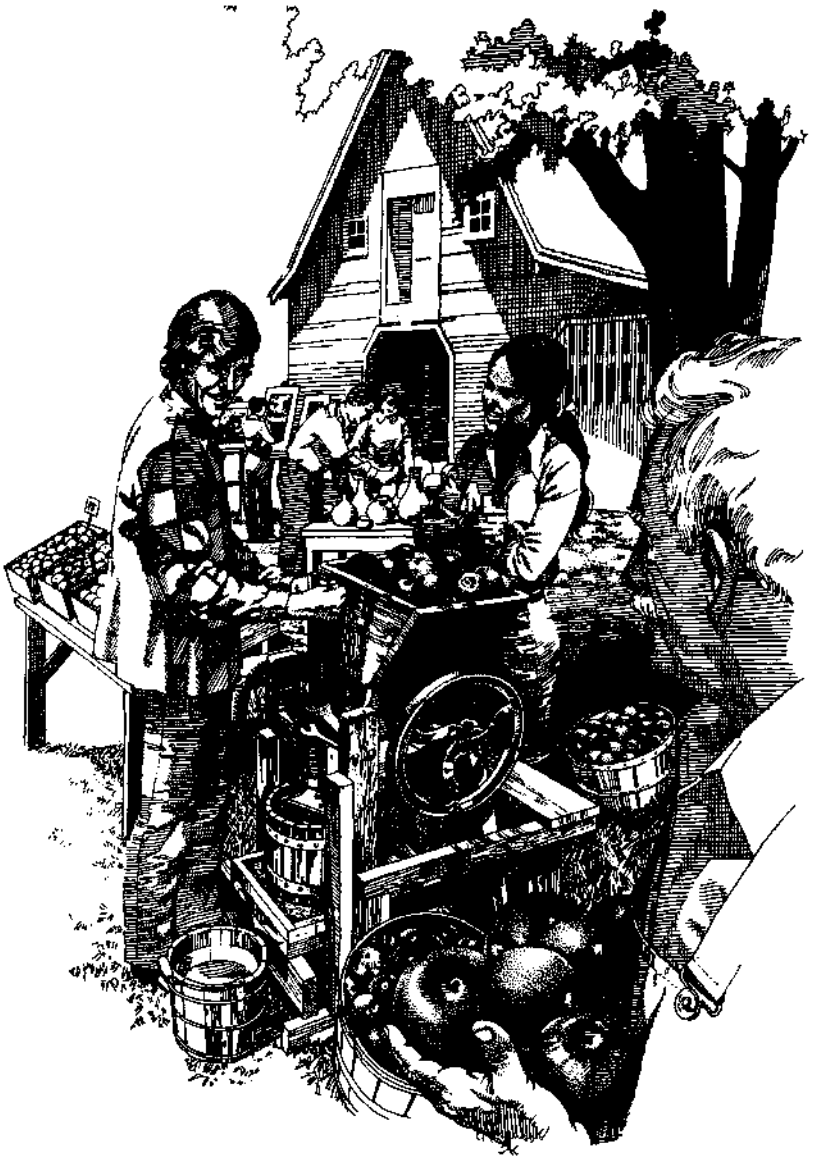
OPPOSITE PAGE: Harvest time, whether it be for fruit, vegetables, or grain, is a happy time of each year. A good and plentiful harvest assures all that there will be ample food supplies throughout the winter. For the produce to be brought to readiness for gathering, the rains must have fallen at the right time and in the right quantity.

In middle eastern lands, the farmers depend on the former rain to germinate the grain and carry the growth forward to a certain point. They then wait for the latter rain to complete the work of preparing the grain for the sickle. Without the latter rain no barley or wheat would ever be ready for the harvest.

In the work of spiritual preparation for the coming of Christ, the same principle of operation is valid. The latter rain of the Holy Spirit, because it, and it alone, completes the work of God's grace in the soul, must precede the judgment of the living, which will admit only those into the Saviour's harvest in whom the work of God's grace has been completed. If the latter rain were to come after the judgment of the living and the sealing, it would be too late to prepare anyone for the judgment and all those then living would be lost.

remain in the person forever, for, the sanctuary being closed, there is no longer any means of separating it from him. To admit him to heaven would be to re-establish sin there, a step which will never be permitted. Therefore, all must be spotless at that time or perish. This truth is clearly stated in the following paragraph:

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a



holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of *Revelation* 14." *Great Controversy,* 425.

So then, the mighty ministry of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power prepares God's people to meet and pass the exacting scrutiny of the judgment of the living. That being so, the whole duration of the latter rain must be located *before* and not after the judgment of the living.

Because the vital ministry of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power cannot fulfill its work without the intelligent co-operation of the believer, it is essential that the child of God be conversant with what the Spirit is doing for him at every stage in his growth toward ultimate perfection.

We turn now to a study of other prophetic evidences which so clearly show that the judgment of the living comes suddenly upon all at the end of the loud cry period and not at the beginning of it.

The very first fact which we need to have fixed very clearly in our understanding is that not one of us can receive the final seal of God until after we have passed the great final test. In other words, there comes to us first of all the great final test and we either pass it or we fail under its pressure. If we successfully withstand it in the power of the living God, then we receive the seal of God and are made eternally secure from the tempter's devices. I will refer you back now to a statement which was quoted in the last chapter to reveal that the judgment of the living followed the period of time during which the latter rain falls. We will now see that it also teaches us that the seal of the living God will be placed only on those who have passed the great final test, and have been accepted in the judgment as fit to enter heaven. Here is the statement once more:

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. '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.

‘‘ 'And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

" 'And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men.

" 'And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

" 'And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

" 'And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

" 'And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.' *Revelation* 13:11-17.

"This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing His law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:976

After the quotation from *Revelation* 13:11-17, the very next words say, "This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed." Obviously then the test referred to by the word, "this", can only be the test as outlined in the quotation given immediately before. Look again at that quotation and it will be seen that it outlines the following steps in the growing severity of the test to its final and full pressure.

First of all there is the revelation of the miracle working power of Spiritualism. This will test the people of God and no doubt there will be those who are among the children of the Lord, who will be deceived thereby. Then there is the making of the image itself. As we learned previously, the people of God will refuse to obey the law imposed by this image, and this will bring the buy and sell *decree* listed in these verses. Then will ultimately come the death decree upon those who refuse to comply. It will be only when this point is reached that the fullness of the test imposed by the image beast will be felt. When it is first formed, only milder measures are employed in the determination to coerce obedience. It is only as these recourses fail to achieve their objectives, that the pressures are increased to the point where the uttermost limits have been reached in the imposition of the death decree.

Having outlined all this in these verses, it then says, "This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed."

Therefore, all that is listed there must be included in that test, not only a part of it.

Inasmuch then as we have learned from the previous chapter that the death *decree* is imposed with all its awful weight upon the people of God just before the close of human probation, and inasmuch as we learn here that the death decree is included in the great final test, and inasmuch as we have learned that we must pass this test before we are sealed, then it follows that the seal of God will come upon the people of God just before the commencement of Jacob's trouble, which is quite a distance of time from when the image is first set up.

Now then, none of us can receive the final seal of the living God until we have been judged and had our sins blotted from the heavenly sanctuary. Therefore, if only those who have passed this test successfully can receive the seal of God, then only those who have passed the same test can pass the judgment of the living successfully. If the receiving of the seal is contingent on the passing of that test, then the passing of the judgment must be equally contingent on it. This can only mean that the judgment of the living will not commence until the final test has come upon the world. We now know perfectly well that "the great final test comes at the close of human probation." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 412.

This means that it comes at the end of the latter rain period when the mission of the gospel is completed, and that therefore the judgment of the living must also come at the end of the latter rain period, and most certainly not at the beginning of it as some believe.

Let us now consider a further statement which confirms the truths being taught here:

"When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received 'the latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' Then Jesus ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands, and with a loud voice says, 'It is done;' and all the angelic host lay off their crowns as He makes the solemn announcement: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still:' *Revelation* 22:11. Every case has been decided for life or death. Christ has made the atonement for His people and blotted out their sins. The number of His subjects is made up; 'the kingdom and dominion,

and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven,' is about to be given to the heirs of salvation, and Jesus is to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords." *Great Controversy,* 613, 614.

This statement is very helpful in that it assembles in their order the events which will happen around the close of probation. A certain angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done. What is his work? It is stated in the very same sentence! It is the work of bringing the final test of the Sabbath truth to the world, so that the destiny of each class is then eternally established. Those who have proved themselves loyal in the face of that test, receive the seal of the living God, while the remainder obviously have the mark of the beast, in each case, forever.

In the very moment when this work is accomplished, Jesus ceases His work in the sanctuary above, making the solemn announcement which can only be made once the judgment is completed, that all are to remain forever as they then are. The unrighteous are to remain unrighteous, and the righteous are to remain righteous. Nevermore thereafter, can there be any changing of sides. The destiny of each class is forever fixed.

This alignment of humanity into two fixed parties is achieved by the great final test which comes simultaneously upon the entire world, compelling all men to make their final decisions for or against God, and immediately thereafter the work in the sanctuary comes to its end. This establishes the fact that once the final test comes, which all must have before they are sealed, then immediately follows the judgment of the living, the work in the sanctuary is finished, and there is no more work of grace for the soul. And all this proves that the judgment of the living is not followed by the latter rain but by the time of Jacob's trouble only. The latter rain must and does come before the judgment of the living.

The evidence considered so far is more than sufficient to establish the truth that the latter rain precedes the judgment of the living. In other words, no part of either runs concurrent with any part of the other.

But there is much more evidence contained in the Word of Truth to strengthen this point and to enlarge our understanding of it. Let us turn now to the parable of the wheat and the tares.

"Another parable He put forth to them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field;

" 'but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way.

" 'But when the corn had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared.

" 'So the servants of the owner came and said to him, "Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?"

" 'He said to them, "An enemy has done this." The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?"

" 'But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them.

" ' "Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, 'First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn.' " ' " *Matthew* 13:24-30.

The specific point of evidence supplied by this parable in respect to the matter under consideration is that the wheat and the tares are to grow together until the harvest. At that point they are separated so that thereafter, they walk together no more at all. Just how this point of evidence does serve to support the position that the latter rain comes before and not at all after the judgment of the living, can be made clear only as we understand what the symbols of the parable mean.

Jesus Himself explained what He meant by the parable. The sower He declared to be the Son of Man; the field is the world; the good seed or the wheat which springs forth from it, are the children of God; the tares are the children of the wicked one, and the evil sower is the devil.

There now arises the problem of defining what the "world" is in the parable. The problem is solved by the following statement:

" 'The field,' Christ said, 'is the world.' But we must understand this as signifying the church of Christ in the world. The parable is a description of that which pertains to the kingdom of God, His work of salvation of men; and this work is accomplished through the church. True, the Holy Spirit has gone out into all the world; everywhere it is moving upon the hearts of men; but it is in the church that we are to grow and ripen for the garner of God." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 70.

The tares are not to be confused with the thorn and the thistle. These are obviously not wheat, whereas the tare is so like the wheat that none but the expert can pick them apart until the harvest, and then it is clearly seen as to which is which.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The unproductive curse of the wheat fields is the tare, which so closely resembles the good grain, that, in its early stages especially, it is virtually impossible to distinguish from the wheat. But with the coming of the latter rain, both grow rapidly to full maturity, and then it can be readily seen which is the valuable plant, and which is the cumberer of the ground.



Now, inasmuch as both must grow together in the church until the harvest, and inasmuch as this is the point in which we are most interested, it follows that we must now ascertain what the harvest is. In explaining the parable Jesus said, "the harvest is the end of the age [world; *K.J.V.]." Matthew* 13:39. In a very definite sense this parable finds a general application to the second coming of Christ when the tares and the wheat are forever separated, but it must be understood that the end of probationary time is, to all intents and purposes, the end of the world.

Again this truth is plainly taught in the Inspired Word. Thus we read: "The tares and the wheat are to grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 72.

"The looker-on may discern no difference; but there is One who said that the tares were not to be plucked up by human hands lest the wheat be rooted up also. Let both grow together until the harvest. Then the Lord sends forth His reapers to gather out the tares and bind them in bundles to burn, while the wheat is gathered into the heavenly garner. The time of the judgment is a most solemn period, when the Lord gathers His own from among the tares. Those who have been members of the same family are separated. A mark is placed upon the righteous." Testimonies *to Ministers,* 234.

Both of these statements show that the end of probationary time, the judgment of the living, is the harvest when the Lord separates the wheat from the tares. Until that time they are both together, but beyond that time they are forever separated.

Those who argue that the latter rain comes only on those who have been judged, argue that probationary time has closed for some when the image of the beast is first made and the latter rain begins, so that, during the loud cry period, the Church which gives that final warning is a pure Church composed of wheat only. And if it could be proved and shown that during the loud cry period there will be only wheat in the Church, then they would have an argument, but the fact is that the Word of God shows the opposite to be true.

In other words, inasmuch as the wheat and the tares grow together only until the harvest; and inasmuch as the harvest is the judgment of the living at the end of probationary time; then it follows that when we find the wheat and the tares no longer co-mingled, then we know that the judgment has taken place. If we find then that the wheat and the tares are not still co-mingled during the loud cry period, then we can know that the judgment of the living has commenced, but if they are still so mingled, then we can know with equal certainty that it has not yet commenced. We shall find from the Word

of God that during the loud cry period the wheat and the tares are still growing together toward the harvest. Let us read it.

In the marriage parable, is pictured the giving of the very last call to mankind. After the second call had been rejected by the bidden ones, then the King said to His servants, " 'The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy.

‘‘ Therefore go into the highways, and as many as you find, invite to the wedding.'

"So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests. "*Matthew* 22:8-10.

The main point of this parable is that the marriage is delayed because the people of God had refused to come as the guests. The very moment that the guests are supplied, then the work is done, the marriage may proceed to its consummation, and the way made fully clear for the immediate return of Jesus. This parable tells how and when the work will finally succeed in finding the guests to fill the wedding and we know that will be the work of the loud cry or the final warning. That is the last evangelistic work in the world, and it will be successful in filling the wedding with guests.

But does this parable teach that only wheat is brought into the Church during this final gathering of guests to the wedding? It most certainly does not! Rather, it most distinctly says that both good and bad come in to present themselves at the judgment.

"So those servants went out into the highways and gathered together all whom they found, both bad and good. And the wedding hall was filled with guests." *Matthew* 22:10.

These, both the bad and the good, are gathered into the Church—the loud cry Church, where they grow together until the judgment, the coming in of the King, when at last they are forever separated, the one from the other.

The coming in of the king to examine the guests is the investigative judgment of the living.

"By the king's examination of the guests at the feast is represented a work of judgment. The guests at the gospel feast are those who profess to serve God, those whose names are written in the book of life. But not all who profess to be Christians are true disciples. Before the final reward is given, it must be decided who are fitted to share the inheritance of the righteous. This decision must be made prior to the second coming of Christ in the clouds of heaven; for when He comes, His reward is with Him, 'to give every man according as his work shall be.' *Revelation* 22:12. Before His coming, then, the character of every man's work will have been determined,

and to every one of Christ's followers the reward will have been apportioned according to his deeds.

"It is while men are still dwelling upon the earth that the work of investigative judgment takes place in the courts of heaven. The lives of all His professed followers pass in review before God. All are examined according to the record of the books of heaven, and according to his deeds the destiny of each is forever fixed." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 310.

So then, the coming in of the king to examine the guests is the investigative judgment.

Now then, when does this coming in take place? Will it be during the gathering of the guests? Do the two events coincide somewhat? Does the king arrive before the guests are assembled in anticipation of their being gathered for their examination?

The answer in each case is "No!".

First the guests are found and gathered and when the furnishing of the wedding with guests is completed, then and only then does the king come in to examine the guests. Once more the evidence shows that the judgment of the living takes place at the end and not the beginning of the latter rain period.

Another statement which shows that the wheat and tares are still co-mingled during the loud cry period reads as follows:

"There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world." Testimonies *to Ministers,* 300.

What class of people have the disposition to control and dictate in the Church of God? Are these wheat or tares? They are tares!

And where will they still be found when the *Revelation* 18 angel joins the third angel in the last message to be given to the world? They will be right there among the wheat, right in the Church trying to dictate and control the work of God. In other words, right there in the loud cry Church there will still be wheat and tares co-mingled among those who are giving the message, that is, among the servants who go out and gather the guests to the wedding.

Thus we learn that those who are brought in to the Church during the loud cry period and those who give the message and gather in the rest, are both composed of wheat and tares. This is not to say that the tares will receive the infilling of the latter rain and do a mighty work for God, but it is to say that they will still be growing together with the wheat during this period and will continue to do so until the judgment separates them from the wheat at the end.

One has but to compare the role of the latter rain in nature with

the role of the latter rain in the work of grace to see that it is never at the beginning but only at the end of the latter rain that the final separation takes place between the wheat and the tares. The latter rain does something for the tares as well as for the wheat. Just as it brings to full maturity the goodness in the wheat, so likewise the same rain brings to full maturity the nature of the tares. It must never be forgotten that during the period of early growth, it is not easy to distinguish the difference between the tare and the wheat. They are so much alike.

"The tares closely resembled the wheat while the blades were green; but when the field was white for the harvest, the worthless weeds bore no likeness to the wheat that bowed under the weight of its full, ripe heads. Sinners who make a pretension of piety mingle for a time with the true followers of Christ, and the semblance of Christianity is calculated to deceive many." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 74.

Thus neither the wheat nor the tares come to full maturity until the latter rain has done its work. In nature the early rain germinates the seed and causes it to grow, but it is the latter rain which fills out the heads of grain and ripens them for the sickle. And it is the same latter rain which causes the tares to grow to full maturity also. One may ask how this could be true in the spiritual realm, until one recognizes the fact that where the gospel appears at its best, there sin appears at its worst. At the cross of Calvary where righteousness appeared at its very best, there the malignancy of sin appeared at its very worst. So when the latter rain is falling, it imposes a test and a call upon those who are not in tune with it, and they are forced to make a stand against it. The more powerful the latter rain becomes, the more this resistance is developed, until all pretense is swept away and the real character of the individual is seen for what it is.

So in the very nature of the case the wheat and the tares must grow together until the harvest which is the end of probationary time, the commencement of the judgment of the living. Then they are forever separated. And this is but to say that the judgment of the living could never come elsewhere but at the end of the latter rain. No farmer is ever going to go out and harvest his crop the moment the latter rain begins. He will wait till the latter rain has done its needed work and the sunshine of the summer heat has hardened the grain ready for the sickle. Then and then only, at the end of the latter rain, does he harvest the grain. So too it will be in the heavenly garner.

Thus we have seen evidence upon evidence so far showing that the judgment of the living will come at the end and not at the beginning of the latter rain period. In our next chapter we shall explore still further evidence to consolidate our thinking and knowledge on this vital question.

Chapter 13

Two Entirely Different Separations

In the last chapter we examined some of the evidences in the Prophetic Word which so clearly show that the latter rain comes before, and not after the judgment of the living commences. Because this point is so important, we will not leave it until we have examined still further evidence to show the same truth.

"When the mission of the gospel is completed, the Judgment will accomplish the work of separation. .. .

"When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil and the destiny of each class is forever fixed." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 122, 123.

This statement is of particular interest to us, because of its close connection in thought with the statements considered in the last chapter in regard to the wheat and the tares. This is concerned with the same thing exactly but under a different symbolism. The symbolism here is that of good and bad fish, whereas in the other it was wheat and tares.

The teaching of Christ under consideration here is another parable, that of the fishing net. Jesus said, "Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a dragnet that was cast into the sea and gathered some of every kind,

"which, when it was full, they drew to shore; and they sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but threw the bad away.

"So it will be at the end of the age. The angels will come forth, separate the wicked from among the just,

"and cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth." *Matthew* 13:47-50.

"The casting of the net is the preaching of the gospel. This gathers both good and evil into the church." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 122.

Just as the wheat and the tares grow together in the Church until the harvest, so the gospel net gathers both the good and the bad fish into the Church until the harvest, when the two are forever sepa-

rated. Thus we see that between the parable of the wheat and the tares, and the fishing net, there is a very close connection in thought and that they are both teaching the same truth in regard to the final separation.

This parable is even more specific than the parable of the wheat and tares when it comes to spelling out the relationship between the judgment of the living and the loud cry.

The main thought is contained in these words:

"when the mission of the gospel is completed, the Judgment will accomplish the work of separation. . . . When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 122,123.

Let us ask some questions, the answers to which will be found in these sentences.

For how long do the good and the bad fish remain together in the ship which is the Church?

They remain there until the mission of the gospel is completed, and then they are forever separated from each other.

When will the mission of the gospel be completed? Will it be at the beginning or at the end of the latter rain period?

If the mission of the gospel were to be completed at the beginning of the latter rain period, then what would be the need for the latter rain and loud cry? It is the latter rain which finishes the work of God's grace not only in the soul of each living believer, but also in the work of calling the true children of God into the full knowledge of the truth in those last days. Therefore, it is when the latter rain has come to its end and only then that the mission of the gospel will have been completed.

What comes at this point to accomplish the work of final separation?

It is the judgment which comes at this point of time. This can only be the judgment of the living which is intended here, for the judgment for the dead has been going forward ever since 1844. One could hardly expect to find a statement which more clearly states that the latter rain comes before the judgment of the living than this one. It specifically and directly says it, and leaves no argument in the matter.

In *Early Writings,* 269-272, is described the shaking, and it is as plainly told there as it can be that this shaking precedes the latter rain. There are many who immediately assume that this shaking is the dividing of the wheat from the tares, the wise from the foolish virgins, the good from the bad fish, and is the same shaking as the one already studied in this and the previous chapter of this series.

Now to make this assumption, and to draw this conclusion, is to make a very serious mistake. It is to fail to understand the difference between things which are different and yet are called by the same name. While it is very true that there is a shaking or separation before the loud cry begins, it is to be understood that this is not the same shaking as comes at the end of the loud cry period at the judgment of the living. They are two very different shakings at two very different points of time, caused by different factors altogether. It is important that these differences be understood or we shall find ourselves making wrong conclusions which will lead to our taking very wrong positions in the final and finishing conflict.

Before discussing these different shakings so as to make this point clear, let us first establish the principle of Bible interpretation wherein there are often two things called by the same name yet they are in all other respects different. As Bible students we must learn to understand this difference although it is never explicitly pointed out in the Scriptures.

The simplest and clearest example of this is found in the two advents of Jesus Christ, the first of which is now in the past and the second is yet to be. Both of these events are called, "the advent of Christ", because that is exactly what each is. No other words better describe the event in each case. But there the similarity ends, for in practically every other respect they are entirely different.

Let us compare these differences.

In the first advent, He came in complete obscurity, but in the second He will come in all the brilliant glory of His Father and all the holy angels and every eye shall see Him. There will be nothing obscure about that advent.

In the first He came in poverty, but in the second He will appear with all the riches of His Father.

In the first He came as a babe, but in the second He will be at full maturity and stature.

In the first He came tabernacled in mortal, sinful flesh, but in the second He comes to minister in glorious immortality.

So we might go on and compile quite a list of differences, but this is sufficient to make the point intended. Now then, while both of these advents were described in the Old Testament, never once are we told therein that there were to be two of them. Always it simply spoke of the advent of Christ as the Messiah, or the Saviour, or the King, without specifying which advent was being described. The student of the sacred word is left to distinguish which appearing was the subject of the prophecy and to apply the information accordingly.

What would happen no doubt, was that the Lord showed to a prophet a vision of the first advent of Christ, and the prophet would

simply write down what was shown to him. Another prophet would be given a view of the second advent of Christ, and he would write down what was shown him, but in neither case were they specifically shown that one was the first or the second. It was left with the careful, prayerful student of the Word of God to understand and to know this under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Now for you and for me today, this matter of discerning the difference between the two advents of Christ presents no problem. Automatically, without thinking, we apply the appropriate texts in their right places because we understand that there are to be two advents of Christ at least, and we understand the differences between these two. For instance, when we read this text, we immediately apply it to the second advent, and correctly so: "Our God shall come, and shall not keep silent; a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous all around Him.

"He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people," *Psalms* 50:3, 4, These words certainly do not apply to the first advent of Christ. We know that it would not fit there. Proof that they apply to the second advent and not to the first, is provided in the following statement:

"When the divine Presence was manifested upon Sinai, the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire in the sight of all Israel. But when Christ shall come in glory with His holy angels the whole earth shall be ablaze with the terrible light of His presence. 'Our God shall come, and shall not keep silence: a fire shall devour before Him, and it shall be very tempestuous round about Him. He shall call to the heavens from above, and to the earth, that He may judge His people.' *Psalms* 50:3, 4. A fiery stream shall issue and come forth from before Him, which shall cause the elements to melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein shall be burned up. The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel.' *2 Thessalonians* 1:7, 8." *Patriarchs and Prophets,* 339, 340.

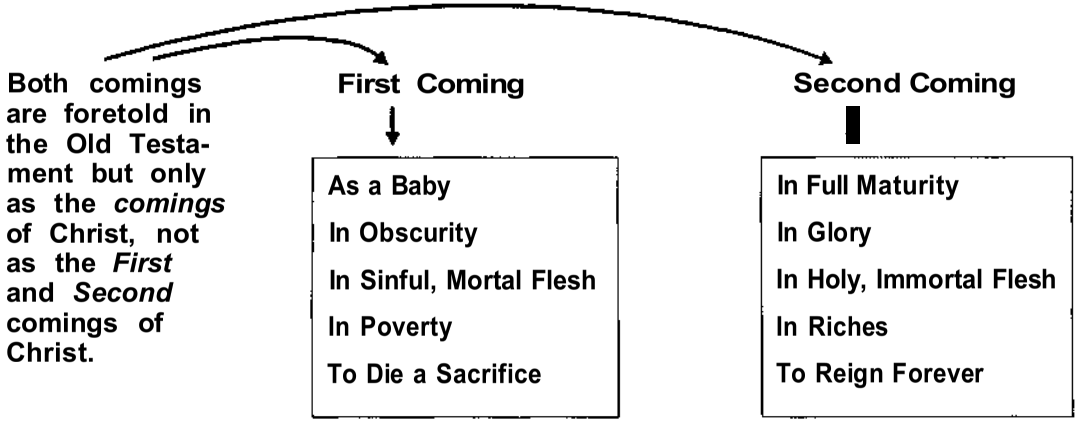
But when we read *Isaiah* 53:4, 5, "Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows: yet we esteemed Him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted.

"But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement for our peace was upon Him, and by His stripes we are healed," we know we are reading about the first advent of Christ.

While this is to us no problem, it was certainly not so easy for the people who lived in expectation of the advent of the Messiah at His first appearance. In fact, they did not see and understand that there

THE TWO COMINGS OF CHRIST

confirm the principle that in the Scriptures, there are often two things called by the same name but are in all other respects different from each other. As Bible students we must learn to distinguish these differences.



Because the Jews failed to understand this principle, they looked for Christ to come at His *First* coming as He was due to come at the *Second* coming. Because He did not come according to how their study of the Scriptures led them to expect Him, they rejected Him at the cost of their eternal lives.

were to be two advents of Christ, but saw and understood that there would be only one when they should have understood two. There can be no blame on the part of God for their misunderstanding. The Holy Spirit was as available to them as He is to us, to teach them these guiding principles of interpretation so that they did not need to err at all.

But they did, even though they had no excuse for making this fatal mistake, and we have less still, for not only do we have the advantage of the same Teacher as they, but as well as we have the lesson that their mistake can, and must teach us.

"Had they [the Jews] with humble minds and spiritual discernment, studied the prophecies, they would not have been found in so great error as to overlook the prophecies which pointed to His first advent in humility, and misapply those which spoke of His second coming with power and great glory. The Jewish people had been striving for power. They were ambitious for worldly honors. They were proud and corrupt, and could not discern sacred things. They could not distinguish between those prophecies which pointed to the first advent of Christ, and those that described His second, glorious appearing. The power and glory described by the prophets as attending His second advent, they looked for at His first advent." *Review and Herald,* December 17,1872.

The measure of the seriousness of their mistake can be seen only as we realize that it cost them their eternal life, for, as a result, they were so mistaken as to the nature of the particular advent involved, that when Jesus appeared exactly as prophesied, they rejected Him on the basis of *their* understanding of the prophecies. Blinded by pride, they had carefully assembled every prophecy describing Christ's second Advent, while completely ignoring each and every statement detailing the manner in which He would come at His first advent.

It is a sobering truth that once they became established on this faulty procedure, the more diligently they studied, the more Scriptural support they found for their position, the more they were locked into their expectations of how the Saviour-king would appear, and the more certain they were to reject the Messiah. That is why "the learned doctors of the law" were Christ's bitterest opponents.

From all this comes the solemn warning that it is not enough to spend a great deal of time in the study of God's Word, important as it is to do so. In addition, we must study according to the correct principles of Bible interpretation. Otherwise, the more time we spend studying the Scriptures, the more deeply embedded in error we shall be. This is why all the professedly Christian churches have each arrived at different points of doctrinal error all from the same Bible.

So then, we dare not think lightly that we are immune to the same mistake. True, we will not do this in respect to the two advents of Christ, but we have to face the same test of our humility and willingness to learn what the Word would teach us as distinct from what we might wish it to teach us in other areas.

Just as there were two advents of Christ, so there are two shakings or separations, two seals of God, two marriages, two blottings out of sin, and two justifications, to name some of the things which are called by the same name and yet are different. To escape arriving at wrong conclusions in respect to these and other couplets, we must faithfully and consistently apply the same safe principles of Bible interpetation as those which reveal the two advents of Christ.

Let us do that in respect to the two very different shakings or separations, noting first of all that nowhere does the inspired writer state that there are two different shakings. We are alerted to the possibility that there are two when we begin to find two different descriptions of shakings which cannot be matched.

Once we have become aware that two different shakings are involved, the next task is to search out as many statements describing the shakings as can be found, and then sort them into two categories—those detailing one kind of shaking, versus those detailing the other kind. We will then find a very wonderfully harmonious pattern appearing.

It is not often that the two things which are different are covered in the same prophecy. Usually they are not mentioned together and their relationship to each other is not so plainly shown. In this parable, the differences between these two separations are made so clear that none need err in understanding them. Let us look then at the parable of the fishing net for a moment or two.

The net which is a symbol of the teaching of the gospel through human lips chosen by God, is let into the sea of the world and brings forth fish both good and bad. Note very carefully that it does not bring all the good and all the bad from the sea in any one dipping, nor does it ever bring all the bad from the sea either. In other words, in this separation, some good and some bad are separated from the rest in each casting of the gospel net.

These good and bad fish are deposited together in the ship and the net dips again and again to gather more good and bad into the same ship. Eventually the mission of the fisherman is completed and then he sails to the shore where he sits down and examines each fish, separating the good from the bad and casting the bad back into the sea once again.

That is the story briefly outlined. Now let us examine the differences in detail.

In the first shaking or separation, the preaching of the gospel by human messengers accomplishes the work, but the second is accomplished by the fish being put through a test. Each is individually examined to see if it meets the required standard.

Therefore, while human messengers bring the message which accomplished the first separation, only God in heaven through the angels can accomplish the second separation. It is a work which is not committed to human hands to do. It is to the second separation and not to the first that the statements so often quoted about the angels doing the work of separation, must be applied. The statements referred to, are ones such as these two.

"Let both tares and wheat grow together until the harvest. Then it is the angels that do the work of separation."

"The work of separation is given to the angels of God, and not committed into the hands of any man." *Selected Messages* 2:69; Testimonies *to Ministers,* 47.

The first separation separates good and bad from the rest, but the second separates the good from the bad among those who were participants in the first separation. Note carefully that the second separation is not concerned with any who were never caught up in the first separation. This should be a solemn warning to those who insist on remaining in the old hopelessly apostate church organization when God sends a separating gospel message. They have the false idea that they will come out when the final test comes. This they will not do, for, unless they have had a part in the first separation, they will not even be considered in the second.

The first separation occupies a process of time as the net dips again and again until the mission of the gospel is completed, but the second is very short as each fish is put through the screening of the final test to determine its acceptance or rejection for the harvest.

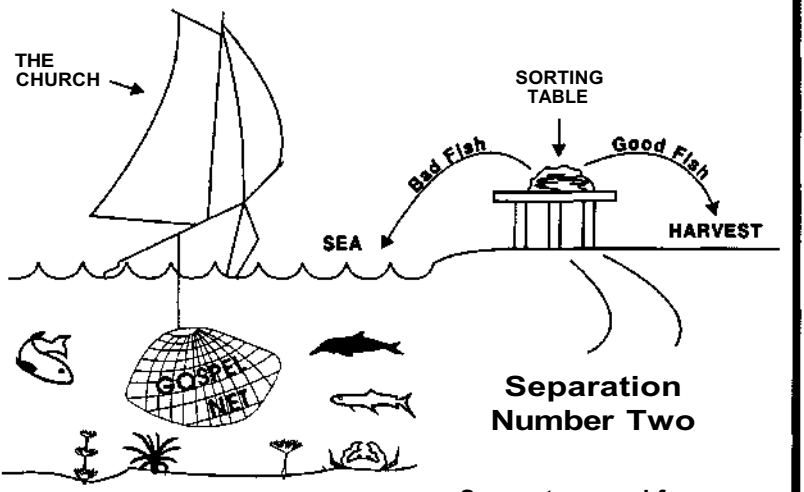
The first gathers the good and the bad into the Church, the second separates the good for the kingdom of heaven.

Therefore the fact that one is involved in the first separation is no guarantee that he will be in the kingdom but, those good fish who are separated from the world in the first separation, and then go on to be parted from the bad fish in the second separation, will assuredly be taken to heaven.

The first must be complete before the second can begin.

These differences between the two shakings or separations are very real indeed. They are just as real as the differences between the two advents of Christ and, like them, must on no account be confused with each other. If we are careful to understand these differences, then we shall find not the least difficulty in identifying which of the two shakings is referred to whenever we read a prophecy of

THE PARABLE OF THE FISHING NET



Separation Number One

Separates good and bad fish from the rest of the good and bad, into the Church

Gospel net dips again and again until its mission is completed. It is by the gospel that the separation is accomplished

Separation Number Two

Separates good from bad by an examination.

Only those involved in the first separation can have any part in the second.

Not the work of the gospel, but of the judge who by examination determines who will go back into the sea or into the harvest—thekingdom.

the one or the other, just as a clear and distinct understanding of the differences between the two advents of Christ, removes all difficulty when needing to apply the various prophecies to the one or the other of the two events.

This then brings us back to the shaking before the latter rain. In the light of the above information, we shall have no difficulty in seeing the difference between this shaking and the one we have been

studying in the parable of the wheat and the tares. Knowing as we do that the first shaking is caused by the test of a message, while the second is caused by the test of persecution, we have but to ask the question as to what is the cause of the shaking mentioned in *Early Writings,* 269-272, to find out which of the two shakings it is. So we read, "I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the true witness to the Laodiceans." Page 270.

Could any language be plainer than this? Here we are told that the cause of this shaking which comes before the latter rain, is the bringing of a message to the Laodicean Church and that message is the Laodicean message. Nowhere in this description of the shaking and its cause and effect, is any mention made of the death decree being imposed upon the people of God as being the cause of this shaking. Such a situation God would never permit, for He knows that Laodiceans have no hope of withstanding such a fearful test as the death *decree* would impose.

The Laodicean message is addressed to a people in a lukewarm condition, who, thinking they are rich and increased with goods and having need of nothing, are in fact destitute, poor, blind, naked, and in desperate need. Such a people, while in that condition, could most certainly never stand against the pressures of the image of the beast. They would not be able to refuse the law which demanded they worship the beast and his image, and therefore against such a people the beast would never need to be brought, because the church and the state would have won with lesser pressure than that.

This is to say that such a people in such a condition would never generate the fearful persecution which is the essence of the great final test, which accomplishes the second and final separation. Whenever did a lukewarm church stir the enmity and the anger of the world against it. This never has been the case, and never will be. Instead, the process is that the Church is found standing in a lukewarm condition and lacking the living presence of the mighty power of God. To such a church comes the message of living righteousness and the result is that there is a shaking, a division, a separation, the majority going in the path of their own choosing, while the minority who prize victory and salvation enough to give anything for it, go in the ways of the Lord. See the picture of this in the days of Christ and the Apostles. See the picture of this in any age and generation.

As the Church becomes filled with the power of God and the truth of God, and goes forth to overthrow the strongholds of evil, then it is that perscution follows. In the situation to be faced in the last days, this will lead the people of God inexorably into the great final test which will come as a result of their own empowered witness

for the truth, and their protest against the evil of the time. And the great final test in turn will accomplish the final work of separation.

Thus there can be no excuse for confusing the separation which takes place before the latter rain and which is caused by the message sent from heaven, and the separation caused by the great final test, which comes at the end of the latter rain, when the mission of the gospel is completed as is shown in the parable of the net.

This also explains the fact that during the latter rain period the wheat and the tares or the wise and the foolish virgins are still comingled. We now know that the first separation brings out good and bad from the rest. Therefore the separation which takes place before the latter rain does not divide the wheat from the tares but simply gathers the wheat and the tares into the Church of God, where they continue to grow together until the harvest when the judgment will accomplish the work of separation and the destiny of each class will be forever fixed.

Both classes need the latter rain to bring them to maturity and the evidences presented in this chapter show in the plainest possible terms that the judgment of the living does not commence until the end and not at the beginning of the latter rain. The parable of the wheat and the tares and the fishing net show this very distinctly. These words are too plain to be misunderstood: "When the mission of the gospel is completed, the judgment will accomplish the work of separation." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 122.

Understanding as we do that this separation is the separation of the wheat from the tares, enables us to understand that the shaking which does take place before the latter rain is not the shaking referred to here and therefore is no argument at all against the position that the judgment comes at the end and not at the beginning of the latter rain. This is the only way it could be as we shall understand and see better and better as we proceed.

So far, we have gathered evidence from teachings in the direct written Word of God, but it is essential that we see that this too is taught in the sanctuary, the great object lesson of the way of salvation. If we cannot find this truth in the sanctuary, then we have no reason at all to believe it. So it will be that we shall turn to that source of light and truth in the next chapter to see that the latter rain does indeed come before the judgment of the living.

Chapter 14

In the Sanctuary Service

The scriptural evidences investigated so far, clearly show the relationship of the judgment of the living to the latter rain so far as the time sequence is concerned. These evidences leave no doubt but that the judgment of the living comes at the end and not at the beginning of the loud cry. One might feel that this is enough, but so important is the sanctuary service and our understanding of it, that we must not leave off this study without looking into that wonderful object lesson to find the same truth taught there with equal clarity, for that is where God's way is found, as it is written:

"Your way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?" *Psalm* 77:13.

The order of last day events, the judgment of the dead and of the living, the seal of God, and the great final separation are all a part of the gospel plan to save men and, as such, are all prefigured in the sanctuary service.

It is in the sixteenth chapter of *Leviticus* that the order of the service of the final atonement is described. This service, as we well know, prefigures the judgment, first of the righteous dead, and then of the righteous living. In the order of that service, we shall find the most perfect harmony with the other truths already studied in regard to the order of last day events.

This service reveals that before Aaron offered the sacrifices for the people generally, he made a special offering of the final atonement for himself and for his family. This is recorded in *Leviticus* 16:11-14:

"And Aaron shall bring the bull of the sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house, and shall kill the bull as the sin offering which is for himself.

"Then he shall take a censer full of burning coals of fire from the altar before the Lord, with his hands full of sweet incense beaten fine, and bring it inside the veil.

''And he shall put the incense on the fire before the Lord, that the

cloud of incense may cover the mercy seat that is on the Testimony, lest he die.

"He shall take some of the blood of the bull and sprinkle it with his finger on the mercy seat on the east side; and before the mercy seat he shall sprinkle some of the blood with his finger seven times."

Having completed the work of taking the blood of the bullock into the most holy place and sprinkling it upon the mercy seat for himself and for his household, the high priest took the goat of the sin offering which was for the people and brought this blood into the sanctuary, and did with it exactly as he had done with the blood of the bullock.

"Then he shall kill the goat of the sin offering, which is for the people, bring its blood inside the veil, do with that blood as he had done with the blood of the bull, and sprinkle it on the mercy seat and before the mercy seat.

"So he shall make atonement for the Holy Place, because of the uncleanness of the children of Israel, and because of their transgressions, for all their sins; and so he shall do for the tabernacle of meeting which remains among them in the midst of their uncleanness.

"There shall be no man in the tabernacle of meeting when he goes in to make atonement in the Holy Place, until he comes out, that he may make atonement for himself, for his household, and for all the congregation of Israel.

"And he shall go out to the altar that is before the Lord, and make atonement for it, and shall take some of the blood of the bull and some of the blood of the goat, and put it on the horns of the altar all around.

"Then he shall sprinkle some of the blood on it with his finger seven times, cleanse it, and sanctify it from the uncleanness of the children of Israel." *Leviticus* 16:15-19.

A brief summary can now be made of what took place on the great day of Atonement at least insofar as we are concerned with the type of the order of last day events. On this day, first of all, two kids of the goats had been set aside, one kid as the Lord's goat, the other as the scapegoat, in addition to a bullock which was to be the offering for Aaron and his household. Now first of all Aaron sacrificed the bullock in order that the final atonement might be made for himself and for his sons, by his taking the bullock's blood right into the most holy place and sprinkling that blood upon the mercy seat.

Then he sacrificed the goat appointed to be the Lord's goat and went through the same final atonement procedure with its blood as he had followed through with the blood of the bullock. By this means the final atonement was made for those of the people who met the

conditions required, and the sanctuary itself and its furniture were cleansed.

No one should have any difficulty seeing that there is a final atonement made for one class of people before it is made for another. One class is symbolized by Aaron and his sons; the other class by the Levites and the rest of the congregation.

To appreciate this distinction, we must understand in what way the two classes are different. This is made clear in the following statement:

"By divine direction the tribe of Levi was set apart for the service of the sanctuary. In the earliest times every man was the priest of his own household. In the days of Abraham the priesthood was regarded as the birthright of the eldest son. Now, instead of the first-born of all Israel, the Lord accepted the tribe of Levi for the work of the sanctuary. By this signal honor He manifested His approval of their fidelity, both in adhering to His service and in executing His judgments when Israel apostatized in the worship of the golden calf. The priesthood, however, was restricted to the family of Aaron. Aaron and his sons alone were permitted to minister before the Lord; the rest of the tribe were entrusted with the charge of the tabernacle and its furniture, and they were to attend upon the priests in their ministration, but they were not to sacrifice, to burn incense, or to see the holy things till they were covered." Patriarchs *and Prophets,* 350.

God was very specific in His detailing the scope of the work to be performed by Aaron and his sons, and of the limitations imposed on the remainder of the Levites.

Aaron and his sons were responsible for offering the sacrifices and were directed to enter the tabernacle to make Atonement for the people, and for the cleansing of the holy places, but the ministry of the Levites was restricted to activities outside the sanctuary, that is, in the courtyard and out among the people.

Nonetheless, despite the limitations imposed on them, they were very busy individuals, for they were the teachers of the people, and they were those who gathered the congregation to the various convocations of which the final atonement was the most solemn. In many ways they ministered to the spiritual and physical needs of the people, but they could not, and they dared not, enter into the sanctuary itself.

Aaron and his sons were part of the house of Levi, and they could do all that the Levites did, but, while the house of Aaron was a part of the house of Levi, yet the Levites were not a part of the house of Aaron. This distinction must not be overlooked or ignored.

This can only mean then, that when Aaron offered the bullock for himself and his household in the making of the final atonement for

them, this did not include the Levites. That offering was not for them, for whom a different sacrificial symbol had been divinely appointed. They must and did *receive* their final atonement from the one other offering available and that was the offering of the Lord's goat. As this was for the people generally, then it stands that the Levites' offering was included with the people and at the same time as the rest of the people. The simple fact of the case then is that Aaron and his sons received their final atonement before the Levites and the people generally, and the Levites received theirs at the same time as the people.

Do not deduce from this distinction that one of the two groups receives its final atonement through Christ's sacrifice, and the other through somebody else. This cannot be, for Christ's propitiatory sacrifice is the only one by which the final atonement can be made for anybody. The bullock slain on behalf of Aaron and his sons symbolized Christ just as the goat slain to make the final atonement for the house of Levi and the rest of Israel also symbolized Christ. We must never lose sight of the glorious saving truth that the entire range of sacrifices listed in the typical services of the Old Testament, all point to the one sacrificial death of Jesus Christ our Saviour. The reason for the use of a variety of symbols is to disclose to view different applications of the blood of Christ.

To understand the message taught in the sacrificing of the bullock to provide the final atonement for Aaron and his sons on the one hand, and the lamb for the house of Levi on the other, we need to discern who are the antitypes of these symbols. Once that is done, the message from the sanctuary becomes clear.

The identification of Aaron, the high priest, is a simple, straightforward matter. His position and attendant ministry point to Christ in His role as the High Priest of the sanctuary in heaven, a truth to which Paul testified again and again.

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens.

"a minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man." *Hebrews* 8:1, 2.

Now two questions emerge here at once. The first question is, If Aaron as a type of Christ offers a final atonement for himself, is he in the offering of that final atonement for himself, also giving to us a type of what Christ must also do for himself? And the answer must be yes!

It is true of course that Jesus Christ has no sin of His own either by natural inheritance or subsequent misdeed, for which He needs to offer a final atonement. But let it never be forgotten that Jesus Christ

has taken upon Himself the sins of all the world and that, as a man and as a God, He bears that sin in the sanctuary above. That awful burden of guilt which was on and in us, He has taken upon Himself. It cannot remain there forever, however, but must be taken and placed on the scapegoat to be sent away into perpetual banishment. This will necessitate a final atonement being made for Him as well as for us. With us of course, it is the blood of Another by which that propitiation is made, but in Christ's case it is His own blood, because in the symbol, He is both the priest and the sacrifice on the great Day of Atonement.

But now the question must be raised, Who then are the antitypical sons of Aaron? They cannot symbolize the people of God upon the earth, for none of us, even though we are sons of our great High Priest, are ministers with Christ in the antitypical sanctuary in heaven. We are not there carrying golden censors from which issue the sacred incense which is the righteousness of Christ, nor are we there presenting the prayers of earthbound Christians before the eternal Father. We are very much here and not at all there!

But cannot we be there by faith?

We can be there by faith, but only as a suppliant and as one who follows his great High Priest by faith as He goes in before God, and not as a priest. To be a ministering son of the High Priest requires your being in the sanctuary in person, physically, and in fact, and not merely by faith.

So, who then are the antitypical sons of the High Priest?

They are those of God's children who were either translated to heaven, as are the cases of Enoch and Elijah, or were raised from the dead and taken there as in the cases of Moses and those who were resurrected with Christ on His resurrection morning. Of them it is written:

"Jesus, when He had cried out again with a loud voice, yielded up His spirit.

"And behold, the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; and the earth quaked, and the rocks were split,

"and the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised;

"and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many." *Matthew* 27:50-53.

"As Christ arose, He brought from the grave a multitude of captives. The earthquake at His death had rent open their graves, and when He arose, they came forth with Him. They were those who had been co-laborers with God, and who at the cost of their lives had borne testimony to the truth. Now they were to be witnesses for Him who had raised them from the dead." *Desire of Ages,* 786.

"When he ascended on high after his resurrection, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Those who had transgressed the law of Jehovah had fallen in death. Although they had confessed and forsaken their sins, Satan had claimed them as his lawful subjects and prisoners. He said they were his victims; but when Christ came out of the grave, he led forth from the prison-houses of the enemy a multitude of captives as a sample of the general resurrection. And when he comes again, it will be to break the fetters of the tomb, to call forth the prisoners of hope from their prison-houses, to clothe them with a glorious immortality." *Signs of the Times,* June 17, 1889.

When these privileged beings arrived in heaven, they were assigned positions within the sanctuary from where they were to minister to their brethren on the earth below. It was while they occupied these positions, and performed these duties, that John was given a view of them. What he saw and heard, he recorded in *Revelation* 4 and 5.

Firstly, he relates how he responded to an invitation to be informed of future events, whereupon he beheld "a throne set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

"And He who sat there was like a jasper and sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald.

"Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads.

"And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. And there were seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God.

"Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and behind." *Revelation* 4:2-6.

Without question, the wonderful being seated on the throne could be none other than God the Father, and the throne room was the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven as is indicated by the "seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God", and confirmed by the following statement:

"The holy places of the sanctuary in heaven are represented by the two apartments in the sanctuary on earth. As in vision the apostle John was granted a view of the temple of God in heaven, he beheld there 'seven lamps of fire burning before the throne.' *Revelation* 4:5. He saw an angel 'having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the

throne.' *Revelation* 8:3. Here the prophet was permitted to behold *the first apartment of the sanctuary in heaven;* and he saw there the 'seven lamps of fire' and 'the golden altar,' represented by the golden candlestick and the altar of incense in the sanctuary on earth. Again, 'the temple of God was opened' *(Revelation* 11:19), and he looked within the inner veil, upon the holy of holies. Here he beheld 'the ark of His testament,' represented by the sacred chest constructed by Moses to contain the law of God." *Great Controversy,* 414, 415.

So then, in this inspired revelation, God is the all powerful Being seated on the throne in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary. Some may have difficulty accepting God's being in this location, for they have always confined Him in their thinking to the second apartment where they envisioned Him abiding perpetually above the mercy seat, between the cherubim. Because of the limited nature of the object lesson which was the Old Testament sanctuary, there is the danger of developing this fixed-position concept of our heavenly Father.

This limited view of an immobile God, has given support to those who reject the presence of a two-apartment sanctuary in heaven, in which Christ firstly administers a daily atonement, followed by the final atonement. These numerous rejecters of truth teach that when Christ returned to heaven, He went directly into His Father's presence in the most holy place of the sanctuary in heaven. Directly into His Father's presence He went, it is true, but that was in the first, not the second apartment.

Several Scriptures confirm that Jesus went directly into His Father's presence when He ascended on high. Here are several of them:

"God, who at various times and in different ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets,

"has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds;

"who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." *Hebrews* 1:1-3.

"Now this is the main point of the things we are saying: We have such a High Priest, who is seated at the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens,

"a Minister of the sanctuary and of the true tabernacle which the Lord erected, and not man." *Hebrews* 8:1, 2.

"To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne,

as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." *Revelation* 3:21.

This wonderful throne of matchless power and glory is not an immobile fixture, but has the capacity to move at incredible speed, so fast in fact that God can transfer from heaven to earth in minutes. Christ demonstrated this capacity on His resurrection day when He ascended to His Father and returned to earth on the same day.

To Ezekiel was given a vision which revealed among other things, the capacity of God on His throne to move with blinding speed from anywhere to everywhere. The entire first chapter of *Ezekiel* 1 is devoted to describing the living nature of God's throne made up of cherubim, wheels within wheels, and living creatures of whom the prophet saw that:

"the living creatures ran back and forth, in appearance like a flash of lightning." *Ezekiel* 1:4. The whole chapter is too long to quote here in full, but I recommend that it be read carefully more than once or twice.

So, there is no question about God's capacity to move Himself and His living throne with incredible speed, to any place, at any time.

And He has so moved it.

The Father and the Son were together in the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary from at least as late as the triumphant return of Christ to heaven after His crucifixion and resurrection, until October 22, 1844, when the Father left the first apartment and travelled into the second apartment. This was an event of such immense importance, that we must expect to find detailed descriptions of it in the authoritative, inspired writings, and so we do.

To Daniel was given a vision revealing the grand entry of the Almighty into the judgment room or second apartment of the sanctuary in heaven. He saw thrones being put in place, the everlasting Father seating Himself, the books being opened, and the commencement of the judgment. Here is his inspired vision of these events which happened on time at the end of the 2,300 year prophecy:

"I watched till thrones were put in place, and the Ancient of Days was seated; His garment was white as snow, and the hair of His head was like pure wool. His throne was a fiery flame, its wheels a burning fire;

"A fiery stream issued and came forth from before Him. A thousand thousands ministered to Him; ten thousand times ten thousand stood before Him. The court was seated, and the books were opened." *Daniel* 7:9, 10.

A still more detailed description which explains that the Father,

at the close of the 2300 years in 1844, transferred to the second apartment ahead of Christ, reads as follows:

"I saw the Father rise from the throne, and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, 'Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.' Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. On the hem of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, 'My Father, give us Thy Spirit.' Then Jesus would breathe upon them the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace. *Early Writings,* 55.

So there is no problem with God's being in the first apartment in John's time, nor with His transferring to the second apartment in 1844. The Father and the Son were together in both of the sanctuary apartments in their turn. They were not separated from each other up till the commencement of the judgment, by Christ's being in the outer apartment, while His Father remained sequestered in the most holy place.

The next step in our investigations is to identify the twenty-four elders, and the four living beings who are seen in the first apartment together with the Father and with the Lamb. This poses no difficulty, for they themselves witness as to who they are. They are redeemed ones who were already in heaven by John's time, including, Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and those who were raised with Christ and went home with Him. Here is their personal testimony as to who they are:

"Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.

"And they sang a new song, saying: 'You are worthy to take the scroll, and to open its seals; for You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by Your blood out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,

" 'And have made us kings and priests to our God; and we shall reign on the earth.' " *Revelation* 5:8-10.

Only human beings who have been saved from sin and death can testify of Christ that He has redeemed them by His blood out of every tribe, tongue, people, and nation.

These redeemed ones are declared to be kings and priests, are seen ministering before the Father in the first apartment in heaven, and each carries a golden bowl, "full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints".

This is clearly the antitype of the ministration of the priests in the Old Testament sanctuary. Just as Aaron and his sons offered sacrifices and ministered within the tabernacle, so Christ and His sons do the same in the heavenly. These are they who, both in type and antitype, *receive* the final atonement cleansing before the rest of Israel.

In the typical situation, the rest of Israel apart from Aaron and his sons, was made up of two classes of people—the Levites and the remainder of the congregation, or the Levites and the other twelve tribes, bearing in mind that there were thirteen tribes altogether. What was the difference between these two groups?

The Levites were the leaders in the worship of God, they were the instructors of the people, and the assistants of the priests in the work connected with the sanctuary. They were the ones who gathered the people and led them to the sanctuary for the great Day of Atonement.

The same two classes, apart from those already in heaven, must be in evidence in the antitype. So who are symbolized by the Levites today? They are those who, through the third angel's message, are well versed in the knowledge of the sanctuary truth, and who, in consequence, will be filled with the power of the latter rain, and sent forth to minister to those of God's children who as yet know nothing of these great truths. They will be the teachers of this great multitude, and will gather them to the sanctuary for the great day of final atonement.

So then, in the typical service, there were three classes of human beings for whom the final atonement had to be made. There were the high priest and his sons, the Levites, and the rest of Israel. But, there were only two services for the three groups, which meant that two of the three were obliged to share one of the two available services. Those two were the Levites and the rest.

There is a very obvious reason for this. The great day of final atonement was not scheduled to commence until October, 1844, but in the divine plan to fill important, and in fact essential positions, long before that time, there was the need to bring certain of the sons of the High Priest into the service of the heavenly sanctuary. We

have observed from the light contained in *Revelation* 4 and 5, that He did this.

We know perfectly well that these redeemed ones who have been taken to heaven in advance of all the rest, could not go there unless a totally successful work had been done in them: "to finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness." *Daniel* 9:24.

That means that every atonement necessary to complete these works in them, including the final atonement, must have been made for them so that they could be cleared for entry into heaven. And, because these sons of the High Priest were taken to heaven long before their brethren, they had to receive a special final atonement service long before 1844. How simply and beautifully this provision of divine grace was made available, so that Christ's sons could take up their appointed ministry in the sanctuary in heaven!

While those who are already in heaven received their final atonement before all the rest, no such precedence is either needed by, or granted to the other two classes of believers.

Consider what took place on the great day of final atonement when all Israel were gathered at the sanctuary. Ten days before, the trumpets had begun to sound their warning of the rapidly approaching day of judgment and final atonement. Throughout the year, the Levites had labored to prepare all for the solemn assembly, and now they called for all to gather at the sanctuary to receive the blessing of the final atonement.

Let it be emphasized that the Levites did not gather at the sanctuary first, there received the final atonement, and then went out to gather the hosts of Israel to the sanctuary for them in their turn to receive their final atonement. That is not the way it was.

Instead, the Levites gathered the people to the sanctuary, and together with them, received all the blessings to be received of the Lord on that solemn day.

What took place in the typical service is the revelation of what happens in the antitype. Those of us who understand the messages of present truth are the people typified by the Levites. Like them we will not come to the sanctuary first to receive the final atonement, and then go forth in the latter rain power of the Holy Spirit to gather the rest of the yet hidden hosts of Israel to *receive* their final atonement. If this were the procedure, type and antitype would be hopelessly at variance.

Instead, we who know the final messages, will be endowed with the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, with which we will go out to the entire world to gather all Israel to the great day of judgment. Then,

when this mission of the gospel is completed, we with them will receive the benefits of the final atonement.

Thus the sanctuary and its services harmonize with the truth that the latter rain and its resulting loud cry come before the judgment of the living, and the sealing of all the living saints.

It is well worth noting that, if it were true that the judgment of the living, the final atonement, and the sealing will precede the outpouring of the latter rain, it would then follow that the people of God would not need to live by faith during the loud cry and the subsequent time of Jacob's Trouble. This would be so because, if the outpouring is to come after the final sealing, its reception by an individual would be the absolute guarantee that he was eternally sealed. After the reception of this incontrovertible sign, he would no longer need to live by faith, for he would have the witness that he was secure for eternity.

But this cannot be, for this will be the greatest test of faith ever imposed on God's people anywhere, at anytime. It will be the period when the saints will have to agonize in order to gain the victory. It is quite impossible for us to *realize* beforehand what a testing time that is going to be.

"The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he succeeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God." *Great Controversy,* 621.

The objection which has been raised against this argument is that we will not know when the latter rain has fallen on us. To support this contention the statement is quoted which says: "It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or *receive* it." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 507.

This statement is used to convey the thought that the latter rain will all be so quiet an affair that it will come and go without our even knowing that it has been and gone. But such a concept arises from a failure to note carefully the meaning of the word, "discern." To discern is to rightly evaluate a thing for what it is.

When the latter rain has fallen, the entire world is going to know

that something powerful and mighty is going on just as did the Jewish leaders when the former rain was poured out. "The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it." *Great Controversy,* 607. But, while they are very much aware that something mighty is going on, and while they bend all their energies to resist it, the fact remains that they will not discern it for what it is. To them that which is the power of God, is nothing but the power of Satan.

The outpouring of the latter rain will be the final and complete fulfillment of the prophecy in *Joel 2.* This prophecy received a first fulfillment in the experience of the disciples in the outpouring of the former rain. Peter, speaking by the inspiration of the Spirit of God, recognized the event as the fulfillment of prophecy when he said, "But this is what was spoken by the prophet *Joel." Acts* 2:16. How much more certainly will the people of God in their understanding of prophecy and under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, know that the latter rain has come, that *Joel* 2:28-32 is being fulfilled for the second and final time.

The people of God will know that the latter rain has come, from a number of evidences. They will know it because the image has been formed and the fall of Babylon is complete. They will know it by the very nature of the message which will be proclaimed. They will know it because the Spirit of God will tell them so.

In fact, one has but to read the sentence before the one so often quoted in Testimonies *to Ministers,* 507 to see this. It reads:

"Unless we are daily advancing in the exemplification of the active Christian virtues, we shall not recognize the manifestations of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It may be falling on hearts all around us, but we shall not discern or *receive* it."

Here is an urgent warning that we will not recognize the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, if we are not daily advancing with Christ. Therefore, if we are daily advancing with Christ, we will recognize the Holy Spirit in the latter rain, will receive it, and will know that we have received the real endowment of light and power.

But the people of God will live by faith alone until the very end, because the outpouring of the latter rain will never be a message that we are eternally secure. Not until the voice of God delivers them during the final stages of the plagues, will they at last have the visible evidence that they are eternally secure.

A common argument is that the latter rain will be given only to those who are fully secure and can never fall again, that God would never trust His Spirit to anyone who might fall away later. But such an argument overlooks two facts. The first is that it is the latter rain which does bring the work of God's grace in the soul to completion.

Therefore no one who waits till they are fully perfected before they accept the latter rain could ever receive it, for they must have the latter rain to bring them to that state. When the latter rain is finished with us and not before, will we be ready for translation.

The second fact is that the gift of the Spirit is in proportion to our capacity to receive it, not on the guarantee of our never falling away again. There are many men in history who have received the Spirit in power and yet will never see the kingdom. Two examples are king Saul who prophesied under the inspiration of the Spirit of God, and Judas who received the power along with the other disciples to go out and heal the sick and work other miracles.

Likewise the fact that one has received the outpouring of the Spirit when the latter rain falls is no guarantee that one will stand right through. No child of God will be eternally secure until the voice of God shall deliver His people during the falling of the sixth plague, very, very close to the second advent of Christ. Until then, it would be most dangerous to relax and imagine that one is now eternally secure and could not fall again. One could fall and it will be needful to watch unto prayer and study as never before to ensure that you stand without faltering.

"Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the *decree* to compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test they will be plunged into deeper distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of faith which they have neglected they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement." *Great Controversy,* 622.

So we see that evidence piles upon evidence to show the nature of the order of last day events. Soon these will be upon us and it behoves all to understand and to know that we must be ready and watching so that the Lord can fill us with His Spirit and see the work ended at last.

Chapter 15

The Shut Door

In many inspired statements such as the one following, we are directed to draw our conclusions from the *weight* of evidence:

"There is no excuse for doubt or skepticism. God has made ample provision to establish the faith of all men, if they will decide from the weight of evidence. But if they wait to have every seeming objection removed before they believe, they will never be settled, rooted, and grounded in the truth. God will never remove all seeming difficulties from our path. Those who wish to doubt may find opportunity; those who wish to believe will find plenty of evidence upon which to base their faith. The position of some is unexplainable, even to themselves. They are drifting without an anchor, beating about in the fog of uncertainty. Satan soon seizes the helm and carries their frail bark wherever he pleases. They become subject to his will. Had these minds not listened to Satan, they would not have been deceived by his sophistry; had they been balanced on the side of God they would not have become confused and bewildered." Testimonies 4:583, 584.

Yet it is always an amazing thing that after the presentation of solid and irrefutable evidence revealing an important aspect of present truth, some objector will come forward with a single brief and obscure statement, which, taken alone, could support his contrary view, while rendering of none effect the power and truth of the message. To this he will cling with tenacious and blind obstinacy, choosing to pin his entire faith and belief on his understanding of this lone piece of evidence, while rejecting the veritable mountain of evidence revealing the full truth. But just as the straw in the clutching hands of a drowning man will serve only to give a fleeting moment of final hope, so the statements to which these cling also give but a fleeting false hope. Careful consideration of what the statement actually does say soon makes it plain that there is no contradiction between it and the general body of evidence.

A typical such statement is this one:

"The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His

hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time." *(Review and Herald,* July 5, 1906). *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:979.

Here is a plain statement announcing that the fate of two different classes of people will be sealed at two different points of time. While the door of mercy remains open for one group, it is fast closed against another. This means that probationary time has expired for the one, but there remains a period of it for the other.

From these facts we are in danger of arriving at some wrong conclusions, simply because we tend to associate the close of probation with the judgment of the living only. Now it is certainly true that the instant a person's name will be called for the investigative judgment, that person's probationary time has gone forever. In this closing of the final day of opportunity, all those who have professed Christ's name come for investigation together at the same time, for, as we have seen, there will not be two groups—one at the beginning, and the other at the end of the latter rain.

But the statement under consideration could be interpreted falsely, to support such a view until the point is made that there have been numerous closures of probationary time which have not been connected to the final investigative judgment of God's professed people.

Now the incorrect assumption is, that because probation has closed for the rejecters of the message of warning and reproof, it has also closed for the accepters of the message. In all eternity both past and future, there is only one closure of probation which occurs at the same time for both those who have accepted salvation and those who have rejected it, and that will be when, at the end of the loud cry, all human probation closes for the commencement of the judgment of the living.

The very first closing of a probation developed with the great rebellion of Lucifer. For a long time, God kept the door of mercy open.

"In great mercy, according to His divine character, God bore long with Lucifer." *Patriarchs and Prophets,* 39.

But, eventually his probationary time ran out, and he and his followers were expelled from heaven—forever. So tightly was the door closed against them, that even though he pleaded for re-admission, it could not be granted to them.

"After Satan and those who fell with him were shut out of heaven, and he *realized* that he had forever lost all its purity and glory, he repented, and wished to be reinstated in heaven. He was willing to take his proper place, or any position that might be assigned him. But no; heaven must not be placed in jeopardy. All

heaven might be marred should he be taken back; for sin originated with him, and the seeds of rebellion were within him. Both he and his followers wept, and implored to be taken back into the favor of God. But their sin—their hatred, their envy and jealousy—had been so great that God could not blot it out. It must remain to *receive* its final punishment." *Early* Writings, 146.

That certainly is a fine example of a probationary time period which eventually came to an end for Lucifer and his angels. But it must be remembered that, once Lucifer raised his issues in heaven, all the angels were on probation so that they might have the opportunity to come to their own decision to remain loyal, or to rebel.

Here now is a point which must not be overlooked. When Lucifer's probationary time ran out, it still continued for the loyal angels until Christ's crucifixion, when, "the last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken." *Desire of Ages,* 761. So then, from the cross forward, the angel's have been so sealed against Satan and his philosophies, that they no longer need probationary time. They have irreversibly chosen to remain loyal to God.

There are numerous examples down through history of the door of mercy being closed against those who despised God's warnings and reproofs, while it continued to remain open for those who were still striving to perfect Christian characters in the fear of the Lord. Here are some of them:

"There was a shut door in Noah's day. There was at that time a withdrawal of the Spirit of God from the sinful race that perished in the waters of the Flood. God Himself gave the shut-door message to Noah:

‘‘ 'My spirit shall not always strive with man, for that he also is flesh: yet his days shall be an hundred and twenty years' (Genesis 6:3).

"There was a shut door in the days of Abraham. Mercy ceased to plead with the inhabitants of Sodom, and all but Lot, with his wife and two daughters, were consumed by the fire sent down from heaven.

"There was a shut door in Christ's day. The Son of God declared to the unbelieving Jews of that generation, 'Your house is left unto you desolate' *(Matthew* 23:38).

"Looking down the stream of time to the last days, the same infinite power proclaimed through John:

" 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' *(Revelation* 3:7).

"I was shown in vision, and I still believe, that there was a shut door in 1844. All who saw the light of the first and second angels'



While the door of mercy is still open for some, it is closed against those who would not enter.

messages and rejected that light, were left in darkness. And those who accepted it and received the Holy Spirit which attended the proclamation of the message from heaven, and who afterward renounced their faith and pronounced their experience a delusion, thereby rejected the Spirit of God, and it no longer pleaded with them.

"Those who did not see the light, had not the guilt of its rejection. It was only the class who had despised the light from heaven that the Spirit of God could not reach. And this class included, as I have stated, both those who refused to accept the message when it was presented to them, and also those who, having received it, afterward renounced their faith. These might have a form of godliness, and profess to be followers of Christ; but having no living connection with God, they would be taken captive by the delusions of Satan. These two classes are brought to view in the vision—those who declared the light which they had followed a delusion, and the wicked of the world who, having rejected the light, had been rejected of God. No reference is made to those who had not seen the light, and therefore were not guilty of its rejection." *Selected Messages* 1:63, 64.

The first on this list is the shut door of Noah's day. At that time, both the door of mercy and the wooden door of the ark were forever closed against those who had refused God's gracious offer of salvation in the time of His retributive judgments. But while probationary time had ended for everyone outside the ark, it had not for those inside that wonderful ship. Both inside and after they emerged from it, they lived lives of test and trial with the freedom to abandon righteousness any time they chose to.

The same conditions held good in the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, and in every other shut-door situation.

With these principles in mind, we can read the statement which we have been considering, more intelligently. Here it is once more:

"The time of God's destructive judgments is the time of mercy for those who have no opportunity to learn what is truth. Tenderly will the Lord look upon them. His heart of mercy is touched; His hand is still stretched out to save, while the door is closed to those who would not enter. Large numbers will be admitted who in these last days hear the truth for the first time." *(Review and Herald,* July 5, 1906). *SDA Bible Commentary 7-.979.*

The flooding of the earth in Noah's day, and the burning of Sodom were certainly times of God's destructive judgments. They were also times of mercy, or else the world and all its inhabitants would have been wiped out.

We need to bear in mind that we do not need to wait for a great

crisis situation to develop around us in order to deprive ourselves of probationary time. It can happen to us along the way as it has to thousands of others. Consider the solemn message contained in these words:

"God leads His people on, step by step. He brings them up to different points calculated to manifest what is in the heart. Some endure at one point, but fall off at the next. At every advanced point the heart is tested and tried a little closer. If the professed people of God find their hearts opposed to this straight work, it should convince them that they have a work to do to overcome, if they would not be spewed out of the mouth of the Lord. Said the angel: 'God will bring His work closer and closer to test and prove every one of His people.' Some are willing to *receive* one point; but when God brings them to another testing point, they shrink from it and stand back, because they find that it strikes directly at some cherished idol. Here they have opportunity to see what is in their hearts that shuts out Jesus. They prize something higher than the truth, and their hearts are not prepared to receive Jesus. Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: They are joined to their idols, let them alone,' and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels. Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." *Testimonies* 1:187.

Then there came a time when the door of mercy was forever closed on the Jewish Church in A.D. 34. But while it was closed then on those who would not enter, it certainly did not mean that the probation of those who did pass the test was also eternally settled. Those apostles who gave the loud cry of the former rain had yet to pass through a lifetime of test and trial, and the fact that the door had been closed against those who would not enter did not in the least degree mean that probationary time for the apostles had also ended. They had passed that test which the Jewish Church had failed, it is true, but this was no guarantee that they would pass every other test along the way.

Again, in 1844 there was a shut door. This is plainly attested to in the Scriptures. "These things says He who is holy, He who is true, 'He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens.' " *Revelation* 3:7. Here the Lord declares that He opens doors which none can shut, and shuts doors which

none can open. Then, in the next verse He states very directly to His own true people, that before them He had set an open door. He did not say that the door was still open to all, but to them, and if specifically to them, then to the others it must have been fast closed.

As a result of the rejection of the message by the Protestant churches generally, there was a closing of the door of mercy on a large class of people as listed above. But again this did not mean that they had all passed through the investigative judgment of the living, since that judgment was still future at that time. Nor did it mean that the sealing of the accepters of the message was complete.

In short, it is too much to assume that because the door of mercy has been closed upon the Church in general, this means that the judgment of the living has commenced. It is also too much to assume that the close of probation for the rejecters of the message means that probation has also closed for the accepters of the message. We cannot, and we must not, read that much into the statement here under consideration.

The difficulty can be further cleared up when we *realize* that there is another type of judgment to be considered which is the daily judgment. Day by day there is a judgment going on wherein the Lord knows the spiritual condition of any individual, church, or nation at any exact moment. But this must not be confused with the final review which takes place at the close of life for anyone who had lived since 1844, or at the close of human probation for all those who come to that time and are still living.

That there is such a daily account kept is made certain by the following references:

"Individuals are tested and proved a length of time to see if they will sacrifice their idols and heed the counsel of the True Witness. If any will not be purified through obeying the truth, and overcome their selfishness, their pride, and evil passions, the angels of God have the charge: They are joined to their idols, let them alone,' and they pass on to their work, leaving these with their sinful traits unsubdued, to the control of evil angels." Testimonies 1:187.

For such a terrible decision to be made, wherein souls are abandoned to the control of evil angels, it would be needful for the Lord to keep a close account of their situation day-by-day. Thus there is a daily judgment going on, and probations are closing on individuals while living upon the earth.

In harmony with the above is this statement: "The time has come when Jerusalem is being searched as with lighted candles. God is at work investigating character, weighing moral worth, and pronouncing decisions on individual cases." Testimonies to Ministers, 448.

This statement was written long before the close of probation

will take place. Yet it describes a judgment of the living, but not the one which is to take place when "the mission of the gospel is completed," (Christ's *Object Lessons,* 122) at the close of the latter rain. It cannot describe that final event because the timing is wrong. The only conclusion that can be drawn from this statement is that there are two judgments of the living—one which occurs on a daily basis, and the other one, the great and solemn review, which will come once only at the close of all probationary time.

The fact that there is a day by day judgment of every living individual, is to be expected. God has been doing that from the very first fall of man. Did not the Spirit of God walk no more with King Saul? Did not the Lord say, "Ephraim is joined to idols, let him alone." *Hosea* 4:17? Did not the Lord pronounce the worldlings (at the time of Noah and of Sodom and Gomorrah) as having passed the limit of their probation? So we might go on to example after example in the history of mankind to show that that statement is not introducing something new, but something which always has been in the history of man.

"Said the angel, 'God is weighing His people.' " Testimonies 1:186.

Thus it is clear that the Lord is judging His people and the people of the world day-by-day, and has an instant, ever up-to-the-minute account of where we all stand. And in such a work of judging, we can come to the place where the account is full and the door is closed against us forever, although we go on in life unaware that this has occurred. But the point is, that we do not have to wait till the investigative judgment of the living at the end of the loud cry for this tragic condition of things to overtake us. It can, and does, happen before that time to any who persistently refuse to heed the warnings of His Spirit and finally reject His appeals.

But as distinct from this day-by-day keeping of accounts, there is the final review of those accounts, and it is this review which is termed the investigative judgment. Since 1844, it has been going on for the dead, but the time will come when it will pass to the cases of the living. We must be careful to understand the distinction between these two.

And there should not be the least difficulty in doing this. Compare the foregoing statements with these two, and all difficulty will disappear.

"The judgment is now passing in the sanctuary above. For many years this work had been in progress. Soon—none know how soon—it will pass to the cases of the living. In the awful presence of God our lives are to come up in review." "As the books of record are opened in the judgment, the lives of all who have believed on Jesus come in

review before God. Beginning with those who first lived upon the earth, our Advocate presents the cases of each successive generation, and closes with the living. Every name is mentioned, every case closely investigated. Names are accepted, names rejected. When any have sins remaining upon the books of record, unrepented of and unforgiven, their names will be blotted out of the book of life, and the record of their good deeds will be erased from the book of God's remembrance." *Great Controversy,* 490, 483.

I have encountered those who experience difficulty in understanding why there has to be this review of the cases of those who profess to be God's children. Whether we understand why it has to be is not so important as accepting the fact that there will be such a review of the lives of every child of God.

This point is further clarified by this verse:

"And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." *Revelation* 13:8.

The conclusions drawn from this are as follows: We know that no one ever has his name written in the book of life unless he first of all comes and makes a living connection with Christ through true repentance and acceptable confession, and so has eternal life resident in him. When this is done, then his name appears in the book of life and remains there until the investigative judgment reveals that he has been found wanting, as is shown in the quotation above.

So then, we have the following situation. Here is a man who has his name in the book of life. The image to the beast is set up, and early in the controversy he lets go of God and worships the beast. But, as shown so clearly in *Revelation* 13:8, no one, just no one, whose name continues to be written in the Lamb's book of life will be doing that. Therefore, before he begins such worship, he whose name was written in the book of life must have had that name removed from it. If there is one thing that is certain, it is that many will apostatize, even in the early part of the pressure of the beast and his image, and from this fact it is deduced that the final judgment of the living must have taken place so that the name can be removed from the book of life before the worship of the beast begins. In other words, this is the conclusion drawn: The test is felt by the individual whose name is in the book of life; He fails under its pressure; and at once his name comes up in the judgment of the living and is blotted out of the book of life; whereupon, he worships the beast and his image.

Now, while it is true that a person's name can be removed from the book of life at this or any other time, it is not true that only during the investigative judgment of the living can a person's name be taken

out of the book of life. Evidence will now be advanced to show that when a man loses his hold on eternal life and closes the door of mercy on himself so that the Lord is forced to abandon him to the control of the evil angels, his name is removed from the book of life then.

And how else could it be, for the book of life is a book of life, not of death. It would be untruthful for God to retain a name in the book of life when that name becomes a name of death. Such could not be, and the fact of it is stated in these words:

"Moses manifested his great love for Israel in his entreaty to the Lord to forgive their sin, or blot his name out of the book which He had written. His intercessions here illustrate Christ's love and mediation for the sinful race. But the Lord refused to let Moses suffer for the sins of His backsliding people. He declared to him that those who had sinned against Him He would blot out of His book which He had written; for the righteous should not suffer for the guilt of the sinner.

"The book here referred to is the book of records in heaven, in which every name is inscribed, and the acts of all, their sins, and obedience, are faithfully written. When individuals commit sins which are too grievous for the Lord to pardon, their names are erased from the book, and they are devoted to destruction." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:987.

So, while it is true that a name once placed in the book of life can remain there until the investigative judgment at the end of the loud cry period, yet there are situations wherein this will not be so. Names, in certain cases, are removed from that book prior to the judgment. It happens at any time an individual has forsaken the way of life and is filled, instead, with death and death alone.

Let us then apply these facts to the time of test. A certain man, as mentioned above, has his name in the book of life, and faces the initial test of the Sunday law. At first he stands stiffly for the truth, and his name remains in the book, but as the pressure grows, he weakens. He does endure ridicule and even rough persecution, but when he is drawn before the courts of law, the weakness in his character, due to lack of preparation, causes his breakdown, and he yields to the powers that be. The issues at that time will be too clear-cut and the available power of God much too present for there to be any excuse whatsoever for disobedience, and having made this decision, it is final. In that moment when he lets go of the power of God and declares his intention of worshiping the beast and his image, he commits a sin too grievous to be pardoned, and at once his name is removed from the book of life, so that, as he bows to worship that beast, he does it without having his name in that book. He did not have to wait for the judgment of the living at the end of the loud cry to

have that name removed. It came out before. But others, who have passed tests so far, must go on to the final test before they can be made eternally secure.

The great and solemn lesson to be learned from these facts, is that, because we have passed one test and come out on the right side of that crisis, we are not to relax with the thought that we are now eternally secure. The fact that others around us have come out on the wrong side and closed the door of mercy upon themselves forever, is not to say that we are secure the other way. If they could not face a given test, then there is no point in their being subjected to future tests. But for those of us who do face and pass that test, there is still a further and tougher testing time to come, and not one of us will be eternally secure until that final seal is affixed at the close of human probation.

Chapter 16

The Sealing Work

The work of sealing the people of the Lord for time and eternity is one of the most interesting as well as one of the most important among last day events. It is the work which once accomplished to the point where the people of God are sealed with the final seal of the living God, provides the certainty of an eternal life in the perfection of God's everlasting kingdom. It is a state of being to which every child of the holy God will put forth every power of mind and body under the saving ministry of the Holy Spirit to obtain.

Back in chapter thirteen, I established the principle that in the Scriptures there are often two things called by the same name, but which in practically every other respect are quite different. A prime example of the application of this principle is found in the two very different advents of Christ. Both are called "the advent" of Christ, because that is what each is—"the advent of Christ." There is no better word to describe the event than that.

Because the Jews proved themselves to be too spiritually blind to understand and apply this principle, they looked for one advent where they should have seen two, with the tragic result that they were not able to match the first appearing of Jesus with the prophesied details of that appearing, for which blunder, they paid the appalling price of the total loss of everything, even their eternal lives.

We today have no difficulty with the knowledge that there is to be a second advent of Christ, from which the first advent was completely different, but, unless we learn the vital lessons to be gained from the Jewish mistake, we shall repeat it with the penalty remaining the awful same—the appalling loss of eternal life.

It is with these words of caution that we approach the study of the sealing work, for there are two seals, both of which are called by the same name yet in almost every other particular are quite different from each other.

That which alerts us to the possibility that there are two seals is the discovery that the information coming to us through the Scriptures seems to be so contradictory, that it appears to be irreconcilable, and in fact can never be harmonized so long as we see one seal where we should see two. Some people try to solve the problem by

forcing the meaning of the statements, or by ignoring those which do not harmonize with their concept of what the sealing is.

But the statements must be taken to mean just what they say and no attempt must be made to change that meaning. Of course, there can be several different meanings to be found in a given statement of which at best, only one can be correct, but that is no problem, for the Bible is its own dictionary by means of which the Scriptural meaning of words is made very clear. It is by the way in which words are used in the Bible, that is, according to the definition found there, that we are to understand Holy Writ. See *Behold Your God* by F. T. Wright, pages 96-118, for further explanation of this subject.

So it is then that no sooner do we begin a serious and careful study of the sealing work, than we become aware of the fact that there are two distinct and separate seals. They are totally different from each other and must not be confused with each other. Each has its place and role in the plan of God and no one can enter the heavenly kingdom unless he has both of them. We observe too that the Bible does not say that there are two seals just as it does not say there are two advents of Christ, or two laws, or two of any of the other two things which in Scripture are different and yet called by the same name.

Let us turn now to some references which clearly speak of a seal which up till this time no person living on the earth at present has received.

"The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . *(Revelation* 13:11-17 quoted.). . . This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed. All who proved their loyalty to God by observing his law, and refusing to accept a spurious sabbath, will rank under the banner of the Lord God Jehovah, and will receive the seal of the living God. Those who yield the truth of heavenly origin and accept the Sunday sabbath, will receive the mark of the beast." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:976.

This statement makes it very certain that no one can *receive* the seal of the living God spoken of here, until he has passed the test imposed by the setting up of the image of the beast. That test comes first and then the seal of God follows on all those who have passed this fearful test. Now the image of the beast, as an active, effective agency, has not at the time of this writing been set up, and as certain as this is so, the test of that image is not before the people yet. Therefore there is not a soul living on the face of the earth who has passed that test and equally surely then, no one living has that seal upon him at this time.

The truth of the above is further borne out by this statement from *Great Controversy,* 613. "When the third angel's message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. The people of God have accomplished their work. They have received the 'latter rain,' 'the refreshing from the presence of the Lord,' and they are prepared for the trying hour before them. Angels are hastening to and fro in heaven. An angel returning from the earth announces that his work is done; the final test has been brought upon the world, and all who have proved themselves loyal to the divine precepts have received 'the seal of the living God.' "

This, like the statement quoted before it, makes it very clear indeed that the great final test must come, and only those who remain loyal in the face of that pressure, will *receive* the seal of God. There is no difficulty then in seeing that this test and this seal are still very much in the future.

So then, in the light of these clear facts it is plain that it is a different seal of which Paul and others speak, when they tell of a seal which was obtained by those living in their time. Let us read of this first in *Ephesians* 1:12, 13.

' That we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise."

Here then were a people to whom Paul was speaking, and to whom he said that they were already sealed with the Holy Spirit. He did not speak of their receiving a seal in the future but as of having received it at their present time. Did this mean that they had passed the great final test? No indeed. Yet they were sealed. It is evident that this must be, and indeed was, a different seal from that to which reference is made in the first two statements above. The seal referred to in those two statements can be placed upon a faithful soul only after he has passed the great final test, whereas, the one of which Paul speaks, has already been placed on God's true children.

There are still further references to this seal in the Scriptures. Here is another:

"They were commanded not to harm the grass of the earth, or any green thing, or any tree, but only those men who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads." *Revelation* 9:4.

The fact that they were to hurt only those men without the seal of God, is a clear indication that there were those with the seal of God in their foreheads at that time.

And what time was that?

It is certainly not the end of time when the great final test will

have been brought to bear in all its awesome power upon God's people, but has to be located before October, 1844.

How can we know this with positive certainty?

We know it by the fact that this command to hurt only those who did not have the seal of God in their foreheads, went forth as a part of the fifth trumpet, a prophecy recorded in *Revelation* 9:1-11. This prophecy contains a prophetic time period which reads as follows:

"And they were not given authority to kill them, but to torment them for five months." *Revelation* 9:5.

Five months of prophetic time equals one hundred and fifty years of literal time. All such prophetic time periods are located before October, 1844, after which there never again can be a message based on time as is clearly written in an inspired explanation of the statement made by the angel of *Revelation* 10:6 that there should be "time no longer". *K.J.V.*

"The special light given to John which was expressed in the seven thunders was a delineation of events which would transpire under the first and second angels' messages. It was not best for the people to know these things, for their faith must necessarily be tested. In the order of God most wonderful and advanced truths would be proclaimed. The first and second angels' messages were to be proclaimed, but no further light was to be revealed before these messages had done their specific work. This is represented by the angel standing with one foot on the sea, proclaiming with a most solemn oath that time should be no longer.

"This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:971.

Along with this are a number of other statements confirming that after 1844, there can never be another message based on definite time, which means that any prophecy in which is involved a definite period of time leading up to a predicted event, must be located in history before 1844. Therefore, both the fifth and sixth trumpets were fulfilled before October, 1844, because they both contain time prophecies.

Yet, despite the clarity of the warnings given against any form of time setting, individuals do arise teaching that, at a certain time, an event critical to the success of God's work will take place. The time comes for the event to take place, but there is no sign of it. Undaunted, they set new dates as each one fails, until their voices fade

from the scene. Some years then pass without any time setting being urged upon us until someone again arises in defiance of such statements as these:

"As the majority of Adventists rejected the truths concerning the sanctuary and the law of God, many also renounced their faith in the Advent movement, and adopted unsound and conflicting views of the prophecies which applied to that work. Some were led into the error of repeated time-setting. The light of the third message would have shown them that no prophetic period extends to the coming of Christ; that the exact time of his coming is not foretold. But, turning from the light, they continued to set time after time for the Lord to come, and as often were disappointed." *Spirit of Prophecy* 4:290.

"Christ gave to his disciples truths whose breadth and depth and value they little appreciated, or even comprehended, and the same condition exists among the people of God to-day. We too have failed to take in the greatness, to perceive the beauty of the truth which God has intrusted to us to-day. Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to imagine that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. Again and again have I been warned in regard to time-setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ." *Review and Herald,* March 22,1892.

Further statements alluding to a present seal as distinct from the future one which is placed only on those who have passed the great final test, are these:

"The law of God, which is perfect holiness, is the only true standard of character. Love is expressed in obedience, and perfect love casteth out all fear. Those who love God, have the seal of God in their foreheads, and work the works of God." Sons *and Daughters of God, 51.*

Again, this seal is not spoken of as something which they will have, but of something they already possess.

"Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads-it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved—just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning, that we may know what is coming." *SDA Bible* Commentary 4:1161.

This statement defines the sealing as being a settling into the

truth both intellectually and spiritually. This pictures a time-absorbing process, for no one *settles into the truth instantly.* Therefore as will be shown more clearly a little later in this chapter, this cannot be the seal acquired on passing the great final test, for that seal will be God's declaration that the individual has fully settled into the truth, not that he is still settling into it.

Clearly then, there are two separate sets of statements describing two different seals. I shall call them the "first seal", and the "second seal". One may object that no where in the *Bible* or *The Spirit of Prophecy,* are these terms to be found. This is true, but it is also true that nowhere in these same authorities do we find the expressions, "the first advent", or again, "the second advent", even though there are two such advents, and even though we are greatly assisted in our understanding of the two advents of Christ by using this system of identification.

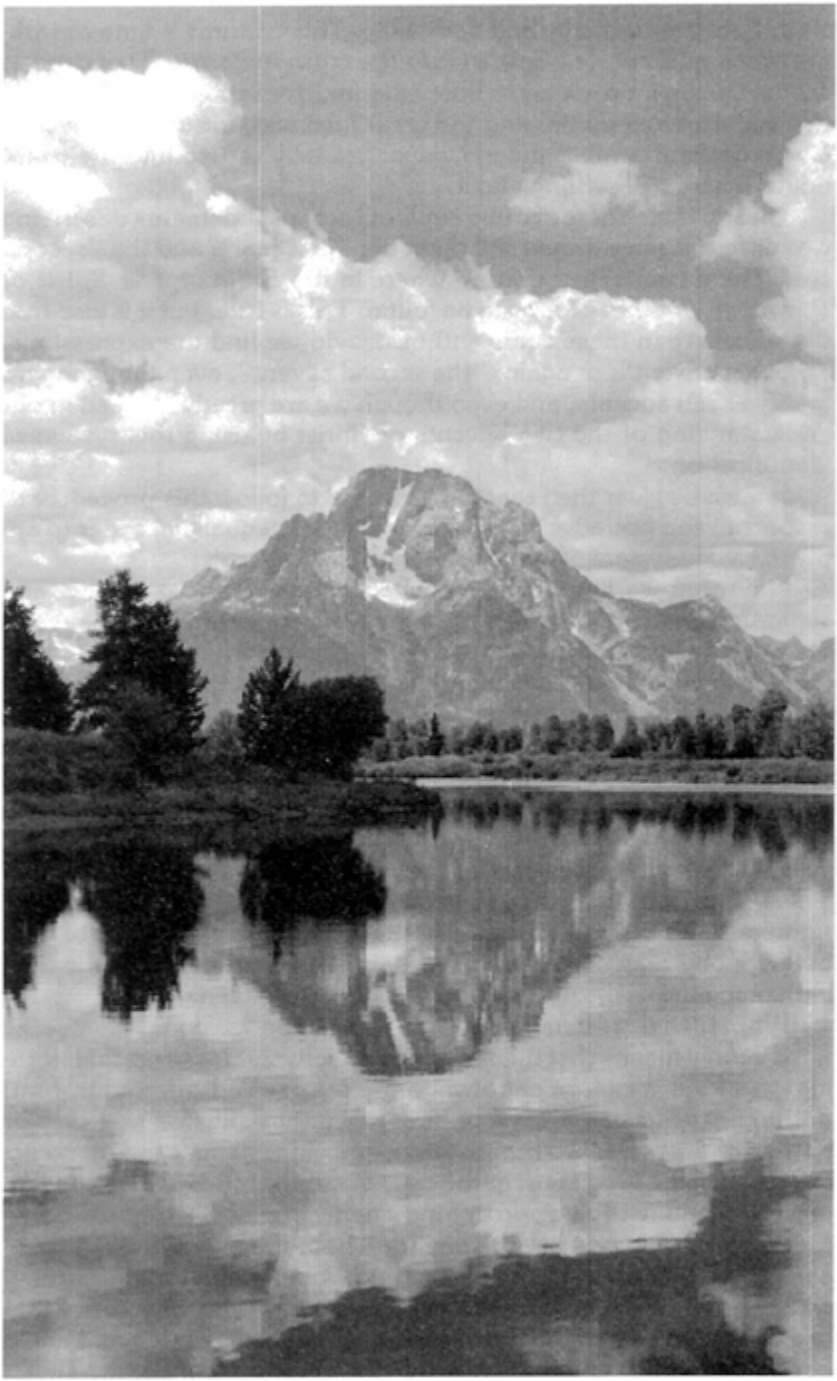
It must be clear then that if it is proper to follow this procedure in respect to the two advents of Christ, then it is equally in order to apply the same system of identification to the two seals.

Now that we have clearly seen that there are two distinct and separate seals, the one possessed by the people of God today, and the other to be placed upon them when the great final test is passed, the time has come to study into the seals themselves to see what they actually are. In doing this we will study the first seal and when we have come to understand that, then we will study the second and final seal.

In the process of understanding just what a seal is, it will not be enough to think in terms of a stamp or a designating mark being the seal of the living God except as they actually serve in the capacity of a seal. This, we shall come to learn, means that it must actually seal righteousness in, and sin out. That is the work of the power of God in the Sabbath, which will require that our understanding of the Sabbath being the seal, will have to significantly broaden.

What then does it mean for something to be sealed?

It simply means that it has been so effectively closed up that nothing of a foreign nature can invade the area sealed off, and in turn, nothing of value can escape or be stolen away. Thus we seal cans or bottles of preserves, so that the decomposing agents can find no access to turn the food sour. In the days of old the cities were closed up or sealed against the approaching enemy. To seal letters or documents so that no one but the one for whom they are intended could dare to open them, kings and governors would stamp into the sealing wax an impression bearing the symbols of their authority. Once that had been done, then that letter was well and truly sealed and could not be opened by any foreign hand except on pain of death. There-



fore we do well to think of the seal in relation to the individual as being a protection, a shutting out of something and a sealing in of something else. And, as we study the various evidences in the living Word, we shall find that that is just what the seal of God does for the people of God.

In the first case it is said to be the seal of the Holy Spirit. It is declared that "He [Christl has made provision that the Holy Spirit shall be imparted to every repentant soul, to keep him from sinning." *Desire of Ages,* 311.

The Holy Spirit, as we learned from *Ephesians* 1:12, 13, is a seal. In the above statement we are told that He is to keep us from sinning. It therefore follows that the Holy Spirit seals us against sin or seals sin out and righteousness in. It is the covering of protection through which the fiery darts of the evil one cannot penetrate.

This immediately lifts our concept of the seal of God out of the realm of its being merely a stamp of approval or of selection, which is placed upon certain individuals to distinguish them from others, because they hold a certain code of beliefs, belong to a certain organization, and have an acceptable attitude of loyalty to those beliefs and to that organization. That there is a stamp of approval placed upon certain individuals as distinct from the mark of the beast, we do not deny, but it is too much to call that stamp, the seal of the living God. That seal is something much more living and powerful than merely that. The seal is the actual presence of the Holy Spirit in the life as a seal against the determined efforts of the devil to tempt us into sin.

The seal of God is therefore the power of God, which is the power of the Holy Spirit, and it is the power of the living truth of God. When we have these in us as a living, actual, indwelling part of us, then sin will most certainly have no dominion over us, and we shall be proof against its power and might. Therefore the work of the gospel in the sealing and of the Holy Spirit in the ministry of sealing, are all one and the same work exactly. Therefore it can be truly said that the latter rain is the sealing, though it must not be forgotten that with equal truth the former rain is also the sealing. And all of this comes to us from Jesus Christ as the Minister of the sanctuary in heaven. And when the sealing work of the Holy Spirit and of our great High Priest is complete, then the people of God will be in a state of moral and spiritual fitness for re-entry into the eternal kingdom.

OPPOSITE PAGE: This mighty mountain of rock is quite immovable by any power at man's command, so too, those who have settled into the truth both intellectually and spiritually. They cannot be moved. The storms may beat upon them, but they stand unshaken by lightning, thunder, and the wildest of winds.

That the sealing is a work of transforming grace wrought out in the very nature of man is made plain from these references.

"Just as soon as the people of God are sealed in their foreheads- it is not any seal or mark that can be seen, but a settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, so they cannot be moved— just as soon as God's people are sealed and prepared for the shaking, it will come. Indeed, it has begun already; the judgments of God are now upon the land, to give us warning that we may know what is coming." *SDA Bible* Commentary 4:1161.

As we have already concluded, and shall better understand later, this is definitely talking about the first seal. It could not be talking about the second seal as all settling into the truth will then have been accomplished as a preparation for the passing of the great final test. And in talking about the first seal it describes the work of that seal as a process of settling into the truth of God, both intellectually and spiritually so that we cannot be moved.

This is not the work of a moment. The word "settling," can never be used to describe a work done instantly or quickly. It is a word describing a process which takes a period of time to accomplish.

We can say with confidence that it does take time to become really settled into the truth of God, to the point where our loyalty to Him is so immovably established that nothing on earth or in hell could subvert it.

It is very fortunate that time is given us in which to become truly and adequately sealed against the forces of darkness. When we first become children of the light, we are far from being firmly established in Christ. We are but "newborn babes", who are admonished to "desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby." *1 Peter* 2:2. At this stage in our Christian life, we do not have the strength and maturity to pass the great final test. Successive tests must be permitted to come to us in the meantime to develop the hardness of a tried soldier, and fit us to stand anything the devil could possibly bring against us.

In the meantime, when the testing process seems as if it will destroy us rather than fit us for the sealing, it is comforting to know the Lord never suffers us to be tempted beyond the strength acquired, as it is written:

"No temptation has overtaken you except such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but with the temptation will also make the way of escape, that you may be able to bear it." *1 Corinthians* **10:13.**

But there is coming the time when all such protection will have been removed and the fullness of the test will come whether we have

acquired the hardness to meet it or not. Then those who have made the diligent preparation by faithfully settling into the truth, both intellectually and spiritually, will stand, while those who have not, will fall.

This truth is borne out in the following statement.

"Those only who have clean hands and pure hearts will stand in that trying time. Now is the time for the law of God to be in our minds, foreheads, and written in our hearts.

"The Lord has shown me the danger of letting our minds be filled with worldly thoughts and cares. I saw that some minds are led away from present truth and a love of the Holy Bible by reading other exciting books; others are filled with perplexity and care for what they shall eat, drink, and wear. Some are looking too far off for the coming of the Lord. Time has continued a few years longer than they expected; therefore they think it may continue a few years more, and in this way their minds are being led from present truth, out after the world. In these things I saw great danger; for if the mind is filled with other things, present truth is shut out, and there is no place in our foreheads for the seal of the living God. I saw that the time for Jesus to be in the Most Holy Place was nearly finished and that time can last but a little longer. What leisure time we have should be spent in searching the Bible, which is to judge us in the last day.

"My dear brethren and sisters, let the commandments of God and the testimony of Jesus be in your minds continually and let them crowd out worldly thoughts and cares. When you lie down and when you rise up let them be your meditation. Live and act wholly in reference to the coming of the Son of Man. The sealing time is very short, and will soon be over. Now is the time, while the four angels are holding the four winds, to make our calling and election sure." *Early Writings,* 58.

As we read through this statement, we are aware that the writing of the law of God in our foreheads is the equivalent of the placing of the seal of God in our foreheads. Note the construction of the paragraph. It begins by saying that the time is now come when the law of God is to be in our hearts. This is followed by a listing of the dangers of allowing other things than this law to occupy the mind. All this is designed to warn us that if these things take the place of the law of God in the mind, forehead and heart, then there is no place for the seal of God in the forehead.

The choice is before us. Either we can have the mind filled with the cares, perplexities, and pleasures of this world, or we can become ever more deeply settled in the truth both intellectually and spiritually so that the law of God is written in mind, forehead, and heart. If the former, then we have the seal of the devil, which effec-

tively seals out the righteousness of Christ and seals the power of sin in. But if the latter, then we have that seal of security whereby the temptations of Satan have neither power nor appeal to the human heart. When the devil comes against us he will find, not a heart filled with his own thoughts and ambitions, but filled with the love of God and the presence of the Spirit of God. From such a heart he will find no sympathy and no response whatsoever.

This first seal then is very clearly a work done in the heart of the believer by the mighty power of Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. It is the preparation for the great final test and therefore takes place day by day before the great final test comes. It is the sealing work which has been going on all through the ages from the very first fall of man to the present time, and will go on while ever human probation continues. As such it is much more than merely an outward stamp of approval. Those who have depended on their loyalty to a church and its beliefs as the guarantee of their having the seal of God need to think again, for much more is involved than this. Only the actual living presence of the power of Christ and his righteousness can seal us against the power of sin and of the devil. We can have that kind of seal today if we will. Let us not rest until we are sure we do actually have it.

Chapter 17

The First Seal

The second or final seal is the one in which the most interest is taken, almost to the exclusion of the first seal. This is because it is not realized by many that, in order to understand and experience the second seal, the first must be clearly understood, and personally experienced especially as it is revealed in the ministry of the sanctuary. There, a practical demonstration is given of the nature of the seal, its work, and the effective results of its ministry.

In the last chapter it was established that there are, not one, but two seals, with the emphasis being placed on the fact that, in almost everything, they are different from each other.

Now comes the time to study each seal in detail, and for the accomplishment of this purpose we shall turn to the sanctuary.

It is a very serious mistake to look to the sanctuary merely for the purpose of transferring guilt for which forgiveness has been obtained, from one person or another. If that is all the ministry of Christ achieves, the sin-problem has never been solved, nor ever will be. God has much higher objectives in mind for the sanctuary than that. This marvellous, redemptive provision of divine grace has been introduced into the human scene to deal with sin at its very root, and thus to guarantee its eternal extermination.

The great question is: "What is sin that it must be completely eradicated? What exactly is God laboring to eliminate from the universe?"

Think about how the subject of sin is usually discussed. Usually the thoughts expressed are about the actions o/sin, the guilt *of sin,* the record *of* sin, and the penalty *of* sin. But none of these is the sin itself. They are all *of* sin. People usually think of removing that which is *of* sin—the actions, guilt, record, and penalty—without removing the sin itself. According to this thinking, the guilt, which is the responsibility incurred by committing the actions of sin, may be accepted by another person, without transferring the actual sin to the person upon whom the guilt has been laid.

It must be understood that while the sin itself remains, there will be the guilt of that sin, for somebody must bear the responsibility for the transgression. Furthermore, there will be a record of it, and

someone must suffer the penalty. The problem then demands first of all the total elimination of all existing sin, its replacement with righteousness, and the absolute sealing of every part of God's kingdom against its re-infection by this awful destroyer.

This enemy, sin, is the power which dwells within every individual through natural inheritance by virtue of the fact that we are children of fallen Adam. This power can be described as the spirit of rebellion, and is far stronger than human power to resist it. In every contest between any human unaided by the omnipotent power of the Holy Spirit, and the sin presence, the human is certain to lose.

Paul desperately tried a thousand times and more to get the better of the powers of darkness reigning in his life, but failed in every attempt to gain the victory. His frustration is recorded in *Romans* 7:1-24. Thus he learned by hard experience the truth of these words:

"The result of the eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil is manifest in every man's experience. There is in his nature a bent to evil, a force which, unaided, he cannot resist. To withstand this force, to attain that ideal which in his inmost soul he accepts as alone worthy, he can find help in but one power. That power is Christ. Co-operation with that power is man's greatest need. In all educational effort should not this co-operation be the highest aim?" *Education,* 29.

The work of eliminating sin must and does begin with the rendering of every believer clean from all existing sin in his life, until there is nothing left to respond to temptation, followed by his being sealed both intellectually and spiritually against any further infections of the disease called sin. The whole purpose and intent of the ministry in the heavenly sanctuary is to provide us with both this cleansing and subsequent immunity. It is designed to teach us that through the actual work in the heavenly sanctuary, of which the earthly was an illustration, the soul which has no protection or seal against sin can be brought to the condition described as follows:

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

The symbolism employed in this paragraph is particularly apt when studying the sealing work. It is the symbolism of the soul being

a fortress held in possession by a new power, and effectively resisting the attacks of the enemy.

Its meaning is further clarified by comparing it with the following:

"The season of temptation, under which, it may be, one falls into grievous sin, does not create the evil that is revealed, but only develops or makes manifest that which was hidden and latent in the heart. As a man 'thinketh in his heart, so is he;' for out of the heart 'are the issues of life.' Proverbs 23:7; 4:23." *Mount of Blessings,* 60.

"Now, while our great High Priest is making the atonement for us, we should seek to become perfect in Christ. Not even by a thought could our Saviour be brought to yield to the power of temptation. Satan finds in human hearts some point where he can gain a foothold; some sinful desire is cherished, by means of which his temptations assert their power. But Christ declared of Himself: The prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in Me.' *John* 14:30. Satan could find nothing in the Son of God that would enable him to gain the victory. He had kept His Father's commandments, and there was no sin in Him that Satan could use to his advantage. This is the condition in which those must be found who shall stand in the time of trouble." *Great Controversy,* 623.

From this information we are able to understand that it is not the enemy without who is to be feared so much as the enemy within. Think of a fortress against whom an enemy of considerable power and might is coming. The master of the castle is preparing to meet the foe by closing every possible avenue of entry. The doors are locked fast, the windows are all barred and everything is secure. But the enemy approaches with confidence, for he knows that he has a secret agent within who will undo the locked doors and let him in. Thus the fortress is overthrown. It is not sealed against the enemy, not because every effort had not been put forth to close every avenue of the castle against the enemy, for this had been done, but because care had not been taken to see that there were no enemy agents within who could undo the work of closing up the defences, and thus provide the opposing army with certain admission. That fortress was not sealed against the enemy. The personal and physical power of that one man within is far less than the power of the army without, yet in his position there he can do far more to overthrow the entire fortress than all the army outside can do.

And all this is a perfectly splendid illustration of the fortress of the soul of man. There is the mighty enemy without but, mighty as he is, he is not to be feared anything like we are to fear the enemy within. While sin still abides within we may think with all the confidence manifested by Peter of old that we can resist the devil and not betray the Lord, but as the enemy approaches, some sinful desire



which we have cherished and failed to give away, provides the access he is seeking and the citadel of the soul is overthrown. The temptation from without finds an answering chord from within, the defences crumble into ruins, and the bastion of the soul is overthrown.

But it was not so with Jesus. When the enemy came against Him, he found nothing in Him that would give the devil the advantage which he sought, and enable him to gain the victory over Christ. He found that fortress to be so sealed both intellectually and spiritually, that his temptations could find no power or advantage over the Saviour. This is the condition in which we must be found if we are going to pass through the great time of trouble. This is in effect to say that it is the condition in which we must be found if we are going to pass the great final test. It is the condition wherein every evil response has been so totally eradicated that the devil will find nothing in us to open the door to him.

To many people it is inconceivable that human beings could ever come to that place. They find it hard to understand how we could ever be without any sinful desire in the heart and life. But, this condition of purity can and will be possessed by God's true children in the end. To help in the understanding of this, consider those who once were smokers, but who now know in their experience what it means to have the complete victory over this evil habit. Of you if you are one of them, it could truthfully be said that you are now a perfect non-smoker, because every trace of desire for this evil, poisonous thing has been taken away from your body and mind where once nicotine ruled as king. Today, the most skilled and persuasive salesman in the world could come and do all in his power to entice you to smoke a cigarette, and he just would not raise the faintest flicker of interest in you whatsoever. On the contrary, you would experience a loathing and an abhorrence for it. This is what it means to have the seal of God, which in this one area you have, and which you can have in every part of your life.

And you have it intellectually as well as spiritually. So thorough has your education been as to the destructive, poisonous, and corrupting nature of this evil weed, so well are you versed in your knowledge of what it will do in the human organism, that mentally you are solidly conditioned against touching that poison. Such a sealing in the intellectual mind is the product of thorough education as to how hateful and destructive sin really is. This seal is just as needful as the seal in the spiritual nature, for we need to be intelligent Christians, knowing what we believe and why.

But there is the spiritual seal as well. When you have that, the longing and desire for this indulgence of an evil appetite will have gone from you forever, and you will have no taste left for it at all. It is

something which is now foreign to your nature and to your very existence and way of life. If you never saw another cigarette forever, you would consider it no loss. Thus you know by experience what it means to have this seal so far as smoking or liquor is concerned. But we are to know the same experience so far as hatred, malice, bitterness, pride, jealousy, evil temper, and the like are concerned. When such an experience is obtained both intellectually and spiritually, then we truly have the fullness of the seal of God and are fitted to stand and pass the final test.

To obtain such a sealing is the work of this life. The very first step in such a work is God's part of the program. He is the one who permits the temptation to come to us so as to reveal the evil of our own hearts. "Temptation is enticement to sin, and this does not proceed from God, but from Satan and from the evil of our own hearts. 'God cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man.' *James* 1:13, *R.V.*

"Satan seeks to bring us into temptation, that the evil of our characters may be revealed before men and angels that he may claim them as his own." *Mount of Blessing,* 116.

The Lord permits this testing and tempting knowing that if we will but learn the lesson, this can be turned to very good account in righteousness. The effort of the devil to discourage and bring accusation does prove the very means of revealing to us the enemy within who is the foe most to be feared. Of course, we should never have to go through this experience for, if we would hear the voice of the Spirit as attempts are made to convict us of our sins and give to us the needed revelation of ourselves, then we would not have to wait till we had stumbled in our self-confidence. Peter never needed to have gone through the humiliation of the denial in the courtyard if he had learned the lessons which the Saviour had sought so earnestly to teach him day by day.

Meet the enemy we must. Peter had to meet the enemy there in the courtyard, but he did not have to meet him with the evil agent still within. Knowing that such a confrontation would eventually come and when, Jesus had sought to show Peter the very trouble within, which would and did cause his downfall, so that prior to the coming of the enemy he could have been cleansed of that evil and had the power of God in its place. Then the devil would have found him sealed against this temptation with no answering chord from within. But all the effort of the Lord to save him from disaster proved unavailing, not because of any shortness of power or skill on the part of the Lord, but because of the blindness and self-will of the disciple. If he had allowed the work of grace to be done in his heart which the Saviour designed, then, when he confronted the enemy, he could

have done so successfully. But when that work of grace was not possible because of Peter, then he had to learn it the shameful and humiliating way. We can be thankful that he did get the message this time. At last he saw the enemy within and by the power of God, got rid of him at once. Then that opening was sealed and made secure against the enemy. "Now his self-confidence was gone. *Never again were* the old boastful assertions repeated." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 154.

So it may be with us. The Lord is anxious that we see the true nature of the enemy within before we go out to do battle with the enemy without, but in our blindness we fail to do this. So it is that unsealed, we have to face the enemy. The sure result is defeat as the enemy within opens the door to the invading army without. But all is not lost. Probation still lingers, and if we are willing to see, then we can know where the real trouble lies. And once we know where the real trouble is, the very first step in the process of sealing has been accomplished.

The next step is knowing that Jesus does and will truly and fully deal with the problem by eradicating the enemy within and replacing him with His own life and power, a life and power which will never betray the fortress, never open the door to the enemy. If ever the fortress is to fall once this new life is within, it must be by the actual choice of the person himself. It would have to be a capitulation, for the power within will never betray the fortress. Never!

In the sanctuary as the minister of that life-saving service, Jesus waits to execute this work. But it is not enough to only know He can and will do it and fully believe it is an essential second step in the matter of being sealed. We must come to the sanctuary and there appropriate by true and acceptable confession the blessings of the sealing which are awaiting us there.

The nature of such a confession is vitally important. It is not enough merely to confess that we have fallen into sin. That does not get at the real trouble. The confession must reach to the acknowledgement of the real problem, the enemy within, which, in short, is what we are. Having made a frank and honest confession of that, then it must be offered to the Lord, with the urgent and unconditional request that it be taken out of and away from us so that we shall know it no more, and, into its place, a new and opposite agent altogether be established.

Now this is the very work that the Saviour is in the sanctuary to do, and desires more than anything else to do. He cannot do it of course until he has our willing consent and cooperation, but in the moment He obtains this, then the work is done with a certainty and completeness leaving nothing more to be desired at that point.

So we come to the door of the sanctuary which is the foot of the cross, and there make our confession, full and comprehensive, for the sin which we now know to be resident within us. With equal decisiveness we hand it all over to the Saviour who by His blood transfers that sin to the sanctuary. It is all-important that we understand here that it is not just the guilt of sin which is removed, but the very sin itself, that enemy within who kept us unsealed from the enemy without. This is evidenced from the fact that the transfer of the blood in the Old Testament type, represented the transfer of the forfeited life of the sinner, which is clearly taught in *Great Controversy,* 418.

The life of the sinner is what he is. This is the enemy within and this must go, before we can have any security against the power of temptation. His place must be made completely empty as shown in this statement: "The religion of Christ means more than the forgiveness of sin; it means taking away of our sins, and filling the vacuum with the graces of the Holy Spirit." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 419, 420.

The sin which was within us is now safely lodged in the sanctuary where it remains until the great investigative judgment day. The place where it was became vacant and then into that place came the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit so that there has been an exchange of life in actual, literal fact. That new life within, variously described as "the new nature," "the life of Christ," "the mind of Christ," "the new heart," "the new creation," "the newborn babe," "the divine nature," and "the indwelling Holy Spirit," has taken over the position and place of the old life which was there. But how opposite is the character of the new. The old was the child and friend of the devil being his own life in the soul of man, but this is the child and friend of God, being the very life of God in the soul.

It can be readily seen and understood how that the first life will always open to the devil in the hour of temptation, but could you imagine for one moment that the life of God in the soul, the Holy Spirit, who is given to the human agent for the very purpose of "keeping him from sinning," is going to open the door and let the devil in? Never will He do that! He will forever keep the door fast closed against the enemy, thus sealing the soul against the temptations of the foe. And because it is the presence of the Holy Spirit in the soul which thus seals us from the enemy, it is called the seal of the Holy Spirit. And because the presence of the Holy Spirit is the presence of the life of God, for the Holy Spirit is God, it is called with equal truth and certainty "the seal of the living God." It is called by these names for the very simple reason that this is exactly what it is. It is important that we understand this. The seal of God and the seal of the Holy Spirit are just that very life-force itself, the seal against

the invasion of sin effected by the actual presence of this power in the soul to preserve us from sinning.

And for the very same reason the Sabbath is the seal of God. Now, in order for an individual to have the Sabbath of God, he needs more than simply a Scriptural argument proving that the seventh day is the correct day upon which to worship. As can be learned from a careful study of the Sabbath of God, the true Sabbath is to be found only where the power of God actually is. See *Living righteousness and the Sabbath of God,* by F. T. Wright. Of course seventh-day observance can be found where the power of God is not, but the true Sabbath of God will always have the power of God. So, the power of God is the seal of God, which means that, where the true Sabbath of God is, there the seal of God is.

Of this we shall have more to learn later, but for the moment let us realize that the nature of the last great conflict between the seal of God, the Sabbath, and the mark of the beast, Sunday, is something much more involved than merely the controversy as to which day of the week we should be keeping. It will be a contest between the power of God and the power of sin, with the Sabbath being the flag waving over the one camp, and Sunday as the symbol of the power of sin waving over the other camp. Not those then who have even the best arguments for the rightness of the seventh day, but those in whom is the power of God, the seal of the Holy Spirit, will stand on the side of the living God.

It hardly needs to be stated here that the first seal is not permanent except as we refuse to let it go. No one, not even the devil himself, can take this seal away from us, but we can choose to let it go just as did the sinless pair in Eden and King David over the matter of Uriah the Hittite. Although there is no longer the responsive enemy within, there is the human nature where Satan can make his temptations felt, and, while the divine nature will strongly call upon the reasoning mind of the individual to refuse to yield, the human nature can exert powerful pressure on the individual to surrender the citadel to the enemy. It is here that the intellectual seal is so badly needed. This battle must be fought out in the mind and is a battle which every Christian must fight to the very end of his days against the powerful pressures which the enemy will bring to bear against the humanity of us all. For a splendid example of this, study the experience of Jesus in the Garden of Gethsemane.

This aspect of the case is important and one which must occupy a lot of study and thought on the part of Christians, but we do not have the space in this article to carry it further. Study carefully *Revival and Reformation,* by F. T. Wright.

This is not to say that the battle will not become more difficult as

we go on through life. The truth is of course that the tests and the temptations will become stiffer, but only in proportion to the power to meet them. The first sealing of the Holy Spirit is not the last. Progressively the work of cleansing goes forward, and as our capacity to *receive* increases, we shall *receive more* and more of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in the soul of the believer. This seals us more and more.

The early part of this work is performed in the power of the former rain. Its finishing stages are accomplished by the outpouring of the latter rain which achieves "the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 506.

Before we summarize the facts concerning the first seal, and pass on to the understanding of the second and final seal, we need to comprehend the work of the former and latter rain as the seal of the living God. This we shall proceed to do in the next chapter.

Chapter 18

The Former and Latter Rain

Nothing could be more important than that we clearly understand in what way it is that both the former rain and the latter rain are a part of the first seal and, as such, must be distinguished from the second or final seal, which is not the work of the Holy Spirit at all.

Many hold the concept that the latter rain is different in nature and work from the former rain; that while the former rain is concerned with a certain aspect of sin, the latter rain is concerned with another and different aspect of it. However, a careful study of the evidences given in the Word of God will show that this is not so. The truth is that the latter rain, by the same process exactly as that employed by the former rain, brings to completion the work begun and carried forward by the former rain.

To hold another view than this is to destroy the whole symbolism of the Word of God in this connection. As it is in nature, so it is in grace, for the same creative laws work in both dominions.

Therefore if we are to understand the work of the former and the latter rain and their relationship to each other in the spiritual realm, we must first be clear on their work and relationship to each other in the physical or earthly realm. If this were not so, then why should the Lord ever use the falling of the former and the latter rain in nature to illustrate the falling of the former and the latter rain in the spiritual world?

It is He who directs our attention to the falling of the rains in the world of nature and says, in effect, "Study that and understand it. Then you will be able to learn and understand the plan and the work of God in the giving of the former and latter rain."

If it is the Lord Himself who thus directs our minds to the symbolism to be found in the world of nature as the means of understanding this important subject, then we had better obey that direction and turn to the world of nature for our information. We can offer no excuse for not doing so. Nowhere is this truth more clearly expressed than in the following statement:

" 'Ask ye of the Lord rain in the time of the latter rain; so the Lord shall make bright clouds, and give them showers of rain.' 'He will cause to come down for you the rain, the former rain, and the latter rain.' *Zecharia* 10:1; *Joel* 2:23. In the East, the former rain falls at the sowing time, when it is necessary in order that the seed may germinate. Under the influence of the fertilizing showers, tender shoots spring up. The latter rain, falling near the close of the season, ripens the grain and prepares it for the sickle. The Lord employs these operations of nature to represent the work of the Holy Spirit. As the dew and the rain are given first to cause the seed to germinate and then to ripen the harvest, so the Holy Spirit is given to carry forward, from one stage to another, the process of spiritual growth. The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ.

"The latter rain, ripening earth's harvest, represents the spiritual grace that prepares the church for the coming of the Son of Man. But unless the former rain has fallen, there will be no life; the green blade will not spring up. Unless the early showers have done their work, the latter rain can bring no seed to perfection." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 506.

So that we shall not miss the message of this paragraph, let us focus our attention on just what it says. First, let us take this sentence again: "The Lord employs these operations of nature [the falling of the former and the latter rain and the results they accomplish] to represent the work of the Holy Spirit."

Here we have a clear and unmistakable directive to understand the workings of the rain in nature, as the revelation of the working of the Holy Spirit in the carrying forward of the work of God's grace in the soul of man. As it is in the natural world, so it will be in the spiritual. This is not to say that the work of the former and the latter rain can illustrate the full range of the work of the Holy Spirit. No one lesson taken from nature can do this, and knowing this, Jesus used many different illustrations from nature, in order to comprehensively reveal the full truth. But the former and the latter rain do teach certain aspects of the work of the Holy Spirit very clearly, and these we are to know and to understand.

Very naturally then, we are to turn first to a study of the former and the latter rain in the world of nature. The former rain falls at the beginning of the season, and it is that which causes the seed to germinate and spring forth. Under the impetus of this rain, the grain advances in growth into a lusty shoot, which, even though no head has as yet appeared, promises an abundant harvest.

This is followed by a petering out of the former rain resulting in a drier period during which the crop survives on occasional showers, and on moisture stored in the soil from the former rain. During this interval, growth continues to the point where the immature head of grain forms on the stalk. It is by no means yet ready for the harvest, and will never be if there is no latter rain to fill out the head and bring it to full maturity. So it is, that toward the end of the season, the anxious, waiting farmer is rewarded by the coming of the latter rain upon the crop. Now he knows there will be a harvest.

It needs to be emphasized that there is no possibility in nature of the grain's being ready for the sickle at the beginning of the latter rain. You will find no farmer on the whole earth who will rush out with his harvesting equipment and begin to gather in the grain the moment the rain begins to fall. Instead, he will patiently wait until the falling of the latter rain has given way to dry summer heat. Even then he will wait until the hot sun has hardened the grain, and turned its color to gold. Not until this is accomplished will he commence to reap his crop. The latter rain falls over a period of time, and every head of grain needs all of this outpouring throughout its full duration in order to be filled out to full maturity and readied for the harvest.

As the grain thus progresses toward readiness for reaping, the farmer will watch over it, testing its progress until at last he makes the final test and pronounces it ready for the ingathering. It is when the latter rain and the summer sun have completed their work, and are finished, that the judgment is passed on the grain—all of it—and then the harvest follows. None of it is judged as fit for the harvest at the beginning of the latter rain, while all of it is judged as being ready at the end of the latter rain. As it is in nature, so it must be in grace, or otherwise, why should the Lord ever have chosen the symbol of the activities of nature to illustrate the work of things in the spiritual realm?

Before we proceed to a study of the work of the spiritual rain, there is a further fact with which we must become familiar. It is that there is not the least shadow of difference between the former and the latter rain, so far as its own formula is concerned and so far as the work it does is concerned. Those who hold to the belief that the latter rain performs a different kind of work in the soul from that performed by the former rain, certainly can find no justification for their belief if they were to obey the injunction of the Word of God and use the activities of nature to illustrate the work in the spiritual world. They would be obliged to show how the latter rain did a different work for the plant than the former rain does.

But it does not.

Both are rain—condensed water vapor falling from the sky to be

soaked up by the earth wherein it penetrates to the roots of the plants, which, by the same process of absorption in each case, gather it with its dissolved plant foods into the plant structure. By the same identical processes of cell construction, the growth of the plant is carried forward in both the operation of the former and of the latter rain. The only difference is in the time when they fall; the one being at the beginning of the season and the other at the latter end of the season. This being so, the one completes the work which the other has begun, but both are outpourings of the same rain exactly. That is, one is not an outpouring of water, while another is an butpouring of some other chemical compound. Both are water.

Each and every person who has experienced the transforming power of the Holy Spirit in the changing of the life from sin to holiness, and the subsequent steady growth in the Christian life, should have no difficulty in understanding the work of the former rain at the beginning of their living experience in Jesus. Each will know that when they accepted salvation, the work was fresh and wonderful as the former rain came down in steady abundance. Then there followed additional showers after the initial outpouring, and under their influence, steady growth was made in the development of Christian character. But in nature, the falling of the former rain is followed by a dry spell. The sun burns down and something of its heat is felt. This does not mean that the influence of the rain is withdrawn, for the air is laden with moisture—evidence of which is given in the dew each morning—but there is a difference from what it was when the rain was falling in abundance at the beginning.

So, likewise, in the spiritual counterpart, it has been found that the first flush of the new experience is followed by a less spectacular period of quiet, solid development. The Holy Spirit has not been withdrawn. New each morning is the gentle dew of His presence, but now there are daily trials and difficulties calculated to stiffen the moral muscle and prepare us to receive the latter rain, which, if it came too early, would still fail in the accomplishment of its work.

But the former rain does not, and cannot complete the work of God's grace in the soul. This is the work of the latter rain, and it takes all of the latter rain to do it; just as it does in nature. This work will not be accomplished instantly when the first showers of the latter rain have fallen. It requires time for the latter rain to completely do its work. It is a process of growth, and growth always takes time. This is made clear in the following statement: "As the members of the body of Christ approach the period of their last conflict, 'the time of Jacob's trouble,' they will grow up into Christ, and will partake largely of His Spirit. As the third message swells to a loud cry, and as great power and glory attend the closing work, the faithful people of

Relationship of the Former Rain and Latter Rain in Nature

Former Rain	Latter Rain
Falls at the sowing time	Falls toward the end of the season
Causes germination	Completes the growth process
First the blade and ear	Then the full corn in the ear
Without the Former Rain, the Latter Rain is of no use	Without the Latter Rain, the crop fails
THIS IS RAIN	THIS ALSO IS RAIN

These Principles Hold True in the Spiriitual Realm

God will partake of that glory. It is the latter rain which revives and strengthens them to pass through the time of trouble. Their faces will shine with the glory of that light which attends the third angel." *SDA Bible Commentary 7:984.*

The time which immediately precedes the time of Jacob's trouble is the period of the latter rain. Notice, that when describing the experience of the people of God during this period, the words are used, "they will grow up into Christ." These words are used with the thought in mind of the natural world wherein the grain grows up during the period of the latter rain into full maturity. So it will be, that during the spiritual latter rain, the people of God will receive the final growth into full maturity, which will prepare them to endure the time of Jacob's trouble and, at the same time, be fitted for translation.

To further bear out the truth that the former rain does not complete the work of God's grace in the soul, we have but to return to the statement quoted above from Testimonies *to Ministers,* 506, where we read: "The ripening of the grain represents the completion of the work of God's grace in the soul. By the power of the Holy Spirit the

moral image of God is to be perfected in the character. We are to be wholly transformed into the likeness of Christ."

This clearly teaches us that, without the blessing of the latter rain and the work which it will do in the soul of each and every one who is alive when it comes time to receive it, the complete work of grace whereby we are brought to the place where, in actual fact, there is left no spot or wrinkle or any such thing in the soul, would not be possible. Therefore then, without the work of God's grace, which the latter rain will do in the soul, not one of us would ever be ready for translation. For this reason it is written that: "Those who come up to every point, and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will be fitted by the latter rain for translation." *Spiritual Gifts* 2:226.

This much must be clear, that the latter rain is needed in order to reach that final state of perfection which will fit us for translation—for entry into the kingdom of heaven without seeing death—but it must be emphasized again, that while the latter rain completes the work of God's grace in the soul, it is not a different process at all from the former rain, but the continuation of the very same process to ultimate and final completion. In other words, the seal of the Holy Spirit in the former rain is still the seal of the Holy Spirit in the latter rain. It is one and the same seal.

To illustrate the point, let us think of a team of workmen who, after reaching a certain point in their construction of a building, ceased operations on that structure for the time being. Perhaps they have to wait for a floor of concrete to dry or for some materials to arrive. Later the crew returns to complete the work begun earlier. In doing so, they use the same procedures, materials, and tools as formerly since the building is still the same building as before and has not changed except that it is getting taller and closer to completion.

Now, to complete the work of construction on this particular building, required that it be performed in two stages, but when it was complete, we would not describe it as being two different buildings, but one. It would not even be two different works but one complete work—the latter part being but the completion of the first part by the same workmen using the same methods and tools.

So, the same Workman—the Holy Spirit—comes in the former rain to begin the work of the character building. Then, at the end, He comes in the latter rain to complete that which He has begun. If His work in the beginning is the seal of the Holy Spirit, then His work in the end is the same seal still. The second seal, as we shall see as the study continues, is a different seal altogether; not involving the Holy Spirit at all. The failure to understand this distinction lies at the root

of all the misunderstanding of the nature of the work of the latter rain and the sealing.

But where does this leave those millions of Christians who died without ever receiving the latter rain, and who therefore passed to their graves without having had the work of God's grace completed in their souls? These certainly were not wholly transformed into the image of Christ. Will such be lost, or does the Judge of the universe have a lower standard for these?

There must be some balancing factor, for we know perfectly well that there will be a great multitude saved in the kingdom, including the faithful apostles, Moses, the martyrs of the Old and New Testaments, and many, many others who have never received the benefits of the latter rain. On the surface of it, the one fact would seem to deny the other, but there can be no contradiction, for there are no paradoxes in Scripture, despite the fact that many learned and unlearned claim that there are.

The simple explanation lies in a fact, which many believers recognize anyhow, that a different level of experience is needed for the successful passing through the time of Jacob's trouble and translation without seeing death, than for death and resurrection. It is important that we note and emphasize that it is a different *level* of the *same* experience, not a different kind of experience which is to be added to the work to be done by the Holy Spirit under the former rain. The truth of this is well expressed in the following statement from the Advent pioneer, James White:

"The mass of people think that if a person is prepared to die, he is prepared for the coming of the Lord. But they do not consider the difference between dying and standing alive to meet the Lord at His appearing. It is one thing to die in the Lord, to yield our spirits to Him while He is pleading for us before the Father's throne, and quite a different thing to stand in the time of trouble after Jesus has ceased to plead in man's behalf, after His priesthood is closed, and He is preparing to come to redeem His own and take vengeance on His foes. They who *realize* these things will bless heaven that means has been devised in the mercy of God for the perfection of the saints." *Life Sketches of James and Ellen White,* 431. This is from the original *Life Sketches,* and is not to be confused with the present book entitled *Life Sketches of Ellen G. White.*

A little reflection will show the truth of the above statement. A full revelation of all that stands between us and God is not given to us at conversion. A simple illustration of this fact is to be found in the case of the reformers such as Luther and Wesley, who did not in their whole life times observe the true Sabbath day. But this sin was not charged to their account, for having committed all things into the

hands of their Mediator, they could rest in the assurance that He, and not they, bore the responsibility of the unknown sins in their lives. In this way, they had perfect protection from the malice and power of the evil one and could be saved unto eternal life. This principle of the believer being responsible to obey only as far as he understands the truth, is plainly stated in the following reference:

"I saw that the present test on the Sabbath could not come until the mediation of Jesus in the holy place was finished and He had passed within the second veil; therefore Christians who fell asleep before the door was opened into the most holy, when the midnight cry was finished, at the seventh month, 1844, and who had not kept the true Sabbath, now rest in hope; for they had not the light and the test on the Sabbath which we now have since that door was opened. I saw that Satan was tempting some of God's people on this point. Because so many good Christians have fallen asleep in the triumphs of faith and have not kept the true Sabbath, they were doubting about its being a test for us now." *Early Writings,* 42.

What God required of them is exactly what He requires of every soul in every other age of this world's history, and that is, that they live up to all the light available to them while they lived. As they came up to test after test and point after point, and consistently showed that they would rather have Jesus than sin, they were giving an assurance that no matter what the Lord might show them, they would give that up too rather than lose heaven and eternal life with God.

But because they died before the latter rain shall fall, they have been deprived of the light which would have enabled them to reach a state of complete moral development into the image of Jesus while in this life. But they died progressing toward that, and living in perfect harmony with the will of God, so far as they had been able to know it. The Lord recognizes this as being the best that they could do, and He accepts it as the guarantee that if they were to have lived long enough to receive the latter rain, they would have taken every step necessary to achieve full character perfection.

So, upon their deaths, which are their personal closings of probation, the Lord, into whose hands they had committed all things, transferred to the sanctuary on their behalf all the undisclosed and unforsaken imperfection remaining in them. In this way, all of their sin goes beforehand to judgment to be transferred to the scapegoat on the great day of final accounts.

But, while all those who died in Christ before the Lord shall appear will have a Mediator standing for them right up to the point of the close of their personal probation which comes on them at the moment of death, those who live beyond the point where their probation closes, will no longer have a Mediator standing on their be-

half. The time when this situation shall prevail is known as the time of Jacob's trouble. It will be a fearful time.

"Says the prophet: 'Who may abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth? for He is like a refiner's fire, and like fullers' soap: and He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver: and He shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness.' Malachi3:2, 3. Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil. While the investigative judgment is going forward in heaven, while the sins of penitent believers are being removed from the sanctuary, there is to be a special work of purification, of putting away of sin, among God's people upon earth. This work is more clearly presented in the messages of *Revelation* 14." *Great Controversy,* 425

If, once probation has closed, they then have sin in them still, they would have to bear the responsibility themselves, for there will be no mediator to bear this for them. But they will not have the power to act on their own behalf, which means they cannot divest themselves of sinfulness. Therefore, any person who enters the time of Jacob's trouble with either known or unknown sinfulness in him, is joined to that sin for eternity. There will be absolutely no way of escape for such a person.

It will be a time when the characters of all will be fully revealed, for both the righteous and the wicked will be placed under the greatest possible pressure to act out their respective characters. The result will be that, in and through God's faithful remnant, His righteousness shall be seen at its shining, radiant best, while in and through those who have rejected His mercy, iniquity shall appear at its ugly, repulsive worst. See *The Seven Angels* by F. T. Wright. No longer will there be any hidden sins in anyone, for all will be revealed.

But where then can they send such sin? The sanctuary—the only place where we can send sin—is closed forever, so that any sin found in them then will be there forever. Inasmuch as every means by which sin can be removed from them will no longer be available to them or anyone else; all such sin must eternally remain in them, so that wherever they go, the sin must also go. If they were taken to heaven, the sin would go there too, and inasmuch as this can never be, then they would never be allowed to go there. If they were, then why ever did God put sin out of heaven and Paradise in the first case?

Therefore, in the very nature of the case as it stands, those who

live right through the time of Jacob's trouble when there will be no mediator between them and God, must have the ultimate level of perfection in their experience. The moral image of God must be perfected in them, and they must be wholly transformed into the likeness of Jesus. Therefore they must all have more light and power than that available to those who have gone before. Those who have gone before have had the blessing of the former rain, which took them so far along the path of development, but left them short of full maturity in their growth. Therefore they must of necessity pass through the tomb. But those who live will have the added development provided by the latter rain, which will bring them to full maturity. The latter rain completes the sealing work of the Holy Spirit begun by the former rain, but let it be emphasized again that this is not a different seal or a different kind of work. It is the same Holy Spirit, doing the same work, and giving the same seal exactly. This is the first seal. The second seal, as we shall see as this study progresses, is not given till after the Holy Spirit has completed His work, and both the former rain and the latter rain are ended.

So far in this study we have seen that the Word of God teaches that the latter rain completes the work of the perfecting of the believers, and that without it we could not possibly reach full maturity of Christian character and be fitted for translation. At once, this runs counter to the commonly held concept that no one will *receive* the latter rain until he has reached ultimate character perfection. It is because of the holding of this concept that so many have taken the position that the judgment of the living comes before the latter rain, so that, having been judged as reaching complete character perfection, they can receive the latter rain. But this concept is untenable, as we have seen from evidences so far in the Word of God; and will see even more clearly and strongly as we proceed in this series of studies.

But we must not pass on from this point without investigating the evidences upon which are based the conclusions that the latter rain comes upon those only who have reached finality of character perfection. Here are two statements which can be understood as supporting that view when held in a certain light:

"Today you are to have your vessel purified, that it may be ready for the heavenly dew, ready for the showers of the latter rain; for the latter rain will come, and the blessing of God will fill every soul that is purified from every defilement." *Evangelism,* 702.

"Those who come up to every point and stand every test, and overcome, be the price what it may, have heeded the counsel of the True Witness, and they will receive the latter rain, and thus be fitted for translation." *Testimonies* 1:187.

Taken alone without consideration of any other Scriptures, it

must be agreed that these statements would justify the position that the judgment of the living commences before the latter rain falls. But there is one thing we cannot safely do. We cannot come to a conclusion in Scripture without comparing Scripture with other Scripture to see just what the Word means when it uses certain expressions.

Such a comparison will show what the Lord regards as the facing of every test and the purification from every defilement. When we successfully face every test which has been brought to us so far, the Lord regards us as if we had faced them all, because the very same spirit of submission combined with trust in the Lord's power to save us from the evil one in that crisis, is that which is required to pass even the great final test. Our faith will then have to be stronger, of course, but it will be the same faith exactly, and, as we face today's trials with power and strength, we give evidence of the determination to face the final test in the same way. The principle involved is the same as that wherein the Lord regards as a murderer the man who has hatred in his heart toward his neighbor.

This does not mean that there is no need for us to pass the great final test. Even though the passing of every test brought to us, up till the time of the latter rain, has qualified us to *receive* the latter rain, we can still fail during the tests of the closing battle and in the great final test in particular.

Nothing could be clearer than this: The great final test, which we must pass before we can *receive* the final seal, does not come before, but at the very end of the latter rain. In chapter eleven of this series, the evidences regarding the great final test were presented, and these showed that it, as stated in Christ's *Object Lessons,* 412: "comes at the close of human probation when it is too late for the soul's need to supplied." Should the statement from volume one of the *Testimonies* mean, that to pass every test, we must pass the great final test too, before we could receive the latter rain, then the latter rain could not fall till after the close of probation for all mankind, when it would be too late to do any good at all for anyone.

The fact is, that no one will have attained to ultimate finality of sinless perfection before the outpouring of the latter rain, for it is the latter rain alone which can bring us to this level, once the former rain has done its work of preparation. Thus, the former and the latter rain provide us with the seal of the Holy Spirit whereby we are brought to the place where the devil will find nothing in us which will respond to his devices. All those who have this seal and pass the great final test are fitted to receive the second seal, without which we can never be finally and eternally secure against the devices of Satan. The subject of this second and final seal will be the study of our next chapter.

Chapter 19

The Second Seal

After having determined from the Word of God that there are two separate and distinct seals as different from each other as the first and second advents of Christ, we spent considerable time and space studying the first of the two seals. It was essential that we do this, for it is impossible to understand the second and final seal if we do not firstly have a clear understanding of the first seal. But now that we have that, we can and will pass on to a study of that second seal, the final seal, which is so distinct and separate from the first seal.

The first seal as we have seen is:

a work which is done in us day by day;

it is the work of the Holy Spirit, begun by the former rain and completed by the latter rain;

it is a process of settling

into the truth both intellectually and spiritually and is

therefore the work of this lifetime;

it seals sin out and righteousness in;

it prepares for the great final test;

it must be absolutely complete before the judgment.

It is thus clearly evident that the first sealing is a very comprehensive and wonderful gift to the repenting, believing child of God, which completes the work of God's grace in the soul. When that sealing work is finished there is no spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing left in the individual, and the devil can find nothing in him whatsoever to respond to his temptations. It is very proper and natural to ask then, If the first seal does all of that for me, then what need do I have for a second and final seal? What is there yet that I need, for which provision is not already made in this first seal? If I will then have the complete work of cleansing done in my soul and the moral image of Jesus completely formed within, then will I not be fit to enter heaven as the result of Christ's creative workmanship?

These are very good questions, for it is very evident that if the Lord has completed the work in my soul—and we have seen beyond any argument to the contrary that this is what the first seal does accomplish—then the Lord is not going to do any further work in my soul in the second seal. And neither will He. Let it be established in

the mind that the second seal is not concerned with a cleansing of the soul of man. That work by that time is complete, and you cannot complete that which has been completed, or perfect perfection.

At the same time, the second seal is still the sealing of the people of God. It is a work done for them though not in them, and inasmuch as the meaning of the seal is that it makes them secure against the entrance of sin, then in a way not accomplished by the first seal, this seal will give them a final and eternal protection against the intrusion of sin into their lives. This is but to say then that although they have the full character perfection within themselves necessary for re-admission into heaven, they still cannot enter there until this further work, not accomplished by the first seal, has been done for them. It is further to say that this work is something beyond the province of the Holy Spirit, something which even He cannot do for them. He has done all that He could do in the first seal, but now another must accomplish this final service for them.

This is not to limit the power of the Holy Spirit in the least. It is not to say that He is anything less than omnipotent. He is truly all-powerful in the fullest sense of the word, but it is not a question of power but one of province, for Jesus Christ has gained a right to do certain works by virtue of His sacrifice which none other but He can do. Thus we shall shortly see that the second seal is the work of the Saviour Himself and not of the Holy Spirit at all. Even so, while Jesus does the actual sealing work in this instance, the Holy Spirit plays a part in that He will be leading, guiding, and helping the people of God to understand this work as it goes forward for them, and to take the right relationship to it so that they can receive the full benefit of this final seal.

What then is this final work which gives to the people of God the second and final sealing against the intrusion of sin? Wherein has the first seal not provided the full and final protection?

The answer is simple and clear. To understand it we must turn to the unfolding of the gospel work as revealed in the sanctuary. In our previous study of the first seal, we saw how that the sin was taken into the sanctuary, thus removing the enemy from within the believer so that it could no longer open the gates to the enemy without. In the place of the evil agency, comes the indwelling presence of Jesus who will never open the gates to the devil and his temptations. Thus the soul is sealed against the power of sin, in just the same way as an earthly fortress would, by the same procedure, be made secure against an enemy from without.

To illustrate, let us suppose that a group of enemy agents who had been opening a castle's gates in order to admit enemy troops, had been detected, captured, and hurried off to a secure prison.

While they were held in the prison, they could not open the gates of the fortress from within to the foe without. So, with every entrance securely barred, and with the enemy agents held helpless in confinement, the castle was sealed against those who were attacking it from without.

That is a picture revealing the way in which the first seal is a seal. The same beautiful picture is portrayed in the following statement:

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

Now while this provision might seem to adequately dispose of the sin problem, it does not do so entirely. When the sinfulness which has been taken from the believer is placed in the sanctuary, it has yet to be finally atoned for and placed on the scapegoat, or permitted to return onto the sinner. Until that final disposal, we face the fearful possibility of all that sin being rolled back on us as if we had never even been cleansed of it in the first case. This was clearly taught by Jesus in the parable of the unjust steward as recorded in *Matthew* 18:21-35.

"Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?'

"Jesus said to him, 'I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven.

‘‘ Therefore the kingdom of heaven is like a certain king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants.

‘‘ 'And when he had begun to settle accounts, one was brought to him who owed him ten thousand talents.

" 'But as he was not able to pay, his master commanded that he be sold, with his wife and children and all that he had, and that payment be made.

" The servant therefore fell down before him, saying, "Master, have patience with me, and I will pay you all."

‘‘ Then the master of that servant was moved with compassion, released him, and forgave him the debt.

‘‘ 'But that servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, "Pay me what you owe!"

" 'So his fellow servant fell down at his feet and begged him, saying, ''Have patience with me, and I will pay you all.''

" 'And he would not, but went and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt.

" 'So when his fellow servants saw what had been done, they were very grieved, and came and told their master all that had been done.

" Then his master, after he had called him, said to him, "You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you begged me.

" ' "Should you not also have had compassion on your fellow servant, just as I had pity on you?"

" 'And his master was angry, and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him.

" 'So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses.' "

The steward was forgiven by his lord of a debt of such magnitude as to be far beyond the possibility of his ever repaying it. The forgiveness was full and complete, and, provided he met the condition of treating his fellow-servant as he himself had been treated, he would have been as free of that debt as if he had never incurred it in the first case. So it is in the work of man's salvation:

"Righteousness is obedience to the law. The law demands righteousness, and this the sinner owes to the law; but he is incapable of rendering it. The only way in which he can attain to righteousness is through faith. By faith he can bring to God the merits of Christ, and the Lord places the obedience of his Son to the sinner's account. Christ's righteousness is accepted in place of man's failure, and God receives, pardons, justifies, the repentant, believing soul, treats him as though he were righteous, and loves him as he loves his Son. This is how faith is accounted righteousness; and the pardoned soul goes on from grace to grace, from light to a greater light. He can say with rejoicing, 'Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.' " *Review and Herald,* November 4,1890.

"It was possible for Adam, before the fall, to form a righteous character by obedience to God's law. But he failed to do this, and because of his sin our natures are fallen and we cannot make ourselves righteous. Since we are sinful, unholy, we cannot perfectly obey the holy law. We have no righteousness of our own with which to meet the claims of the law of God. But Christ has made a way of escape for us. He lived on earth amid trials and temptations such as we have to meet. He lived a sinless life. He died for us, and now He offers to take our sins and give us His righteousness. If you give yourself to Him,

and accept Him as your Saviour, then, sinful as your life may have been, for His sake you are accounted righteous. Christ's character stands in place of your character, and you are accepted before God just as if you had not sinned." Steps *to Christ,* 62.

The man in the parable did not treat his fellow who owed him but a small debt as he himself had been forgiven. When the master heard that, then the forgiveness was taken away from him, and his debt was back upon his own head as *if he had never been forgiven at all.* The entire parable is taught to make this point, namely that the penalty is rolled back on the person who does not maintain his righteousness, as completely as if he had never been forgiven in the first case.

The story is told to illustrate spiritual truth, Jesus making it very clear that "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses." *Matthew* 18:35.

And Jesus was but reiterating a truth already made clear in the Old Testament. "But if a wicked man turns from all his sins which he has committed, keeps all My statutes, and does what is lawful and right, he shall surely live; he shall not die.

"None of the transgressions which he has committed shall be remembered against him; because of the righteousness which he has done, he shall live.

"Do I have any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? says the Lord God, and not that he should turn from his ways and live?

"But when a righteous man turns away from his righteousness and commits iniquity, and does according to all the abominations that the wicked man does, shall he live? All the righteousness which he has done shall not be remembered; because of the unfaithfulness of which he is guilty and the sin which he has committed, because of them he shall die." *Ezekiel* 18:21-24.

Thus the Word of the Living God makes it very clear that there can be no such thing as once saved, always saved. While it is true that pardon and cleansing are the very effective means of providing us with a standing of righteousness in our daily experience, it is also to be understood that such pardon and cleansing are conditional on our faithfulness to the end.

Here on this earth we are on probation. Our destiny is not yet finally and eternally sealed. The sins which we have confessed and handed over to the Saviour as our High Priest are safe and secure in the sanctuary until the great day of final atonement, but then, if we are found to be unfaithful, they will come back on our own heads just as if we had never been forgiven.

This is also clearly taught in the following extract: "Important

The First Seal	The Second Seal
The work of the Holy Spirit, begun by the former rain and completed by the latter rain;	A single act performed in the heavenly sanctuary at the end of probationary time;
The truth both intellectually and spiritually and is	Not a work done in us but;
Therefore the work of this lifetime;	A mighty work done for us;
Seals sin out and righteousness in;	Provided after the great, final test for those alone who pass that test;
Prepares for the great, final test;	Not the seal of the Holy Spirit;
Must be absolutely complete before the judgment.	The work of Christ, as the great High Priest;
	Available only to those who have received the first seal;
	In every respect, the eternal sealing and securing of those who receive it.

truths concerning the atonement are taught in the typical service. A substitute was accepted in the sinner's stead; but the sin was not cancelled by the blood of the victim. A means was thus provided by which it was transferred to the sanctuary. By the offering of blood, the sinner acknowledged the authority of the law, confessed his guilt in transgression, and expressed his desire for pardon through a Redeemer to come; but he was not yet entirely released from the condemnation of the law." *Great Controversy,* 420.

And there is nothing in the daily service which will bring that full release. Nor can the first seal provide the protection needed to make us eternally secure from the return of those sins which have been separated from us in the daily services. Throughout the hours of our earthly probation we are still in a position wherein there is the open door of the possibility of that sin returning upon us again. It is a door which we need to have sealed forever, so that the sin can never ever come back upon us. It would be a terrible thing to have all our sins poised to fall on us for all eternity.

It must be very apparent that the provision for the sealing off of any possibility of the sin returning upon us from the sanctuary, is a very different work from that of getting sin out of us and putting it into the sanctuary in the first case. Yet both, in the truest sense, are a

sealing against sin into righteousness. The first work is preliminary to the second, for if we did not have the first seal, then there would be no sin in the sanctuary from the return of which we would need to be protected. Yet while the first is preliminary to the second, it cannot be complete in itself, and without the second, all that was accomplished under the first seal would be of no avail whatsoever.

This is a fact which needs to be made quite clear. Think of the situation as follows. A believer has faithfully put away every sin which has ever been shown to him and has laid hold upon the righteousness of Jesus to take their place. He has come up to and received all the benefit of the latter rain, thus having had the full measure of the character of Christ developed within him. He has faced and passed the great final test which comes at the close of human probation, and thus has all the inward fitness to enter heaven.

But, the final atonement to be made in the sanctuary has not yet been made for him, even though all the conditions have been met and the time for it has arrived. Until the ministry of Christ in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary shall provide the final atonement for the sins of the righteous, up there in heaven is the awful accumulation of all of his past sins with the possibility of their returning to him in the end. The man has received the full benefit of the work of the first seal. The Holy Spirit by virtue of the province He occupies, has done all He can do for the individual, but this does not seal him against the return of that fearful load of evil. That is a different work. It is the other seal and it can be effected by One Person only and that is Jesus the High Priest, who by virtue of His spilt blood can and will, having entered the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, sprinkle His blood upon the mercy seat and thus make the final atonement for our confessed and forsaken sins. At this point everything depends upon Him. Just as Queen Esther was the one person in existence who could go in before the king and plead for Israel of old, so Jesus will be the only one in existence who can go in and plead before the King of kings for Israel.

But He does not do this from obligation merely. His is not a service of compulsion other than that of the divine compulsion of an indwelling and unquenchable love. His ever has been and ever will be a willing sacrifice. Cost Him what it may, we know that He will go through with the final atonement without the least hesitation. On this we can rely with the greatest of certainty and assurance although, during the judgment of the living, our confidence that He will, shall be tested to the uttermost.

But there is a danger that we underestimate the full implications of what this means to us. Therefore, in an effort both to bring home to us how vitally important it is that Jesus does make the final atone-

ment, and to show the nature and work of the second seal, let us suppose that Jesus in the end will refuse to go through with His work.

Now we all know that our great High Priest will not for an instant refuse to make the final atonement for the sins of the righteous. But, in order to understand how much depends on Christ's making that final atonement, we need to see the awful consequences which would follow should He refuse. That is to say, we are supposing for the moment that He would actually refuse to do this vital ministry, when the time comes for Him to step to the mercy seat and sprinkle His blood for the final atonement for our sins by virtue of which act He is able to take all the sins of the true people of God and place them upon the scapegoat.

What then?

What would this mean to the man here upon this earth at that time who, while living, had received the full benefit of the daily sealing, the full impression of the Spirit of God in the character of Christ in his life, the moral fitness for entrance into heaven, and in whose heart throbbed the hope of translation? We need consider no other individual than such for the rest cannot receive the benefit of the final atonement anyway.

It would mean that his sins could not and would not go onto the scapegoat, for only by Christ's making the final atonement can this be achieved. But neither could they remain any longer in the sanctuary from which they must now be promptly cleansed. The limit of time during which they can remain there has expired. The judgment has come demanding the cleansing of the sanctuary and it will have what it demands. Therefore the sin must be taken out of the sanctuary, and it must be sent somewhere. Inasmuch as it cannot under such circumstances be placed upon the scapegoat, then it must be returned to the individual himself. There is no other alternative, and such would mean that there would be no salvation for us at all, but only the darkness of an eternal night. And this would still be so even though the individual had received all the benefits of the first seal.

In the light of these clear facts, no one should have the least difficulty in seeing that the first seal does not provide us with the protection from the possibility of the return to us from the sanctuary of all our confessed sins. At the same time it must not be forgotten that the first seal is indispensable. It must be experienced in order to receive the second. It is preliminary but it is not final. Wonderful and perfect as it is, if it were the only seal received, we could not, in the end, have salvation.

Thus it is that the first seal takes us so far but leaves us unsealed against the awful possibility of the return of all of our sins in the great day of judgment, but when Jesus steps to the mercy seat and sprin-

kles His blood as He most certainly will do for every truly repentant child of God who has received all the benefits of the Holy Spirit's work in the first seal, then the sin is placed upon the scapegoat and we are then eternally secure against the return of sin in any shape or form.

That final work of Jesus in the sanctuary sets a seal of protection upon us by shutting off forever any possibility of sin regaining its dominion over the people of God. This is the second and final seal which, while still a sealing out of sin and a sealing in of righteousness as is the first seal in its own way, is different in every other respect from the first seal.

As we summarized the facts of the first seal let us now summarize the facts of the second so as to show the difference clearly and distinctly. The second seal:

is a single act performed in the heavenly sanctuary at the end of probationary time;

is not a work done in us but;

is a mighty work done for us;

is provided after the great, final test for those alone who pass that test;

is not the seal of the Holy Spirit;

is the work of Christ, as the great High Priest;

is available only to those who have received the first seal;

is, in every respect, the eternal sealing and securing of those who receive it.

Before we close off this chapter, we would do well to spend a little time in studying the implications of not understanding correctly the differences between the two seals. It is by no means too much to say that a misunderstanding of these differences will result in the certain loss of eternal life now that we live in the time when the light is here and the implications of the two seals are of importance to the living.

When the Pharisees and Jews of old were not able to understand the differences between the two advents of Christ, it cost them their eternal lives, for they were led to expect Him to arrive at His first advent as He was due to arrive at the second. When He did not come in the way their incorrect method of study had led them to expect Him, they rejected Him and lost their eternal lives in consequence. It was as serious as that. So will the wrong understanding of the seals lead us to take a position which will cost us our eternal lives. Let us see how this will be.

The difficulty with the Jew of old was that he saw only the one advent where he should have seen that there were two. Likewise, the average professed child of God today sees but the one seal where he should see two or, to make matters even worse he divides the former

and the latter rain, which is the first seal, into two seals making them different from each other.

When the false understanding is held that there is only one seal, the following line of reasoning is inevitable. First of all it is noted that the seal of God is given to the individual after he has been judged and his sins are blotted from the sanctuary.

This is true of the second seal only.

Next, it is noted that the sealing is a work done in the believer by the Holy Spirit especially during the outpouring of the latter rain whereby the work of character perfection in his soul is brought to completion. This also is true, but this time of the first seal only.

Here then we have the gathering together of certain facts about the seals of God. The facts are true, but the mistake is that the student has gathered them together as if they were all describing the same seal, when in fact they are not.

Having thus brought them together as descriptions of the one seal, then the following conclusions must result. If the seal of God is given in the judgment, and if that same seal accomplishes the final work of character perfecting in the saints, then it must follow that we will come to the judgment with that character work still incomplete, still with shortcomings, weaknesses, and defects of character to be removed so that we can stand in full perfection before the Lord. It will mean that we do not come to the judgment with character perfection, but that the final cleansing of the soul will follow the judgment.

Furthermore, if we take it that the seal of God is given in the judgment and that the latter rain is that same seal, then it must also be that the latter rain must follow and not precede the judgment. That is to say, that the judgment of the living must come to an individual first and then after he has been judged and found to have fulfilled the required conditions, then he is given the gift of the latter rain and sent forth to give the loud cry to others who will in turn be judged, sealed with the latter rain, and sent forth to gather others until the last one has been gathered in.

This is the only possible conclusion which can be drawn while ever the student sees but the one seal instead of the two. Let it not be overlooked that, while the one seal only is seen instead of two, then the Scriptures can be powerfully used to support that theory, which in turn will have convincing weight on the minds of all who see only the one seal where they should see the two.

But how will this cost one his eternal life?

Your faith and belief govern your character development. Jesus said, "And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." *John* 8:32. That is to say, only truth will make you free. Error will not. If you believe that you will be coming to the judgment clad in

the filthy garments of a defective character, then that is exactly how you will come. And as surely as you do, you will be examined and found to have spots, and wrinkles, and such things. But all who would gain eternal life, in that day "must be tested and found without spot or wrinkle or any such thing." *Great Controversy,* 490. To be in any other condition is to be cast out and to lose one's eternal life with dreadful certainty.

And if we believe that the latter rain comes only on those who have been judged and sealed, then the very moment anyone received the outpouring of that Spirit, he would immediately assume that he was now eternally secure and there would be no more need of faith at the very time when he needed to live by faith the most.

If only the Jews in the days of Christ had understood the difference between two things which were called by the same name and yet were different, they would not have lost their eternal lives. And today, if only we can understand the difference between the two seals which are called by the same name and yet are different, then we too shall be saved from the consequences of thus being deceived.

Today is the time to make sure that the law of God is written in our foreheads and in our hearts and then, we shall have the preparation to receive the great final seal when that time comes. May each one make his calling and election sure.

Chapter 20

The Loud Cry Begins

In the previous chapters, a number of different aspects of last day events have been studied by which certain landmarks have been established and a number of correct principles have been laid down. Without this ground-work, we would be unprepared to understand the sequence of events which transpires during the closing events of the great and terrible battle between the God of heaven, as the leader of His people on this earth on the one hand, and the devil, as the leader of the beast and his image on the other. We would do very well at this point to briefly review what we have learned so far before we trace through the step-by-step developments which will culminate in the restoration of God's eternal kingdom.

The great Second Advent Movement has been in the world since 1831, announcing the present judgment of the dead and the coming judgment of the living, revealing the wonderful work of Jesus in the sanctuary in heaven, and proclaiming the Sabbath truth. But the churches of the world have rejected this light, and this has resulted in their and the world's moral decay.

This, the leaders will blame on "the desecration of Sunday", thus further increasing their rejection of God's truth and their support for the institution of the Papacy, with the result that, throughout the entire world, the door will be opened still further for rebellion, lawlessness, and spiritualism to manifest themselves. This gives the devil greater control over the elements, and more and more, he will unleash the forces of nature over which he has a measure of control, with the result that devastations of every kind will exact a fearful toll of life and property.

The church leaders, eager to secure the power of the state to replace the lost power of God, will finally unite, and will present to the civil authorities the argument that all their troubles are due to the disregard for the "sanctity of Sunday", and these troubles will not cease until Sunday observance shall be enforced as the only means of restoring law and order. And the authorities, not realizing that this

is the very worst thing they could possibly do to restore any law or order, will bow to the argument, and enforce the Sunday law legislation. The image of the beast is then set up, and the fall of Babylon the Great is thus completed; the time having come for the fourth angel to lighten the earth with his glory.

While the world has thus been moving inevitably into the throes of this final disaster and self-destruction, the Lord has been preparing His army for the battle. The study of the seven angels of *Revelation* 14 and 18, shows that the people of the third angel's movement will not finish the work to be done before probation closes, but the movement of the fourth angel will.

The prophecy of *Matthew* 22 further confirms that the bidden ones who are identified as the professed people of the Lord, will never give the loud cry. This task will be fulfilled by the faithful servants who carried the final invitation, warning, and call to the bidden ones, who so definitely and swiftly rejected their efforts. As the time approaches for the giving of the loud cry, the faithful servants who make up the nucleus of the fourth angel's movement, draw into a very close unity and develop in character and moral worth, so that the Lord can use them in the final battle.

The rejection of this warning and invitation to the bidden ones causes a definite shaking among the professed people of God, with the result that the faithful ones are thrust out—an event already in the past. Despite this, many are still looking in the future for the shaking to come, not realizing that there are two shakings; the first being caused by the straight testimony of the True Witness to the Laodiceans, and the second by the physical test at the end of the loud cry period.

The judgment of the living does not commence with the loud cry, but is located at the end of it, when the great final test of the death decree is imposed on the people of the Lord. Not one of them can receive the second and final seal until he has passed that dreadful test, the passing of which determines whether or not he shall receive the final sealing. It is the latter rain which completes the work of God's grace in the souls of the believers as they approach this final test, thus finishing in them the work of the first seal, in preparation for the receiving of that final seal.

Having permitted the Word of God to establish these facts for us, it is time to begin a detailed step-by-step study of the events during the loud cry itself. Nowhere is this better set out than in the chapter entitled, "The Final Warning", beginning on page 603 of *The Great Controversy,* and it is intended that these pages shall be the basis of our study for this section. It is interesting to note that in the original 1884 edition, this chapter was entitled "The Loud Cry". The

change is merely in the wording, not the meaning, for is not the loud cry the final warning to the world?

The first three pages of the chapter are devoted to a discussion of the nature of the issues at stake in the great struggle. Quoted first of all is the reference from *Revelation* 18:1, 2, 4, which speaks of the other angel, who lightens the earth with his glory and proclaims that Babylon the Great is fallen, followed by the other voice, which calls upon God's people to come out of her, so that they receive not of her plagues.

Then immediately comes this interesting and important comment: "This Scripture points forward to a time when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of *Revelation* 14, (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various churches that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844."

It is important that this statement be kept in mind, for where we find that these conditions are being fulfilled, we may know that the loud cry has begun.

We are here informed that a terrible condition of unrighteousness will have developed at this time as it is written:

"A terrible condition of the religious world is here described. With every rejection of truth the minds of the people will become darker, their hearts more stubborn, until they are entrenched in an infidel hardihood. In defiance of the warnings which God has given, they will continue to trample upon one of the precepts of the Decalogue, until they are led to persecute those who hold it sacred. Christ is set at nought in the contempt placed upon His word and His people. As the teachings of spiritualism are accepted by the churches, the restraint imposed upon the carnal heart is removed, and the profession of religion will become a cloak to conceal the basest iniquity. A belief in spiritual manifestations opens the door to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, and thus the influence of evil angels will be felt in the churches." *Great Controversy,* 603, 604.

These words are entirely believable, for they describe conditions into which the world is descending with ever increasing rapidity before our very eyes. We are witnesses of these fulfilling prophecies which we know will soon reach complete fulfillment. Unrepentant mankind is doomed. We need no convincing of the veracity of these predictions. These statements need no further comment.

As may well be expected, the fall into total apostasy by the world in general, is but to follow the leadership of her—Babylon the Great—who will have plumbed those depths ahead of all the rest, and, in do-

ing so, will have dragged all those who follow her down with her. It is no wonder then that at this time it is declared that her fall is complete:

"Of Babylon, at the time brought to view in this prophecy, it is declared: 'Her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.' *Revelation* 18:5. She has filled up the measure of her guilt, and destruction is about to fall upon her." *Great Controversy,* 604.

Those few lines are all that are necessary to confirm that, when these conditions shall have been reached, Babylon the Great will have totally fallen, never to rise again. But, while the door of mercy will be closed forever at this time against those who share in Babylon's utter downfall, there will be those who have not identified with Babylon, and from among these a great harvest of souls is to be gathered. They shall not be left to perish, but will be given the fullest opportunity to escape from Babylon forever.

"But God still has a people in Babylon; and before the visitation of His judgments these faithful ones must be called out, that they partake not of her sins and *'receive* not of her plagues.' Hence the movement symbolized by the angel coming down from heaven, lightening the earth with his glory and crying mightily with a strong voice, announcing the sins of Babylon. In connection with his message the call is heard: 'Come out of her, My people.' These announcements, uniting with the third angel's message, constitute the final warning to be given to the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 604.

Even now they are out there in large numbers hidden among those in Babylon who have no interest in the truth as it is written:

"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected. As these bodies depart further and further from the truth, and ally themselves more closely with the world, the difference between the two classes will widen, and it will finally result in separation. The time will come when those who love God supremely can no longer remain in connection with such as are 'lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof.' " *Great Controversy,* 390.

"Notwithstanding the widespread declension of faith and piety, there are true followers of Christ in these churches. Before the final visitation of God's judgments upon the earth there will be among the

people of the Lord such a revival of primitive godliness as has not been witnessed since apostolic times. The Spirit and power of God will be poured out upon His children. At that time many will separate themselves from those churches in which the love of this world has supplanted love for God and His word. Many, both of ministers and people, will gladly accept those great truths which God has caused to be proclaimed at this time to prepare a people for the Lord's second coming. The enemy of souls desires to hinder this work; and before the time for such a movement shall come, he will endeavor to prevent it by introducing a counterfeit. In those churches which he can bring under his deceptive power he will make it appear that God's special blessing is poured out; there will be manifest what is thought to be great religious interest. Multitudes will exult that God is working marvelously for them, when the work is that of another spirit. Under a religious guise, Satan will seek to extend his influence over the Christian world." *Great Controversy,* 464.

"Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought. The powers of earth, uniting to war against the commandments of God, will decree that 'all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond' *(Revelation* 13:16), shall conform to the customs of the church by the observance of the false sabbath. All who refuse compliance will be visited with civil penalties, and it will finally be declared that they are deserving of death. On the other hand, the law of God enjoining the Creator's rest day demands obedience and threatens wrath against all who transgress its precepts." *Great Controversy,* 604.

As stated in this last paragraph, the final showdown will be over the validity of the seventh-day Sabbath versus the first-day of the week as the proper day of worship. But, it would be superficiality of the most dangerous kind to envisage this fearful confrontation as being merely a great battle aimed at proving which day of the week is designated as the divinely appointed day of worship. That issue has long ago been settled, with all the great religious leaders of the denominations large and small, including the Roman Catholic Church, freely admitting that the seventh day is the day appointed by Jehovah.

But, while they can live with this admission, they will manifest the worst kind of hostility towards the Sabbath when it is presented in its purity and power, and against those who will remain unswervingly loyal to all that for which it stands. This alerts us to the fact that there is Sabbath-keeping in the true sense of the word, and there is seventh-day observance. This latter claims to be the genuine article, though it is in fact nothing more than a powerless counterfeit. The more men are deceived by this, the better Satan is pleased.

In the final showdown, the Sabbath of God will be the symbol for all the issues to be settled in that final, titanic struggle. Where the Sabbath of God is found, there the power of God is in residence, for the two are inseparable. See, *Living Righteousness and the Sabbath of* God, by F. T. Wright.

So then, when the almighty power of the omnipotent God spoke the worlds into existence, there the Sabbath appeared. It required that same power to structure the kingdom on earth as in heaven, and once again, there was the Sabbath. The gospel is the power of God sent into the world in Jesus Christ to save us from our sins. The product is the new creation. Again, there is the Sabbath, inseparable from the power of God.

The Sabbath rightly understood and received, is that which Satan fears, for the powers at his command and as symbolized by the Sunday flag, are totally insignificant. Yet, because he has implanted his mind and spirit into billions of deceived mortals, he is able to mount a formidable onslaught against the Lord's people at this time of the end.

If only he could sweep away all the manifestations and operations of the power of God, then he will have torn down the Sabbath, the flag which marks where God's presence and authority reside. With the departure of God's presence, Satan gains possession of the vacant territory. Then, cut off from salvation, we all perish. The devil too will perish for he depends on God to sustain him. It is no wonder that: "Fearful is the issue to which the world is to be brought." *Great Controversy,* 604.

Many volumes could be written analyzing the nature of the issues to be forever settled in the last great battle of the ages between good and evil, but we have only space enough to make the point that the controversy will be far more comprehensive and profound than arguing over which day of the week is the Sabbath day. Each one who has determined to stand loyally on the side of truth needs to search deeply into these things, for, in the rapidly approaching showdown, every man, woman, and child must make a total commitment to truth or error, light or darkness, righteousness or sin, the power of God or the power of Satan, the Sabbath or Sunday.

"With the issue thus clearly brought before him, whoever shall trample upon God's law to obey a human enactment receives the mark of the beast; he accepts the sign of allegiance to the power which he chooses to obey instead of God. The warning from heaven is: 'If any man worship the beast and his image, and *receive* his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation.' *Revelation* 14:9, 10.

"But not one is made to suffer the wrath of God until the truth has been brought home to his mind and conscience, and has been rejected. There are many who have never had an opportunity to hear the special truths for this time. The obligation of the fourth commandment has never been set before them in its true light. He who reads every heart and tries every motive will leave none who desire a knowledge of the truth, to be deceived as to the issues of the controversy. The decree is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently." *Great Controversy,* 604, 605.

We can be thankful that at that time the issue will not be clouded, but will be clearly brought before the people, as we read:

"The *decree* is not to be urged upon the people blindly. Everyone is to have sufficient light to make his decision intelligently." *Great Controversy,* 605.

Of course, the devil will spare no effort or expense to make the issue as clouded as possible, but despite that, the power attending the message will clarify every issue so that no one will have any excuse. For a period of time unknown to us at this moment, and nowhere revealed in the Word of God, the battle will rage on, until at last, the whole world is brought to the great final test, which, as we have learned previously, is at "the close of human probation." *Christ's Object Lessons,* 412.

Then, as the following statement clearly shows, the one class will have received the mark of the beast, while the other class will have received the seal of the living God.

"The Sabbath will be the great test of loyalty, for it is the point of truth especially controverted. When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While the observance of the false Sabbath in compliance with the law of the state, contrary to the fourth commandment, will be an avowal of allegiance to a power that is in opposition to God, the keeping of the true Sabbath, in obedience to God's law, is an evidence of loyalty to the Creator. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God." *Great Controversy,* 605.

Note very carefully that the events in this paragraph are dated by the statement: "When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men. ..." Therefore, knowing as we do that the final test comes upon men at the very close of human probation when the loud cry has ended and the final warning has been given, then the division between those who make their final choice for Sunday and those who

make it for the Sabbath will be seen. It is then that all of these two classes will have received, respectively, the mark of the beast and the seal of God.

None can receive the seal of the living God until he has maintained his unswerving loyalty to God under the awesome pressure of all the increasingly severe tests leading up to and including the great final test. As we shall shortly see, there will be a series of increasingly stiffer and stiffer tests beginning at the present time and ending with the great final test. The major tests in their order will be: general persecution, the threat of fines and imprisonment, the deprivation of the right to buy and sell, betrayal by family members, friends, and apostate believers, and the death decree.

Those who run this fearful gauntlet cannot afford to fail at any point on the way up, for, should they do so, they will, at that point *receive* the mark of the beast, and thus be eternally lost. They do not need to face any more tests after that in order to determine their eternal destiny, for that will be decided by their failure to measure up to the test so far. For instance, those who cannot endure the trial imposed by the threat of fines and imprisonment, have no hope of surviving the much greater pressure of the buy and sell *decree,* and the resistance of all such would, in the face of the death decree, crumble to powder.

But, on the other hand, the true people of God who will be alive at that time cannot receive the seal before the great final test, for by it, and not by any lesser test, the eternal destiny of God's people shall be decided.

Thus it is plainly written: "The Lord has shown me clearly that the image of the beast will be formed before probation closes; for it is to be the great test for the people of God, by which their eternal destiny will be decided. . . . *[Revelation* 13:11-17 quoted which includes the death decree.]. . .

' This is the test that the people of God must have before they are sealed." *SDA Bible Commentary 7-.976.*

This statement applies to those who are still in the great valley of decision during the loud cry period, including those who give the message, for they can still turn back if they should weaken. No one will be eternally secure until, having passed the judgment of the living, his accumulated sins in the heavenly sanctuary are blotted out, and placed upon the scapegoat. This is the ministry performed by Christ which finally and eternally seals the believer in everlasting righteousness.

This will be the time of final separation between those who receive the seal of God or the mark of the beast.

In truth, then, it is written that,

"When the final test shall be brought to bear upon men, then the line of distinction will be drawn between those who serve God and those who serve Him not. While one class, by accepting the sign of submission to earthly powers, receive the mark of the beast, the other choosing the token of allegiance to divine authority, receive the seal of God." *Great Controversy,* 605.

This statement is in perfect harmony with this other from Christ's *Object Lessons,* 122,123:

"When the mission of the gospel is completed, the judgment will accomplish the work of separation. When the work of the gospel is completed, there immediately follows the separation between the good and the evil, and the destiny of each class is forever fixed."

Chapter 21

The Loud Cry Develops

VJe have been studying the first three pages of the chapter in *Great Controversy,* entitled "The Final Warning", wherein we have found revealed the magnitude of the issues to be fought out in the period of the falling of the latter rain. That concluded, we are brought back to the present so that we might be carried forward in a more detailed survey of the events to transpire each in their turn.

It is on the bottom of *Great Controversy,* 605, that there begins such a step-by-step description of the events of the loud cry, as is matched nowhere else in the inspired Word. The first words take us right back to a point leading immediately to the beginning of the loud cry and then moves on, step-by-step to the very end of the outpouring of the latter rain. We shall quote these words, pausing every now and then to draw your attention to the significance of the information given.

"Heretofore those who presented the truths of the third angel's message have often been regarded as mere alarmists. Their predictions that religious intolerance would gain control in the United States, that church and state would unite to persecute those who keep the commandments of God, have been pronounced groundless and absurd. It has been confidently declared that this land could never become other than what it has been—the defender of religious freedom. But as the question of enforcing Sunday observance is widely agitated, the event so long doubted and disbelieved is seen to be approaching, and the third message will produce an effect which it could not have had before." *Great Controversy,* 605, 606.

This paragraph speaks of the things to happen just before the loud cry actually begins. On the part of the vast majority, there has been complete disbelief in the possibility of free America ever imposing pressure and persecution on any who would not observe an ordinance of the church, but there comes the time when the event is seen to be approaching, and then the third angel's message will grow in power and influence until it is joined by the angel of *Revelation* 18,

at which point the loud cry proper begins. It is worth comparing the statement from *Great Controversy* with the one from *Early Writings, 211.*

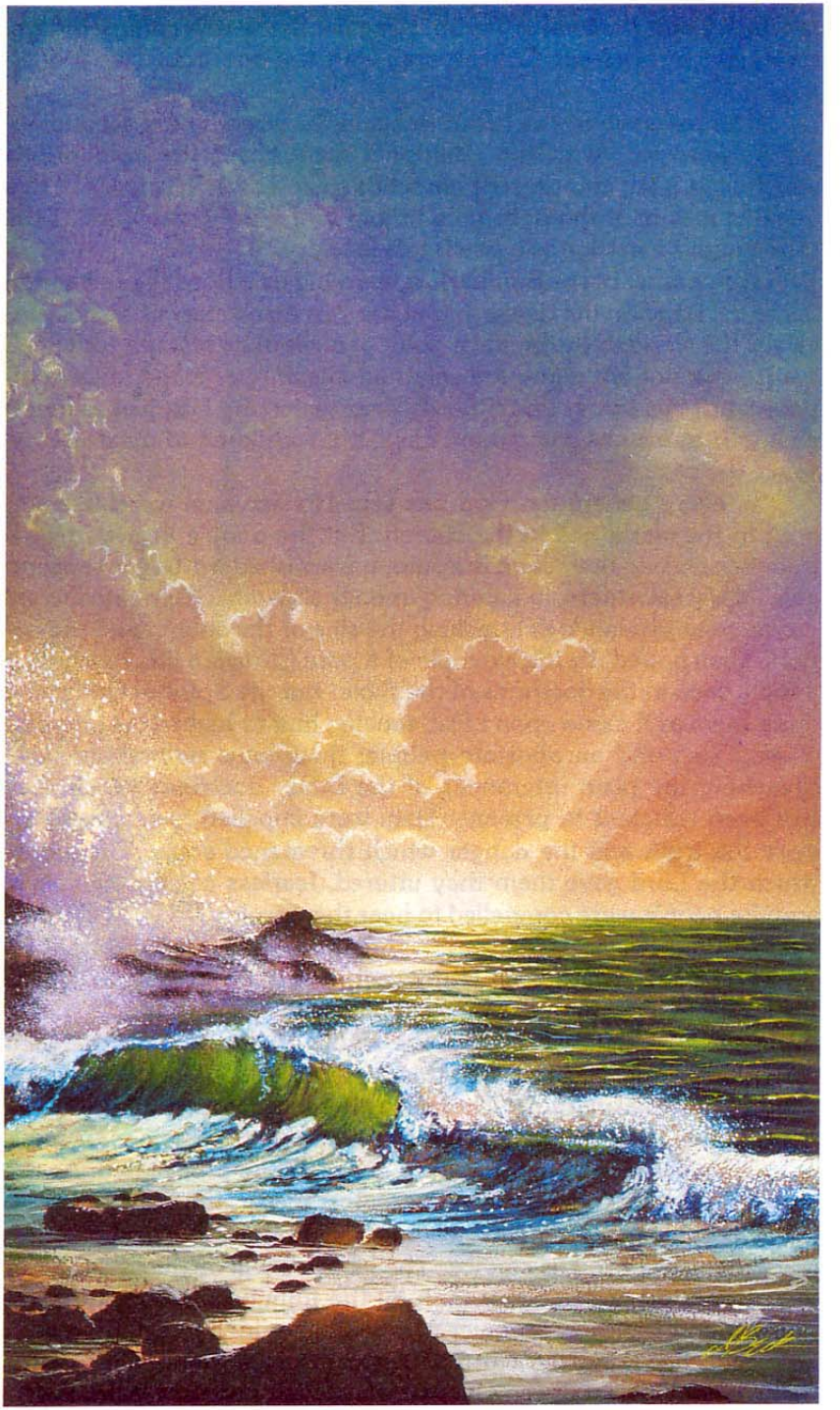
"The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry."

This passing of the Sunday law, marking as it does the full and final fall of Babylon the Great so that her sins reach clear up to heaven, brings the world to the greatest point of crisis in its history; for which the Lord is not left without a solution. His answer is the fullest outpouring of His power upon the children which are His, just as in the past, His Spirit has come upon His faithful children to meet the crises of the past.

"In every generation God has sent His servants to rebuke sin, both in the world and in the church. But the people desire smooth things spoken to them, and the pure, unvarnished truth is not acceptable. Many reformers, in entering upon their work, determined to exercise great prudence in attacking the sins of the church and the nation. They hoped, by the example of a pure Christian life, to lead the people back to the doctrines of the Bible. But the Spirit of God came upon them as it came upon Elijah moving him to rebuke the sins of a wicked king and an apostate people; they could not refrain from preaching the plain utterances of the Bible—doctrines which they had been reluctant to present. They were impelled to zealously declare the truth and the danger which threatened souls. The words which the Lord gave them they uttered, fearless of consequences, and the people were compelled to hear the warning." Great *Controversy,* 606.

Thus it has always been in the past, and it will be no different in the future beginning of the loud cry. A fearful crisis will have arisen, the result of which will be that the whole world will be threatened with total self-destruction. Into this the Lord will not let them plunge without one final warning. Therefore He sends His mighty Spirit in a flood-tide of latter rain power upon His faithful, praying ones.

"Thus the message of the third angel will be proclaimed. As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power, the Lord will work through humble instruments, leading the minds of those who consecrate themselves to His service. The laborers will be qualified rather by the unction of His Spirit than by the training of literary institutions. Men of faith and prayer will be constrained to go forth with holy zeal, declaring the word which God gives them. The sins of Babylon will be laid open. The fearful results of enforcing the obser-



vances of the church by the civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power—all will be unmasked. By these solemn warnings the people will be stirred. Thousands upon thousands will listen who have never heard words like these. In amazement they will hear the testimony that Babylon is the church, fallen because of errors and sins, because of her rejection of the truth sent to her from heaven." *Great Controversy,* 606.

There are several points which need to be pondered in this paragraph. In the first case, it must be very clear that this is the description of the opening of the loud cry, and that therefore, the latter rain which produces the loud cry has fallen in abundance. These are not events which take place before, but at the very beginning of the giving of the loud cry, The second sentence in the paragraph makes this clear reading as it does, as follows: "As the time comes for it to be given with greatest power," the events thereafter enumerated then follow, but would not follow nor happen except that time had come; the time when the message is to be given with the greatest power.

And what is that time?

It is that time when the mighty power of the *Revelation* 18 angel joins the third angel's message in the power of the latter rain to begin the loud cry of the final warning. In the 1884 edition of *The Great Controversy,* 424, the same sentence reads as follows: "As the time comes for the loud cry to be given", which makes it so clear that this is the time of the loud cry which is being described in the following sentences. What is described in those sentences are events which transpire under the loud cry.

Further evidence to this is given as we read the very nature of the warning sounded. Page 603 reveals that *Revelation* 18 will be fulfilled during a time "when the announcement of the fall of Babylon, as made by the second angel of *Revelation* 14, (verse 8), is to be repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the various organizations that constitute Babylon, since that message was first given, in the summer of 1844."

The message of the second angel as given in 1844, announced the partial fall of Babylon, but, since that time, there has been much more of which she is guilty, and all of this is to be charged to her account in the final warning.

"The second angel's message of *Revelation* 14 was first

OPPOSITE PAGE: The outpouring of the latter rain will be the greatest outshining of light ever bestowed upon the peoples of this earth, here symbolized by the waters of this planet's vast oceans. As the morning sun rises in splendor above the horizon, and grows in strength until high noon, so too will increase in brilliance and power, the glory of the Son of righteousness.

preached in the summer of 1844, and it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that 'Babylon is fallen, . . . because she made *all nations* drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.' She has not yet made all nations do this. The spirit of world conforming and indifference to the testing truths for our time exists and has been gaining ground in churches of the Protestant faith in all the countries of Christendom; and these churches are included in the solemn and terrible denunciation of the second angel. But the work of apostasy has not yet reached its culmination.

"The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord, Satan will work 'with *all* power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness;' and they that 'received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved,' will be left to *receive* 'strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.' *2 Thessalonians* 2:9-11. Not until this condition shall be reached, and the union of the church with the world shall be fully accomplished throughout Christendom, will the fall of Babylon be complete. The change is a progressive one, and the perfect fulfillment of *Revelation* 14:8 is yet future." *Great Controversy,* 389.

So it will be that the spiritual state of the churches will have sunk to the lowest possible level, never to rise anymore. This will be the time for the powerful announcement to go forth which will announce that not merely Babylon is fallen, but that Babylon the Great has gone under.

This will be when, under the ministry of the *Revelation* 18 angel, all the additional corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844 will be mentioned. These will be:

"The fearful results of enforcing the observances of the church by civil authority, the inroads of spiritualism, the stealthy but rapid progress of the papal power . . . ." That covers it all pretty well, and there is not another thing Babylon could do to increase her guilt, but not one of these three things was present in 1844. There was no move then to enforce the Sunday observance by law. It was not agitated nor mentioned. Neither was spiritualism a great power in the churches, although it did begin to gain a grip on the churches immediately after their rejection of the Advent message.

Finally, in those days, the papal power was not a force to be reckoned with. In 1798 the deadly wound had been inflicted, and thereafter the fortunes of the Papacy reached a very low ebb indeed, so much so that many believed that she could never again rise to any position of world prominence. On November 24, 1848, for instance, the Pope had to flee from Rome for his life, and then in 1860, the Papacy lost its lands in Italy, except for the Vatican itself. While, from there on, the papacy began a slow at first, but ever increasingly rapid climb back into a position of world power and prominence. At the time of the giving of the second angel's message in 1844, she was not a figure of world prominence anymore.

But at the time described in our reference on page 606, all these corruptions, which have been taking a firm hold in the churches which constitute Babylon, are vigorously attacked and exposed, proving beyond a doubt that we are here reading of events within the early stages of the loud cry.

Now that this is clear in mind, we are ready to proceed with the next event in the order of last day events as the struggle during the loud cry develops to its final climax.

As we continue the study of this progression of events, our reference is still the paragraph on page 606 of *The Great Controversy,* which, as has already been shown, describes the opening events of the loud cry. Before reading further into this paragraph, there is another point to be noticed and kept in mind as we proceed. It is, that each of the events is dependent on the one before it taking place before it can transpire. A quick review of the opening events, so far declared to us in this paragraph, will show the truth of this.

First of all, the time comes for the message to be given with greatest power. That time having come, and not before, the Lord begins to work with greatest power through humble instruments; qualifying them with the outpouring of His Spirit. The direct result of this, which would be quite impossible otherwise, is that they are constrained to go forth and declare the words of warning which the Lord will give them. Thus empowered and directed, they are enabled to lay open the sins of Babylon, and in so doing, the next direct result is that thousands upon thousands will listen in amazement, who have never heard words like these; hearing that Babylon is the fallen church because of the rejection of the light and the truth of heaven. Thus, matters have really begun to develop, and our interest naturally centers upon what is to happen next. Of this we are left in no doubt as we read directly on:

"As the people go to their former teachers with the eager inquiry, Are these things so: the ministers present fables, prophesy smooth things, to soothe their fears and quiet the awakened con-

science. But since many refuse to be satisfied with the mere authority of men and demand a plain, Thus saith the Lord,' the popular ministry, like the Pharisees of old, filled with anger as their authority is questioned, will denounce the message as of Satan and stir up the sin-loving multitudes to revile and persecute those who proclaim it." *Great Controversy,* 607.

Notice again that each of the events in their succession in this paragraph is the natural and inevitable consequence of the one before it.

But observe too, just what are the first measures which are to be adopted against the people of God. Will it be bitter persecution on the threat of death? At this stage, it will not be anything so drastic, for the leaders of the apostate churches will not give much consideration to the tiny remnant of the faithful. At that time, the people of God will not be a great host, for the Laodicean message will have effected a great shaking in the Advent Church before the loud cry begins, as is plainly shown in *Early Writings,* 269-271. History has always shown that only a tiny minority come out on the right side of these tests, by which the church is shaken, and so it will be again. In referring to the people of God at the time when the conflict opens, the Spirit of Prophecy speaks of them as "the little company who are standing in the light. . . this faithful few." *Testimonies* 5:209, 210.

When the Sunday law is first passed, it will not be directed primarily against the people of God, for they will be so small a minority, having absolutely neither voice nor influence in the affairs of men, that the churches will regard them as not even worth any consideration the one way or the other.

The Sunday law will be brought in because the churches, having lost all of the power of God because of their rejection of the truth sent to them from heaven, will have become powerless to solve the vast problems which shall have swept over the world, bringing all men to the brink of universal self-destruction. Seeing their own loss of face and fearing their own destruction as a result of reactionary forces caused by their own failure, they turn to the other source of power—the power of the state—to save themselves and the world from destruction. This will be their grand and glorious solution, the final attempt on the part of faltering mankind to be the problem-solvers in God's place.

The true people of God will understand from their prior education in Sabbath rest principles, that any scheme designed by human problem-solvers will not only be doomed to failure, but will only worsen the already desperate situation. In deepest love for the masses being led to destruction, they will warn of the fearful consequences of deposing God as the Solver of all problems, and of re-

placing Him with mere humans. Powered and inspired by the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, they will make a tremendous impact on the scene. Quite suddenly, they, the people of the Lord, whom the religious leaders had regarded as being inconsequential, will emerge as highly influential.

The situation finds a parallel in the experience of the Pharisees who thought that once they had put Christ to death, their troubles would be over, so little significance did they give to the church of Christ in that day. How soon they were to learn that the Apostles were a mighty power to be reckoned with, as reflected in the Jewish Leaders despairing and angry cry against the early apostles, "You have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine." Acts 5:28.

So it will be, that when the churches of these last days secure the power of the state to enforce their decrees, they will think that they will have no more about which to be worried, but to their surprise and amazement, they will find that a tiny and insignificant company of people filled with a strange and wonderful power will arise to lay bare the true nature of their scheming. Yet even when these people of God first appear on the scene, the leaders will seriously underestimate the power which is in them, and will think that they can easily nullify their statements with arguments, whose only force will be the power of their own authority. For some this will be enough, but others will demand a plain, "Thus saith the Lord," which, of course, these men cannot supply from a Word which condemns in every phase and principle that which they are doing.

Then, when they find that argument is of none effect, and as they see all that they have worked, schemed, and striven for threatened, they will resort to that age-old weapon of the evil one—persecution—appealing to the credulous mob to attack the faithful messengers of the Lord.

Thus it is plain and clear that the first measure used against the people of God after the loud cry has begun will not be persecution, but only argument, based upon the authority of men. Certainly this is no great test for the people of God. To be able to meet successfully the arguments of those who oppose the truth is not a painful experience, but rather a stimulating one, even after making due allowance for the fact that there is a measure of sorrow in seeing otherwise intelligent and rational men take foolish and soul destroying stands against the God of heaven Himself.

But predominantly, our thought and concern will not be for the enemies of the truth but for the successful advancement of the truth itself, and we shall feel at this time that things are going rather well, as an intense interest takes hold of the people and many show that they are not content with anything less than solid proof from the

word of God. It will be no great trial to belong to the movement at this time, and most certainly this shows that the great final test will still be beyond this point. We shall come to it in our study in due course, and when we do, we shall recognize it for what it is and where it is.

And, as surely as they have not yet faced the great final test, then as surely the judgment of the living has not yet commenced at this time, for this is "the great test for the people of God by which their eternal destiny will be decided." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:976. That test must come to them, and be successfully passed by them before they can be judged as worthy of the second and final seal by which they are rendered eternally secure from the tempter's devices. Therefore, inasmuch as the great final test has not come upon them here in the early stages of the loud cry after they have received the infilling of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power, then they have not yet been judged and sealed with the second and final seal. Therefore the latter rain comes before, and not after, we have been judged. No truth could be simpler or plainer than that.

Despite the efforts of the clergy to suppress the truth, the message rapidly grows in power and influence. "As the controversy extends into new fields and the minds of the people are called to God's down-trodden law, Satan is astir. The power attending the message will only madden those who oppose it. The clergy will put forth almost super-human efforts to shut away the light, lest it should shine upon their flocks. By every means at their command they will endeavor to suppress the discussion of these vital questions. The church appeals to the strong arm of the civil power, and in this work, papists and Protestants unite. As the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment-keepers. They will be threatened with fines and imprisonments, and some will be offered positions of influence and other reward and advantages as inducements to renounce their faith. But their steadfast answer is, 'Show us from the word of God our error'—the same plea that was made by Luther under similar circumstances. Those who are arraigned before the courts make a strong vindication for the truth, and some who hear them are led to take their stand to keep all the commandments of God. Thus light will be brought before thousands who otherwise would know nothing of these truths." *Great Controversy,* 607.

This paragraph reveals that we have come to the time when the battle will be heating up toward full intensity, and more definite measures will be taken by the church against the true people of God. In studying this paragraph, care must be taken that we do not draw a wrong conclusion from the statement: "As the movement for Sunday

The Sequence of Events as They Transpire Under the Development of the Loud Cry in the Power of the Latter Rain

The message of the third angel swells to the loud cry;
The image of the beast is set up;
The time comes for the message to go with greatest power, which means the time has come for the loud cry to begin;
God calls His servants and fills them with His Spirit in latter rain power;
He sends them forth to give earth's final warning;
The sins of Babylon are laid open, including the evils added since 1844—Sunday laws, inroads of Spiritualism, and advances of the papacy;
This is the repeating of the 2nd angel's message by the *Revelation* 18 angel;
Thousands upon thousands are stirred;
They go to their ministers with eager enquiries;
These try to make light of the questions;
The people are not satisfied with this but demand Scriptural answers;
The ministers become angry as their authority is questioned;
In retaliation they stir up persecution;
God's servants refuse to be silenced;
The controversy enters new fields and Satan is astir;
The Sunday laws are called in against God's people;
Some are fined, others are imprisoned, others still are offered bribes or attractive positions;
They demand Scripture proof;
Fierce and terrible persecution develops;
The buy & sell decree is introduced;
Matters escalate toward a crisis of immense proportions;
As the storm approaches there will be a great shaking;
Multitudes will abandon their position and join with the enemy;
The faith of God's people will be tried to the limit;
Some declare that, if they had foreseen what it would cost them, they would have kept silent;
As the climax of it all, the death decree is passed;
This is the great final test;
The judgment of the living follows immediately;
Then comes the sealing;
All this is followed by the time of Jacob's trouble and the great time of trouble including the seven last plagues.

enforcement becomes more bold and decided, the law will be invoked against commandment-keepers." This could be understood to mean that the Sunday law has not yet been passed at this stage, until certain factors are considered.

In the first case, as we have seen before, the passing of the Sunday law sets up the image of the beast and accomplishes the complete fall of Babylon the Great. The message of the loud cry angel announces that Babylon the Great is fallen, and is, therefore, a message which cannot be sounded until the fact of it is accomplished. As surely as this is so, the Sunday law has been passed before the loud cry begins, and as surely as the loud cry is in progress, so surely has the Sunday law been passed. Therefore, at the time referred to in the statement under study at this point, the Sunday law has already been passed for some time.

There is nothing in this statement to deny that. When the statement is read carefully, it is seen that it does not say that the Sunday law is passed at this time. It says that the movement for Sunday enforcement becomes more bold and decided, and as it does, the law is invoked against commandment-keepers. The movement for Sunday enforcement does not cease to exist when it has succeeded in having the Sunday law passed, especially when all that has been gained at that time is a general law. After the passing of the law, the movement will remain very actively in the field to see that the law is enforced. And as violations of it appear, they will plead for more teeth to be put into that law to cover hitherto unforeseen possibilities and infringements; as is the case with all human law-making. Having gained their earlier demands, and as they are confronted with this powerful protest from a minority group, the movement does indeed become more bold and decided in its efforts to enforce the already existing Sunday law. Hitherto the law was not directed against the Sabbathkeeper, but rather at the irreligious who had no regard for the worship of God at all; but now there is the need to direct it against the commandment-keeper.

As the now bolder and more decided movers for Sunday enforcement see this threat, they go to the civil power and succeed in having them invoke the law against the Sabbath-keeper. Now the word "invoke" means very literally "to call in", and you cannot call in something which does not already exist. The law was not made primarily as a direct weapon to be used against commandment-keepers, but now that they have shown that they are powerfully and decidedly against the Sunday law enforcement, the law is called in specifically against them for the first time.

Now the people of God will find themselves in the courts of law testifying for their faith. This is an effort on the part of the devil to

silence their witness, but because they refuse to be intimidated, they instead give a powerful testimony for the truth, resulting in thousands hearing the message who would otherwise never hear it, with some of them deciding to stand for the commandments of God. Thus instead of stopping the message, these means only serve to further impel it forward.

Again we ask the question, Has the judgment of the living commenced by this time? To answer, we must ask the other question, Has the great final test come to the people of God at this stage?

The fact is that they have not yet even come to the buy and sell *decree* which is a still lesser test than the death decree, especially in the context in which the death decree will be imposed upon the people of the Lord. In fact, that which makes the death *decree,* as we shall eventually see, so great a test is not so much the threat of death in itself, but the implications and the circumstances under which it is imposed. This we shall understand better when we come to it.

But for now we wish to study the evidence which shows that the buy and sell *decree* is still something after the point of time we are now studying. It says that they are threatened with fines and imprisonment. The imposition of a fine, which means taking away a portion of a person's money, would be unnecessary if he were under a decree which forbad him to either buy or sell. Under those conditions his money would be completely worthless to him, and there would be no punishment in taking it away from him. In other words, a buy and sell decree is a greater punishment than a fine or imprisonment, so at this stage the buy and sell decree is a future development which will appear in due time.

It would be well to recall again at this point the statement which reads: "Because they refuse to break His law in obedience to earthly powers, they will be forbidden to buy or sell. It will finally be decreed that they shall be put to death." *Desire of Ages,* 122. This statement clearly shows that the pressure on the people of God mounts progressively toward the ultimate *decree* of death. The world takes a severe measure against them, which they expect will serve the purpose of silencing them, but when this fails, they adopt a more severe measure still and then others, even more severe, as they find themselves unable to silence the voice of reproof and warning.

By combining this statement with the information we have studied from *The Great Controversy,* we have the following order of events revealed: The law is passed, but the people of God refuse to honor it, for it would mean that they would have to dishonor God to do so; more than this, in the mighty power of the Spirit, they protest the law and show that it is fraught with disaster; the Sunday law movement meets this first of all with argument; then with personal

persecution; then with law suits; the threat of fines and imprisonment; and then, because they still refuse to break God's law in order to obey the law of the land, they impose the buy and sell decree; and when that, too, fails to silence them, they ultimately impose the death decree, which, because of the terrible circumstances and situation involved, becomes the most severe and terrible anyone has ever faced in human history, apart from what Jesus suffered upon the cross. Others in the past have faced and stood the test of death decrees but never any like this one.

From this time on the battle rages with a fierce and terrible intensity. The enemies of God are fully aroused, and nothing is too cruel or too desperate for them to use in their mad purpose of silencing the dissenters. "Conscientious obedience to the Word of God will be treated as rebellion. Blinded by Satan, the parent will exercise harshness and severity toward the believing child; the master or mistress will oppress the commandment-keeping servant. Affection will be alienated; children will be disinherited and driven from home. The words of Paul will be literally fulfilled: 'All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.' As the defenders of truth refuse to honor the Sunday sabbath, some of them will be thrust into prison, some will be exiled, and some will be treated as slaves. To human wisdom all this now seems impossible; but as the restraining Spirit of God shall be withdrawn from men, and they shall be under the control of Satan, who hates the divine precepts, there will be strange developments. The heart can be very cruel when God's fear and love are removed." *Great Controversy,* 608.

This is the prospect for all those who in these last days will be true to the Lord. God does not promise us a sweet and rosy path to the kingdom, but rather one which is fraught with every kind of hardship, peril, and persecution. It is a path which will require the greatest faith, courage, and patience, which must be developed in the present time if we are going to endure that day.

There will be universal hatred of God's people. When the loud cry begins, it will be a glorious experience at first, for the message will go with all-conquering power against the citadels of wrong. But the devil will not be asleep, nor will he stand idly by as the messengers of righteousness go forth with the truth. At this time the Spirit of God has been still further withdrawn from the earth, with the result, that calamities and disasters are more frequent and more terrible; as a result, the earth is being reduced to poverty and starvation.

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to

transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday-sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced: and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying reverence for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity. Thus the accusation urged of old against the servant of God will be repeated and upon grounds equally well established: 'And it came to pass, that when Ahab saw Elijah, that Ahab said unto him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? And he answered, I have not troubled Israel; but thou and thy father's house, in that ye have forsaken the commandments of the Lord, and thou hast followed Balaam.' As the wrath of the people shall be excited by false charges, they will pursue a course toward God's ambassadors very similar to that which apostate Israel pursued toward Elijah." *Great Controversy,* 590.

The fearful drought which reduced Israel of old to such dire physical straits was the direct result of the sins of the king and the people, yet they blamed the trouble upon the very man who had given the warning, which, if but heeded, would have saved them from all of their troubles. So it will be again; the whole of the world will be stirred in enmity against the Sabbath-keeper. The fearful straits to which the world will be brought will be caused by the sin of the leaders and the people. But they will blame all of their troubles on the small group of God's people who will have been the very ones who will be giving the warning, which, if but heeded, would save the world from all of its troubles.

Never in human history this side of the flood have so many of the world's population enjoyed such affluence, comfort, and plenty. They are not accustomed to living in hardship, yet this is the very generation which will be forced to feel the pinching hand of want and need. Imagine the fury which will mount toward the people of God whom they will erroneously imagine to be the cause of all their troubles. Thus the storm clouds will gather, black and heavy for their final bursting over the heads of the true children of God. Then will the courage and faith of all be tested; then will come the final test; then will come the time when "a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message," will "abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition."

Of this we shall study further in the next chapter.

Chapter 22

The Final Shaking

If there is one thing which should be clear in the study of the development of the struggle between the forces of the God of hosts and the powers of the kingdom of darkness during the loud cry period, it is that the pressure upon the people of God mounts with increasing severity as time passes. We have seen that the Sunday law is decreed in the first case as a means of giving to the churches a power over the people which they will have lost because of their own apostasy, and as such will not have in mind the people of God, who at that time will be so few in number and scattered in the world as to be deemed unworthy of consideration. But to the stunned surprise of the worldly ministry, this unknown and unrecognized minority will appear invested with the power of the Holy Spirit in no mean measure.

At first the opponents of truth will still seriously underestimate this unforeseen development and will confidently imagine that it can be met with argument. As this will prove to be of no use at all in the case of every honest seeker for the truth, their enemies will be driven to the use of persecution, and a more stringent enforcement of the Sunday law. By this time, the true believer will find himself the object of hatred and persecution on every hand, and the experience will be an exceedingly unpleasant one indeed.

But, fearful as this time will be, it will still only be the gathering of the fearful storm which will finally break with unbridled fury upon the children of God. Then will come the great final test, a test of such severity and magnitude as will discover each and every weak character professing to be numbered in the Lord's army. Then, those who have been in the ranks of Sabbath-keepers as foolish virgins and tares among the wheat, as bad fish among the good, will be seen to be what they are and will leave the ranks of the people of God to become their most bitter persecutors, enemies, and opponents. In fact, many of them will not even wait till the storm actually bursts upon them, but seeing it approaching and reading the portents of it, they will desert the ranks beforehand. This is made very clear as we read

right on from the last point studied in our reference from *The Great Controversy:*

"As the storm approaches, a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message, but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition. By uniting with the world and partaking of its spirit, they have come to view matters in nearly the same light; and when the test is brought, they are prepared to choose the easy, popular side. Men of talent and pleasing address, who once rejoiced in the truth, employ their powers to deceive and mislead souls. They become the most bitter enemies of their former brethren. When Sabbath-keepers are brought before the courts to answer for their faith, these apostates are the most efficient agents of Satan to misrepresent and accuse them, and by false reports and insinuations to stir up the rulers against them." *Great Controversy,* 608.

It will be necessary to spend a little time and space in the study of this paragraph before we move on, as several questions raised by it need clarification. The picture here presented is that of a great shaking among the people of God which takes place, not at the beginning of the loud cry period, but when it is well advanced, at which time "a large class who have professed faith in the third angel's message but have not been sanctified through obedience to the truth, abandon their position and join the ranks of the opposition."

This is to say that the loud cry church will not be a church free of unsanctified elements until the very end of its career, when the gathering storm of the great final test will separate the true from the mere professor. This means that the foolish virgins are still co-mingled with the wise, right down to the very end.

It is understood that this truth runs directly counter to the concept held by so many as to the constitution of the loud cry church, which many believe will be a church in which only the pure and the holy will be found. It is reasoned that during the loud cry period, the issues will be so clear-cut and the pressures against those who would stand for the truth so great, that only the true and the genuine would dare to stand for the truth at this time.

That such a concept is false is evident on two counts in particular. In the first case, the Word of God distinctly declares that the wheat and the tares will be together during this period. The inspired evidences for this have already been presented in the thirteenth chapter of this series. We suggest that you go back and review it carefully right now, before proceeding with this study.

In the meantime, here is another statement verifying that the church of God during the loud cry period will be composed of co-mingled wheat and tares:

"Unless those who can help in_____are aroused to a sense of their duty, they will not recognize the work of God when the loud cry of the third angel shall be heard. When light goes forth to lighten the earth, instead of coming up to the help of the Lord, they will want to bind about His work to meet their narrow ideas. Let me tell you that the Lord will work in this last work in a manner very much out of the common order of things, and in a way that will be contrary to any human planning. There will be those among us who will always want to control the work of God, to dictate even what movements shall be made when the work goes forward under the direction of the angel who joins the third angel in the message to be given to the world. God will use ways and means by which it will be seen that He is taking the reins in His own hands. The workers will be surprised by the simple means that He will use to bring about and perfect His work of righteousness." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 300.

It is not wise, but foolish virgins who always want to control and dictate what moves shall be made in the church of God when the loud cry is in progress. Both "grow together until the harvest; and the harvest is the end of probationary time." *Christ's Object Lessons, 72.*

In the second case, the pressure against the people of God is not so great at the beginning of the period as to keep out the foolish virgins. In fact, the picture is, that the people of God will be a triumphant and successful band during the early stages and have the better of the situation on every hand. Every effort of the authorities, both ecclesiastical and civil, to silence them will be defeated. Prominent men, among whom are statesmen and lawyers, take a full stand for the message, and where great men accept the truth, others will always blindly follow.

Thus, during the outpouring of the latter rain, the gospel net, as it always does, will draw forth from the sea for the final separation, both the good and the bad fish, who will enter into the hold of the ship—the true church—until the final test accomplishes the work of final separation. After all, the preaching of the message of the loud cry is the preaching of the everlasting gospel, as it never will have been preached before. It will be the dipping of the gospel net into the sea of the world, and it will bring forth a greater harvest than the net has ever enclosed before.

By the simple law of averages, there will be more bad fish drawn forth too. It will be a period when things are really on the move with tremendous agitation and excitement. This is the very thing which attracts the foolish virgin, who likes to be where the action is and seeks to get on the wagon when it is evidently going somewhere. But when it appears to bog down and all seems lost, then they confess

themselves to have been deceived and flee back to the churches again.

By all this, we are not to understand that the foolish virgins are to actually receive a personal infilling of the Holy Spirit in latter rain power along with the wise virgins. Such would not be possible, for only those who have first been cleansed of the old nature and have the life of the Spirit within, can, in turn, be used by the Spirit to proclaim a mighty message. In the paragraph we are studying, this class who abandon their position are those who have professed the truth but have not been sanctified by obedience to it.

This is the exact description of a foolish virgin: "The class represented by the foolish virgins are not hypocrites. They have a regard for the truth, they have advocated the truth, they are attracted to those who believe the truth; but they have not yielded themselves to the Holy Spirit's working. They have not fallen upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, and permitted their old natures to be broken up." Christ's *Object Lessons,* 411.

So they certainly cannot receive and be filled with the Holy Spirit in latter rain power. One would conclude, then, that it would be impossible for them to co-mingle with the wise, as they would be painfully aware of the difference between them and those who really did have the power of God. But is this really so? At that time, there will be a power with the message itself, so that wherever it goes, it is something to be reckoned with. They will be advocating that message, and will be conscious of the power which goes with it. This, they will interpret as being the power of the Spirit in them. As well, they will be caught up in the excitement of the battle and will also feel the enthusiasm of that, as if it were the power of the Spirit in them. Thus they will go forward, thoroughly self deceived—as the foolish virgins always have been—until the bursting of the final storm reveals to them and to others, their sad lack of the oil in their lamps.

These are solemn facts, and it behooves every one of us to consider his own experience in the truth in the light of them. If we are believers in the message of living righteousness, then we are either wise or foolish virgins. We cannot be classed as hypocrites. They are the ones who profess to serve the Lord, but reject the messages He sends to them at this critical hour. If we are believers in the message for this time, then we are not hypocrites, and thus can only be either a wise or a foolish virgin. Our eternal salvation depends upon our knowing which we are. Therefore let us search our hearts and lives to discover whether we do have the inward filling of the Holy Spirit—which is the very life of Christ in the soul replacing the old evil life which was there before. Then cultivate the new life with all the powers which the Lord has given; looking to Him to give the increase as

we do our part. Then, and then only, will we be able to stand when the final test is brought to bear upon men. Make your calling and election sure while there is still the time and the opportunity. Let no price stand between you and the truth of God.

A second point to be considered in the study of the paragraph under discussion right here is the two separations. There is described in this paragraph a separation in which those who have not been sanctified by the truth separate themselves from the faithful and walk with them no more. Thus, a mighty shaking, or separation takes place, after which the church is pure and clean of all unsanctified elements and the promise is fulfilled:

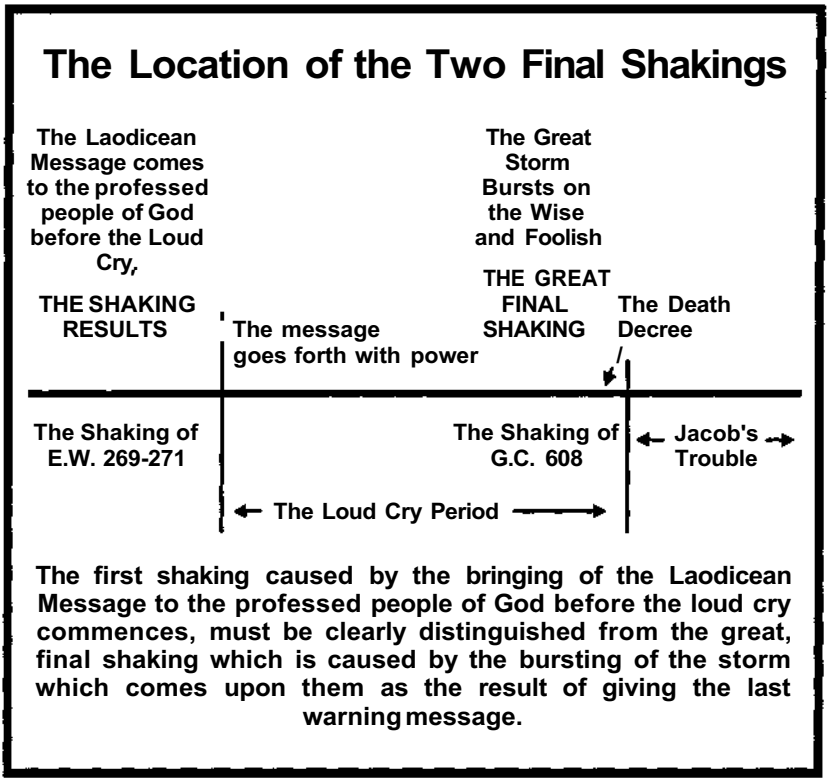
"Awake, awake! put on your strength, O Zion; put on your beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city! For the uncircumcised and the unclean shall no longer come to you." *Isaiah* 52:1.

No clear understanding of this shaking, its nature, and what it accomplishes can be obtained unless we *realize* the principle that there are two shakings, each with its own distinctive characteristics, coming at two entirely different points of time, and in every other respect different from each other. This principle has been thoroughly discussed and clearly set forth in chapter thirteen of this series, and once again we suggest a careful review of the facts therein presented. So that we can determine which of the two separations is being described here in the paragraph we are studying, we will first of all briefly list the main differences which are as follows:

The first separation described as the dipping of the net into the sea, is accomplished by the test of a message sent by God to the Church and not by pressure and persecution. It is the second and final separation which is accomplished by a test or trial and persecution. A study of the parable of the ten virgins makes this very clear. In that parable the message goes forth and both the wise and the foolish separate from the rest, who show no interest in going forth to meet the Bridegroom. The wise and the foolish virgins then co-mingle in the Church, just as the good and the bad fish are together in the ship which is a symbol also of the Church. Then comes the end, when the mission of the gospel is completed and both the wise and the foolish are tested. Then it is seen which of them has the inward presence of the Spirit and can thus go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage.

Thus while in both the cases of the parables of the fishes and the virgins, the first separation separates the good and the bad from the rest, the second separation separates the good from the bad, the wise from the foolish.

As some confuse the separation described in Great Controersy, 608, with that in *Early Writings,* 269-271, we would do well



to make the differences very plain. There must be no doubt in our minds that these are not the same separations either in point of time or in kind. In the first case the separation described in *Early Writings* takes place before the loud cry even begins, while the one described in *Great Controversy* takes place when the loud cry has about come to its conclusion. There should not be the least difficulty in seeing this. Nothing is clearer in *Early Writings* than the fact that that shaking comes before the loud cry begins while it is equally clear that the one described in *Great Controversy* takes place later, distinctly separated in point of time from the other.

Equally clear is the fact that the shaking described in *Early Writings* is caused by the proclamation of a message while that described in *Great Controversy* is caused by the bursting upon them of a furious storm of the bitterest possible persecution. That the first shaking being discussed here is caused by the proclamation of a message is made clear by these words: "I asked the meaning of the shaking I had seen and was shown that it would be caused by the straight testimony called forth by the counsel of the True Witness to the

Laodiceans. This will have its effect upon the heart of the receiver, and will lead him to exalt the standard and to pour forth the straight truth. Some will not bear this straight testimony. They will rise up against it, and this is what will cause a shaking among God's people." *Early Writings,* 270.

The true preaching of the Laodicean message is the preaching of the everlasting gospel. Many have the idea that it is a message of denunciation, so that when they rise up and declare in trumpet tones the wrongs and departures of the Church from the truth, they are therefore proclaiming the Laodicean message. This is a bad mistake which has been made by all too many, for, what they have failed to see is that the Laodicean message is something far more than denunciation and exposure, and unless they are preaching what the message really is, they are not preaching the message at all.

Clear proof of this lies in the fact that so many so-called reformers have arisen proclaiming what they imagined to be the Laodicean message but which was in fact nothing more than a tirade of denunciation, and yet have caused no shaking at all, whereas the true preaching of the true Laodicean message will cause a mighty shaking among the people of God as some will not bear the straight truth but will rise up against it.

Never in all of history has a message which consisted in denunciation ever succeeded in creating a shaking and a true reformation. In his book, Lessons *from the Reformation,* 102, (page 66, Destiny Press edition), A. T. Jones points out that "the Reformation did not and does not consist in exposure and denunciation of the iniquities of the Roman Church." He acknowledges that that is there as an incident, as an indispensable part of it, but it was not the message itself. "If," he argues, "exposure and denunciation of iniquities of that church could have wrought reformation, then The Reformation would have been in the world more than five hundred years before it was."

There had been no want of men who saw the wrongs in the Church, who feared the ultimate outworking of those evils, and who were not afraid to raise their voices in protest and condemnation of what they saw. "These Reformers" included popes, bishops, priests, laymen, and princes who for five hundred years before the reformation began, rose up one after the other and spoke forth their mind on the wrongs they saw, but it is the solemn and clear fact of history that not any one of them alone, or all of them together, ever even began to work reformation in the Roman Church. But when men arose with the living gospel and preached *that,* then the Reformation had begun and with it the shaking and the separation which must inevitably follow.

The principle involved is well stated in these words:

"Not until you feel that you could sacrifice your own self-dignity, and even lay down your life in order to save an erring brother, have you cast the beam out of your own eye so that you are prepared to help your brother. Then you can approach him and touch his heart. No one has ever been reclaimed from a wrong position by censure and reproach; but many have thus been driven from Christ and led to seal their hearts against conviction. A tender spirit, a gentle, winning deportment, may save the erring and hide a multitude of sins. The revelation of Christ in your own character will have a transforming power upon all with whom you come in contact. Let Christ be daily made manifest in you, and He will reveal through you the creative energy of His word—a gentle, persuasive, yet mighty influence to re-create other souls in the beauty of the Lord our God." Thoughts *from the Mount of Blessing,* 128,129.

In just the same way, the preaching of the Laodicean message will accomplish a work of decided reformation and a clear cut shaking because it will be the preaching, not of denunciation of wrong primarily, but of the everlasting gospel. The message itself clearly tells us that. Look again to see what it really does say, and, in looking, let us go past the verse which speaks about being wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked, to the one which says, "I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eyesalve, that you may see." *Revelation* 3:18.

The gold is the faith and love which purifies the soul and implants in it the character of Jesus Christ; the white raiment is the garment of Christ's righteousness; and the eyesalve is spiritual discernment. This is that which is offered by the gospel, and this is that which is received by all who accept the gospel of Jesus Christ.

This is the 1888 message, which we are told presented the same three gifts in just the same order. "It presented justification through faith in the surety; it invited the people to *receive* the righteousness of Christ, which is made manifest in obedience to all the commandments of God. Many had lost sight of Jesus. They needed to have their eyes directed to His divine person, His merits, and His changeless love for the human family." Testimonies *to Ministers,* 91, 92.

This statement proves, then, that the message of Christ and His righteousness which was presented in 1888 and in the following five years to the Advent people, was none other than the Laodicean message, which in turn is the everlasting gospel, the living power of God to save from all sinfulness and all sinning.

When it was presented then, many rose up against it and sue-

To the Advent people in 1888 was offered the Laodicean message which is the Everlasting Gospel, the complete cure for their spiritual delinquency.

The Laodicean Message Offers	This Is the Gospel, the Cure For	These are God's Saving Gifts	The 1888 Message
Gold Tried in The Fire	Unbelief	Justification By Faith	Faith And Love
White Raiment	Sinfulness	Righteousness Of Christ	Obedience To All The Commandments Of God
Eye Salve	Blindness	Spiritual Perception	Recover The Sight of Jesus

ceeded in stifling the counsel of the True Witness, but the promise was, that it would come again, and when it did, it would accomplish a shaking among the people of God. That time has come and is now in the past. Soon the loud cry will begin, and soon will that bring upon the wise and the foolish the fearful storm of persecution and trouble which shall divide the wheat from the tares and the good from the bad fish.

Those who cannot distinguish between these two shakings are still looking in the future for the shaking to come, whereas the first has already come and has been, and is still doing its divinely appointed work. Such mistaken ones are not saved in spite of their ignorance, any more than is the Jew, who is still looking for the Messiah to come, when in fact He came almost two thousand years ago without the Jews even knowing it.

Thus we can be sure that the shaking spoken of in *The Great Controversy*, 608, is the second and final shaking.

Before the loud cry begins, the fourth angel must return with his message—the message which was rejected in 1888. With that mes-

sage, he did return to the Advent people, who, exactly as prophesied in *Matthew* 22, rejected their second call. But the dipping of the gospel net by means of the preaching of the Laodicean message was not without results, so that fish—good and bad—were gathered from the sea. All this takes place before the loud cry begins.

Then, when it does begin to sound, those who have received the light of truth take that selfsame message of the fourth angel in the mighty power of the Spirit to the churches of the world with the result, that once again, the gospel net dips into the sea, bringing forth the fish, good and bad.

Finally, there comes the closing scene when the great final test divides the good from the bad. The lesson to be learned from this is, that even though we have come out on the right side of every issue so far, this is not the guarantee of final victory. That great final test is still awaiting us.

The majority of those who will be shaken out at this time will be those who have come in during the loud cry period. There will be some as well, who will have joined the movement before the latter rain begins to fall. Some of these are already with the movement. They have done well so far, and are more likely than many others to endure to the end. These are they who have successfully come through on the right side in the first shaking, but this is no guarantee they will emerge triumphantly from the great test which produces the last all-purifying shaking.

While those who come out on the right side of the first shaking must still pass the test which produces the second, those who fail the first will have no part in the second. The parable of the fishing net confirms that there is nothing more certain than that. The majority of the Advent believers are shaken out when the Laodicean message comes to them, and thus do not, and cannot figure again in a later shaking.

Fearful indeed will that time be. Then everything which can be shaken will be shaken, and only those who have the truth as a living principle in the heart will be able to stand.

"Satan will work his miracles to deceive; he will set up his power as supreme. The church may appear as about to fall, but it does not fall. It remains, while the sinners in Zion will be sifted out—the chaff separated from the precious wheat. This is a terrible ordeal, but nevertheless it must take place. None but those who have been overcoming by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony will be found with the loyal and true, without spot or stain of sin, without guile in their mouths. We must be divested of our self-righteousness and arrayed in the righteousness of Christ." *Selected Messages* 2:380.

"Now is the time for God's people to show themselves true to principle. When the religion of Christ is most held in contempt, when His law is most despised, then should our zeal be the warmest and our courage and firmness the most unflinching. To stand in defense of truth and righteousness when the majority forsake us, to fight the battles of the Lord when champions are few—this will be our test. At this time we must gather warmth from the coldness of others, courage from their cowardice, and loyalty from their treason. The nation will be on the side of the great rebel leader." *Testimonies* 5:136.

Chapter 23

Tried to the Uttermost

Having established in our study thus far that the shaking described in *The Great Controversy,* 608, is the second and final shaking, we are now prepared to study in more detail the nature of the great final test which shall come upon the people of God, and which test they must have before they can be sealed. Heretofore, we have seen only that the great final test is the death decree, but now we are to see that it is much more than facing death which makes it so great a test. What will make it to be so terrible an experience will be the peculiar setting and circumstances in which it is imposed upon the believers.

We are all well aware of the fact that a certain test given to us under one set of circumstances can be incredibly more trying and fearful than the same test given under more favorable circumstances. So we are now to learn, that not only are we to face the supreme test of a death decree, but that it must be faced under the most difficult circumstances possible, so that the pressure and the dread of it will be felt to the utmost. The martyrs faced the death sentence again and again, but never in the setting in which the saints of the last days will have to face it. Their test was great, it is true, but never to be compared with the test to be faced by the faithful of the very last days.

The picture of this unfolds as we continue the reading and study of our chapter from The *Great Controversy.* Let us read right on from where we left off.

"In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord's servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. God's Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives. Yet when the storm of opposition and

reproach bursts upon them, some overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim; 'Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace.' They are hedged in with difficulties. Satan assails them with fierce temptations. The work which they have undertaken seems far beyond their ability to accomplish. They are threatened with destruction. The enthusiasm which animated them is gone; yet they cannot turn back. Then, feeling their utter helplessness, they flee to the Mighty One for strength. They remember that the words which they have spoken were not theirs, but His who bade them give the warning. God put the truth into their hearts, and they could not forebear to proclaim it." *Great Controversy,* 608, 609.

There are three sentences in this paragraph which make it plain that it is describing how things will be right at the end of the loud cry period. They are these: "They have faithfully given the warning . . . They are threatened with destruction . . . The enthusiasm which animated them is gone."

The first of the three sentences reveals that the giving of the warning is by this time a thing of the past. It does not say that they "are giving" but that they "have given" the warning. The former would be present tense, while the latter is past tense and is used to describe that which has been done—in this case the final warning to mankind. In harmony with this is the statement that they are threatened with destruction. This reveals that the death decree now hangs over their apparently defenceless heads. Knowing as we do that the death decree comes as a result of the evidence presented in the twelfth chapter of this series, we can know to what point of time the sentence, "They are threatened with destruction", brings us. It brings us to that point of time just before the close of probation when the great final test is brought to bear against the people of God.

Some may reason that the buy and sell *decree* will threaten us with destruction, and in a certain sense, this is true. More likely, it threatens us with starvation, under which conditions a man can live for quite a long time, especially if he is able to scratch some nourishment from whatever he can pick up. The threat of destruction implies a more immediate ending of one's life, such as would be under a death *decree.*

The third sentence tells us that the "enthusiasm which animated them is gone." This is a definite indication that the latter rain has dried up. It cannot, and does not fall forever, either in nature or in grace. Once its work is done, then it no longer is needed and it dries up. It would be impossible for the people of God not to be animated with enthusiasm while the Holy Spirit was still flooding through them in latter rain power. Therefore the very fact that the "enthusi-

asm which animated them is gone", indicates that the time has been reached when the last work which can be done by the Holy Spirit has been accomplished, and the latter rain has dried up, leaving them seemingly powerless and helpless.

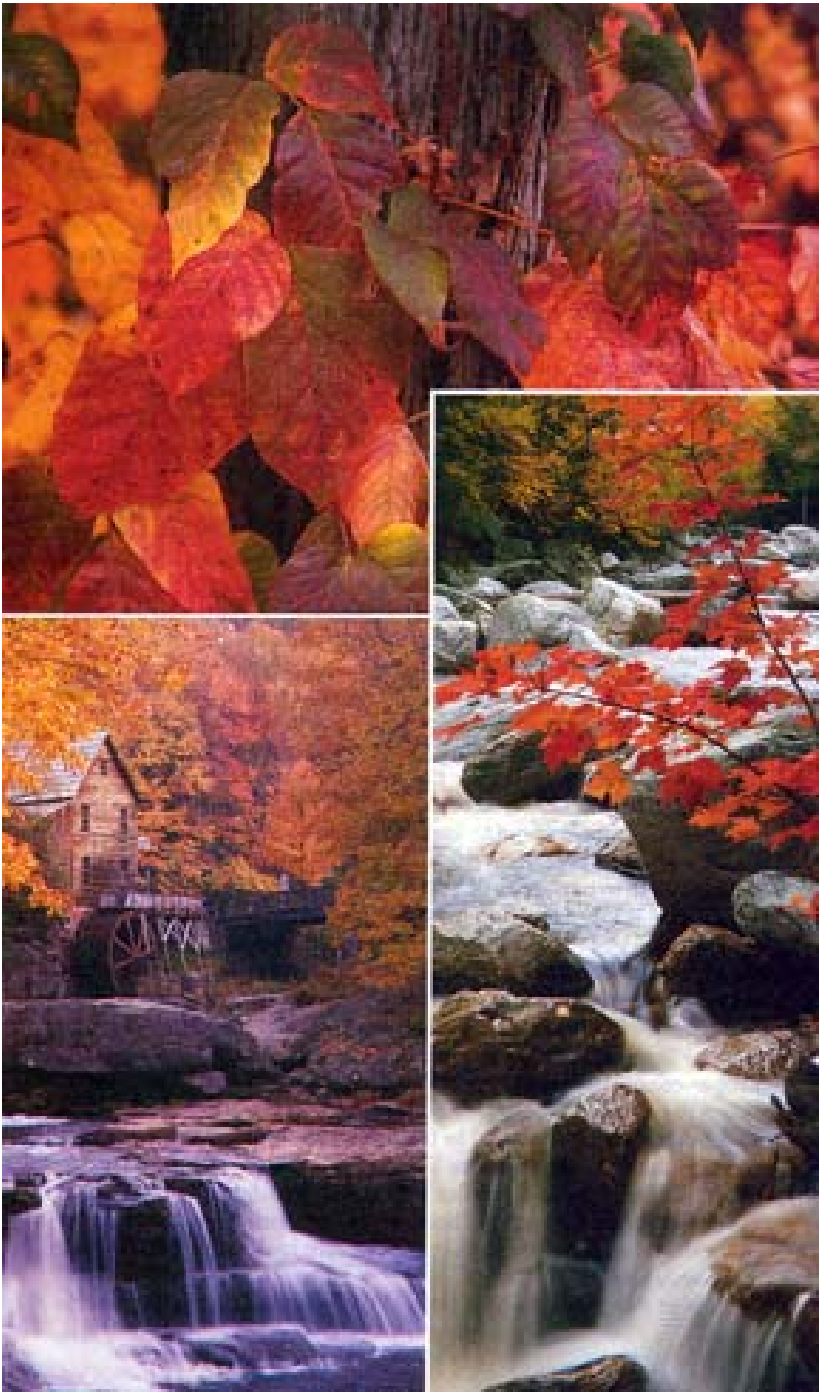
This is not to say that the Holy Spirit has forsaken them. By no means! His presence in them will be just as real and actual at that time as ever before, but He will no longer be flowing through them; not because of any fault or failure on their part, but because of the fault and failure on the part of men in the world to receive the gracious warning given them.

It is when the Spirit is flowing through us in power that we are most conscious of it, and joyful in His presence; whereas He can be in us without there being any physical consciousness or witness that He is there.

There are three distinct phases of the work of the Spirit on our behalf. The first is when He comes to us on the outside and convicts of sin and uncleanness. This is a painful experience, and one of which we are very much aware while it is happening. If the Spirit is successful in bringing us to true repentance, then He is able to come in and dwell in us, but mark this point with care, He can only dwell in the person upon whom He has first successfully worked by bringing him through personal conviction to true repentance. Now there follows quiet and peace where there had been turmoil and strife. For a short time the Spirit leaves us to glory in this new-found life, and then comes the schooling for the eternal home. Soon we find ourselves in trials and hard places, and at times the Spirit seems to have forsaken us, but we come to learn that this is only apparent and not real, for He is as present in these difficult passages as ever He was in the new birth experience.

All this is a preparation for service and for witnessing, which is the third work of the Holy Spirit, as He who had worked so efficiently on us, and then comes to dwell in us, now works through us to the saving of others. This is the most joyful part of the experience in the Holy Spirit—the time when we are most conscious of His presence. But the Spirit will only work through us provided we maintain the proper connection with Him while there is a field in which to work. When the hearts of those within the sphere of our influence become so hardened as to be settled in their rejection of the Spirit's ministry through the believer, then the Spirit is withdrawn, not from the believer, but from the rejecter. But in thus being withdrawn, it ceases to flow as a current through the believer, to rest, instead, within him until such time as there is a further opportunity for the Spirit to flow out to a needy soul.

It is at this point that the faith of the believer is really tested. He



has been experiencing the very real thrill of the working of the Spirit through His life, but then quite suddenly this dries up. He is at once tempted to think that the Spirit has forsaken him and begins to cast around in his own life to see what he has done to grieve the heavenly Guest. At the same time he is conscious of the pain, of the discouragement, and disappointment over the refusal of the souls for whom he has been laboring; which is a real test of faith in the truth in itself, because we know that every time a soul refuses the truth, it makes us wonder if we have the truth after all.

Another thing which affects us is that the higher the pitch and the greater the intensity of the previous experience under the working of the Spirit's power, the greater the reaction when the termination of that experience arrives. An excellent example of this is the experience of Elijah at the gates of Jezreel. All day he had battled the priests of Baal at the altars on Mount Carmel. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, he had stood ceaseless guard over the situation, never daring for a moment to relax his vigilance. Then had come the triumph and the vindication of the truth of God, the slaughter of the wicked priests of Baal, the lonely intercession for the rain, the answer to his prayer, and the heaven empowered run in the driving rain back to the gates of Jezreel. Then suddenly it was all over. Physically and mentally exhausted, he sank down into a deep sleep from which he was awakened to hear the dread threat of Jezebel—the death sentence.

No longer was the Spirit flowing through him, for at that moment there was nowhere for it to flow, and Elijah felt desperately alone and forsaken, even though, in fact, he was anything but that. Yet, that was all that he could see and feel, and seeing and feeling only that, he turned and ran for his very life. The higher the peak of spiritual activity while the Spirit is flowing through us, the greater the sense of letdown when that current ceases to flow when the work is done.

Thus it was with Elijah back then, and thus it will be with the people of the Lord when the loud cry is finished. That which makes the

OPPOSITE PAGE: While the access to the channels is open, the water, a symbol of the Holy Spirit, will flow freely, as it carries its life-giving, life-sustaining ministry through the countryside, but let the access be blocked, and the streams will cease to flow.

In the closing up of the final ministry of the Holy Spirit, the outpouring of the latter rain, there will be an immense outflowing of the Holy Spirit while the ways into the souls of men are still open. This will be a period of wonderful inspiration for God's people until the last rejecter of God's mercy has closed his heart against the light, and thus blocks off all access to the channels. The latter rain will then have completely ceased to flow thus giving the impression to the saints that they are the cause of this sudden destitution. This will be a factor which will greatly increase the incredibly severe trial through which they will be passing.

illustration from the life of Elijah even more to the point, is that he is the type of the very people who will give the loud cry. He battled the Ahab and *Jezebel* of his day, who are the type of the great apostate system of the last days, for exactly as Ahab and *Jezebel were* a combination of church and state, united to enforce the worship of Baal in defiance of the God of heaven, so will the Ahab and the *Jezebel* of these last days be a union of church and state combined to enforce the worship of Baal in defiance of the God of heaven.

Ordaining that type would meet antitype in the last days, the Lord declares that the symbolic name of the people who will fight the beast and his image will be the Elijah people, and just as the original Elijah was translated without seeing death, so those who are the Elijah people of these last days will pass from this earth to heaven without seeing death. Just as the Elijah of that day experienced a day of power and triumph in the battle with Ahab and *Jezebel,* so too, the Elijah people of this day will experience a day of power and triumph as they battle the Ahab and *Jezebel* of these last days. At the end of that day came the anti-climax with the ceasing of the flow of God's power through him at the very time when his physical energies were exhausted, and so too will it be for the faithful in this last struggle. It was at that point of time, when the threat of death would and did have the greatest possible impact, that that woman, *Jezebel,* issued her *decree.*

So, too, there will come the ending of the day of power for the people of the Lord as the Holy Spirit ceases to flow through them, and with that will come the experience of anti-climax and depletion. It will be at that moment that the Jezebel of these last days, filled with wrath beyond description, will level against them the *decree* of death. Coming at that moment, it will have an impact which it could not otherwise have had, and like Elijah, they shall long to flee away from it all. Thus it is that we read in the paragraph we are considering:

"Yet when the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim, 'Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace.' " *Great Controversy,* 609.

Note that it says that "some" but not all, would feel overwhelmed. This means that some will have a tougher battle to fight because they have failed to learn how to develop living faith sufficient to give them a better experience. Of them it is written:

"Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the *decree* to compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test they will be plunged into *deeper* distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of

faith which they have neglected they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement." *Great Controversy,* 622.

We are beginning to see that it is not just the death *decree* but the setting in which it is suddenly thrust upon the people of God, as it was upon Elijah of old, which makes the death decree far more of a test for them than it was for the martyrs of old. And, if that is all that there will be to it, it would be bad enough, but there is more yet.

The key to the understanding of more yet, is found in this same paragraph where we read:

"The work which they have undertaken seems far beyond their ability to accomplish."

At first glance this would appear to be a contradiction to the other information in the same paragraph, which indicates that at this time the loud cry has ended and the work finished. The moment, however, in which we remember that the people of God are not going to know when the work is actually finished, the contradiction disappears. While it is true that in the cases of some, the rejection of the message will be so clear and definite, that there remains no question as to where they stand, yet in the cases of many others, it will not be possible for the finite mind to determine whether for them the work is done. Let us not forget too, that Satan, ever at work to deceive, will make it appear that many on his side are truly converted, appearing as if they need only the special truths for this time to make them ready for eternity. To us in that day, it will truly seem that the great work is but just begun, when, in fact, it has already come to its end. God will know it is finished. The Holy Spirit and the angels will know it is finished, but it will not be given to the saints of God to know this.

Now the fact that the work seems far from finished, while at the same time the power of the latter rain has dried up, will suggest to them that the loud cry has failed of doing its work, the awful implications of which being that the last opportunity for gaining the total and final victory over sin will be forever lost. This will be the fearful witness of sight and circumstances in that hour—a witness which the devil has always sought to exploit to the uttermost, as he did at the Red Sea crossing for the children of Israel, and for Christ on the Mount of Temptation. At that time, "to triumph" means to stand upon the Word of God and refuse to believe the all too convincing and very present witness of sight and circumstances, and so it will be again in this last and closing conflict. It was by faith that the Israelites crossed the Red Sea, and it was by faith that the Saviour overcame on the mount with Satan, and it will be by faith, and by faith alone, that the righteous will conquer in the closing scenes of the great final struggle of the ages.

The true child of God will know, as he enters upon the closing conflict, that the loud cry is a do-or-die affair. Like Queen Esther, who is also a type of the people who face the great final test, we shall go into this conflict with the words: "If we perish, we perish." The possibility of it was neither distant nor inviting for her, and the same will be true for us in the end. Enter upon this conflict we must, with all of its terrible possibilities, but if we should fail, there never will be another opportunity, either for us or for any other generation of mankind.

We have the Word of God that it will not fail, for has He not said: "For He will finish the work and cut it short in righteousness, because the Lord will make a short work on the earth." *Romans* 9:28. But against that word is the awful witness of sight and circumstances; the most formidable of which is the memory that never in history has Satan failed to bring to an early end every great revival and reformation which the Lord instituted. Never has this been because of any failure or short-coming on the part of the Lord, but ever and always because of the unwillingness of the children of God to follow Him to the end and finish the work so well begun. Always they have come short of the noble work; which coming short has given to the devil the opportunity he seeks to turn the tide and kill the revival. Had the will of the Lord been fulfilled, then the work would have been finished long ere this, and the people of God would now be in a world made new. Instead, we are still here in this wretched world of darkness and death.

When Israel entered the land of Canaan long ago, it was the plan of God that they should be a righteous people who would develop and spread until the whole world was filled with the presence of the Lord, and the devil driven out. They began so well, but they left little pockets of evil here and there, which grew in power until they were driven out instead. See *Judges* 1:27-36. In David, another day of opportunity was given them *(Hebrews* 4:7), but again they failed the Lord. Again the devil succeeded in bringing the good work to none effect. In *Daniel* 9:24-27, the Lord appointed them 490 years in which to "finish the transgression, to make an end of sins, to make reconciliation for iniquity, to bring in everlasting righteousness, to seal up the vision and the prophecy, and to anoint the Most Holy."

The making of an end of sins can only be accomplished when on the one hand it has been forever brought to its end in the lives of the people of God, and on the other, when all sin and sinners have been destroyed. When such a work is done, then the defeat of the devil is final and absolute, and the kingdom of God is forever established. That it was God's plan that this should be accomplished for, and through Israel within the compass of those 490 years, is clear from

the text before us, and that the devil succeeded in preventing that which the Lord had planned is equally clear from the testimony of history.

Then came the Apostolic Church. If ever there was a church invested with the power to finish the work, it was that one. Led by men who had personally walked and talked with the Saviour, and who had witnessed His life and sacrifice, bound together by the cords of a wonderful and heavenly love, filled with the Spirit and mighty in the Scriptures, they seemed filled with the certainty of carrying the work through to its completion. Neither were they unaware of the peril of failure, for Paul reminded them of the generations which had gone before in which the day of opportunity had passed, and then called upon them in this earnest entreaty:

"Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it." *Hebrews* 4:1.

Come short of it they did, so that once more the work of God failed, and the devil triumphed.

But never could the devil wholly triumph, although the slender thread of truth became so fine at times as to seem to disappear altogether. But, living and unquenchable, it rose again, strong and vigorous to make another effort to finish the work.

The fifth such effort began in 1831, only to result in the now familiar pattern of failure and defeat for the forces of the Lord. We are familiar with the many statements which state that if the people of the Lord had been faithful, then long ere this the work would have been finished and we would have as surely been in the kingdom, but it is not so. See *Evangelism,* 695, 696; *Great Controversy,* 458; *Desire of Ages,* 633, 634.

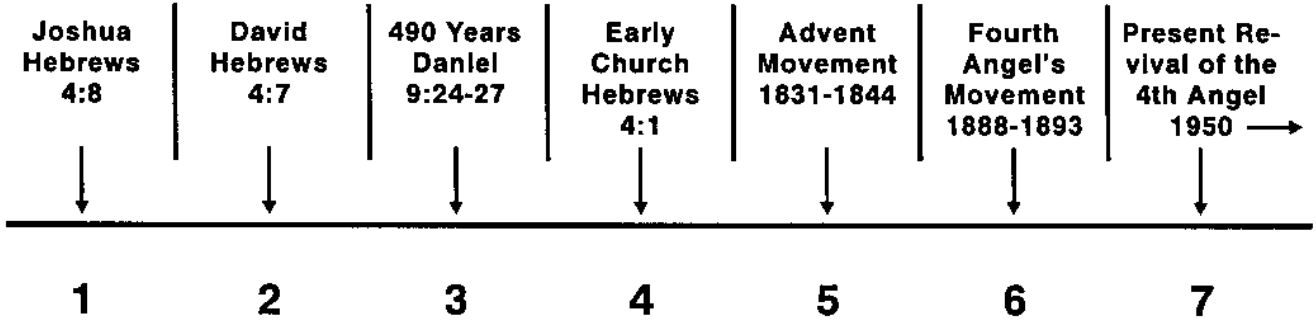
Then came the sixth day of opportunity for entrance into the promised land in the mighty message of righteousness by faith which began to sound in 1888. Once again the stage was set for the speedy finishing of the work, and once again:

"Satan succeeded in shutting away from our people, in a great measure, the special power of the Holy Spirit that God longed to impart to them. The enemy prevented them from obtaining that efficiency which might have been theirs in carrying the truth to the world, as the apostles proclaimed it after the day of Pentecost." *Selected Messages* 1:234, 235.

So it will be, that the enemy of souls will enter the final conflict with a record of unbroken, though not complete success, behind him. This will give him the courage to believe that he can succeed again, only this time conclusively and permanently. He has the opportunity to do so as it is written:

"If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be com-

The Seven Days of Opportunity for the Finishing of the Work Between Joshua's Day and the End



plete." *Great Controversy,* 618. In that case, he would gain that which has always so narrowly eluded him.

And so it will be, that at the end of the loud cry period, every witness of sight and circumstances will loudly declare that he has done so again. Satan will exult in this, and will press the picture upon the saints in its hardest possible lines so as to break their faith in the promises of God and thus effect their certain defeat. He will point to the fact that the Spirit is no longer flowing through them, declaring that this is certain evidence that God has forsaken them. He will tell them that the work is anything but finished, and will argue that the Spirit has left them because they have grieved away His presence. He will point to the vast numbers on his side; he will display his power in miracles and the wonders of apparent conversions; he will declare that they are not even Christians, for by their wanton stubbornness they are causing the whole world to lie under the heavy hand of calamity and destruction; he will point to the large numbers who have just abandoned them and become their worst accusers; he will play up the picture of their being forsaken of God and man; he will lay before them the history of their past lives and will declare that they are nothing but abject and absolute failures. His arguments will appear neither foolish nor weightless, for every witness of sight and circumstances will loudly declare that he is telling the truth and nothing but the truth. Never could a situation appear more desperate nor their effort to preserve the truth more futile. Ponder the picture of it. Try to gain some concept of what it will be like, for no words and no imagination can truly picture the fearful nature of that test and that experience. None will ever know the full truth of it until they have experienced it.

It will be in that setting and at that time that the death decree will be levelled against them as it was against Elijah. Then Satan will press his final argument as death stares them in the face. "What is to be gained by dying?" he will argue. "The martyrs of old died as conquerors, for they knew their blood would be seed to raise many more for the truth, but this is the hour of ultimate defeat for the truth of God. All is lost and nothing is to be won by your death." In its hardest possible features and most desperate lines will the devil press the situation on the faithful in that day.

Thus, by no means the death *decree* alone, but the death *decree* in the setting of all of this, is as it can only be, the great final test which all must have before they can, while living, receive the second and final seal of the living God. Needless to say, only those will survive, who have learned to live by faith and faith alone; those who have so committed themselves to the Lord that they will say, "God is our God; and even if He has failed, then we shall fail with Him. We

would rather go down with Him in righteousness than to stand with the devil in sin."

Thus the evil one and the righteous become locked in the last desperate struggle. The ranks of God's people are finally purified, they come to the judgment of the living where their sins are blotted out, and they receive the seal of the living God.

It is indeed a sobering prospect for the people of the Lord who can expect to live through this time. Not one of us will face and pass that test successfully unless we are facing and passing the lesser tests of today. The person today, who cannot overcome pride and selfishness now, certainly will not stand then.

May the understanding of these coming events stir each reader to a more consecrated work of soul cleansing and development, so that we shall each be able to stand in that dark and desperate hour.

Chapter 24

Joshua and the Angel

Thus far in our study we have seen something of the fearful experience that the righteous will pass through as they come up to the great, final test. We have seen that that which will make the death *decree* so terrifying will be the setting in which it will be imposed upon us. It will come charged with all the fury of the *Jezebel* of the last days, when every witness of sight and circumstances will be loudly proclaiming that the Lord has withdrawn Himself from us and forsaken us to the will and malice of our arch foes. That in itself will make it a test which would seem beyond the possibility of human endurance, but that, as we have seen, is not all, for the test will come upon a people who will face, what every appearance declares to be, the failure of their mission. We will have entered that last and finishing conflict with the understanding that this is the final settlement the one way or the other of the long standing controversy. For six thousand years the contest has waged back and forth. There are times in that history when the truth has gone forth conquering and to conquer, and at other times the devil has been the one in the upper position.

Both powers have struggled to obtain a conclusion to the whole matter, but neither has succeeded. If error could have blotted truth from the world at any time, then the victory would have stood there, but there has always been a thin line of survivors for God even when things have been at their lowest. On the other hand, truth has never gone right through to the final vanquishing of evil either. Thus the contest has raged back and forth, but now in the end, the two contestants have entered the lists, each grimly knowing that this is it. One or the other will emerge from this the supreme and final victor, while the losing party will be vanquished forever. At first, when the loud cry begins, every promise will be there that the righteous will be on the victor's side, but as thousands desert the ranks, as the storm approaches, leaving a tiny scattered remnant, and as the latter rain dries up, every appearance will suggest that the work has failed, and

that, once again, evil is emerging as the final victor. This will impose a tremendous pressure on the faithful to go over to what appears to be the winning side. Never could things look darker or more hopeless. Never could the death *decree,* which will be loaded with hate and revenge, be imposed with more deadly effectiveness than at this moment.

And yet, this is still not all that the people of the Lord will have to endure at this time, for, in addition to all this, their names at this very time come up in review in the judgment of the living. That would be enough on its own to worry about without all the other, and we can be very sure that the evil one will make the very most of the opportunity to break the faith of the people of God. What the people of God will have to pass through in this respect alone is made clear in the parable of Joshua and the Angel, but before we study this, there are certain evidences in the paragraph on page 609 of *The Great Controversy,* which we are currently studying, that help to certify that the judgment of the living does take place at this final point of time.

There are some who mistakenly teach that the great, final test comes to the believer before he can receive the latter rain and give the loud cry message. Such understand that the judgment of the living commences before the loud cry does, and that those only who have successfully passed that test have been judged as worthy of eternal life in the judgment of the living, have received the blotting out of sins, and have received the seal of the living God, can take part in the giving of the final warning under the power of the latter rain.

The paragraph before us gives further evidence to prove that this is very much a mistaken and erroneous idea. Note the wording of it:

"In this time of persecution the faith of the Lord's servants will be tried. They have faithfully given the warning, looking to God and to His word alone. God's Spirit, moving upon their hearts, has constrained them to speak. Stimulated with holy zeal, and with the divine impulse strong upon them, they entered upon the performance of their duties without coldly calculating the consequences of speaking to the people the word which the Lord had given them. They have not consulted their temporal interests, nor sought to preserve their reputation or their lives. Yet when the storm of opposition and reproach bursts upon them, some, overwhelmed with consternation, will be ready to exclaim: 'Had we foreseen the consequences of our words, we would have held our peace.' " *Great Controversy,* 608, 609.

Does not this paragraph make it very clear that the storm of persecution which bursts upon them comes as a consequence of their speaking forth the words of God in the power of the Spirit? See how

it states that they have given the warning; entering upon the work without any real awareness of what the result is going to be. At the beginning there was no special threat to their possessions or their lives, because at that time none of these things figured in the picture. But they went forth to declare the words of God, and, as surely, triggered the reaction from those who hate the truth. Then, as the storm bursts upon them, some will be ready to cry out that if they had but known where all this would lead them, they would never have gone forward.

Things have thus developed to the point where they are being menaced and denounced on every side by those who were even their former friends. Satan has enlisted the powers of the nations to pass the death *decree* to ensure that they will be destroyed. They are but a little company now who are left standing in the light. This is the picture of things as they will be, as a result of the giving of the loud cry message.

And this is exactly the picture given to us of how things will be when the experience of Joshua and the Angel begins, so far as the peculiar application to the experience of the people of the Lord is concerned in the closing up of the great day of atonement. Let us read the evidence of this from Testimonies 5:472, 473:

"Zechariah's vision of Joshua and the Angel applies with peculiar force to the experience of God's people in the closing up of the great day of atonement. The remnant church will be brought into great trial and distress. Those who keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus will feel the ire of the dragon and his hosts. Satan numbers the world as his subjects, he has gained control of the apostate churches; but here is a little company that are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. As he influenced the heathen nations to destroy Israel, so in the near future he will stir up the wicked powers of earth to destroy the people of God. All will be required to render obedience to human edicts in violation of the divine law. Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will 'be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinfolks, and friends.' "

The closing up of the great day of atonement is the judgment of the living. It is then that the remnant church is brought into great trial and distress. This is the time when "Satan numbers the whole world as his subjects", when "he has gained control of the apostate churches." This is the time when all that stands between him and complete triumph is this little company, which is very evidently made up of the ones left after the great shaking occasioned by the bursting of the storm of persecution described in The Great Controversy,

608, 609, which comes in consequence of the giving of the final warning in the power of the latter rain. This is that time when he will stir up the wicked powers of the earth to destroy the people of God, which they will attempt to do by making a death decree against them. This is that time when: ' 'Those who will be true to God and to duty will be menaced, denounced, and proscribed. They will 'be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinfolks, and friends.' "

Match the facts given in this statement with the information already studied in *The Great Controversy,* and no reasonable doubt is left but that the judgment of the living comes at the end of the loud cry period. Here is just one more evidence to add to the many others which we have seen in the previous chapters of this series.

Some may wonder why we are going to such pains as to give so accurate and comprehensive a picture of the terrible experience through which the people of God are to pass. There is very good reason for this. In the first case, just as the Jews expected the Messiah to come and usher in for them a wonderful day of glory and military supremacy in the world, so the commonly held concept of the coming latter rain has been that of a glorious period of triumph, vindication, and spiritual supremacy in the church. But, while it is true that the loud cry begins that way, there is the dreadful deterioration into the situation pictured above, wherein the spiritual sinew and muscle of the true children of God will be tested to the uttermost limits of endurance.

By approaching the advent of the Messiah with their wholly erroneous concept of His appearing, the Jews suffered terrible, and in most cases, eternal loss. In like manner, if we approach the final conflict with an erroneous concept of what it is going to be, we shall also suffer great loss, which in many cases would serve to destroy the faith which otherwise would stand. The very purpose of giving to us the sure Word of prophecy, is to prepare us for what is coming, so that when it happens, we are not in the least *degree* caught by surprise.

Therefore if we understand that which we have been studying in these chapters and remember them so that we enter the final conflict expecting that this is what is to be, then when it comes, we shall not be caught by surprise, but will be strengthened in the knowledge that what is happening is exactly what the Lord had warned us would happen. So let it be settled in our minds right from here on out, that the future is going to be a very grim and terrible battle indeed, that the pathway to the kingdom is not lined with roses, and that we shall have to overcome by faith and dogged patience.

At the very time when the cup of woe will be already so well filled for the faithful, they will be called upon to face the judgment of the

living. That this is not something which passes off automatically and distantly in the courts of heaven without involving them emotionally, spiritually, and therefore, physically, is made plain, both by the type of the experience of the children of Israel as they came up to the great day of atonement, and by the illustration given in the experience of Joshua and the Angel. To understand this, we need to briefly summarize the nature of the work in the sanctuary, both in the daily and in the final service.

Sin, as we have learned from the studies on living righteously, is not so much "what we do" as "what we are"—the dispositions and nature resident within the individual. This is the root of the trouble, and there can never be good fruit in the life unless there is first of all a new root and a new tree. The whole purpose of the sanctuary service is to take this sin out of us, and dispose of it forever, so that we shall know it no more. The first stage of this work is the removing of the sin from the individual and placing it in the holy place of the heavenly sanctuary where it remains; pending the final disposition onto the scapegoat at the end of the time of human probation.

It is right here that the first application of the parable of Joshua and the Angel is made. The picture as outlined in *Zechariah* 3:1-5: "Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him.

"And the Lord said to Satan, The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?'

"Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel.

"Then he answered and spoke to those who stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him.' And to him he said, 'See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.'

"And I said, 'Let them put a clean turban on his head.' So they put a clean turban on his head, and they put the clothes on him. And the Angel of the Lord stood by."

Joshua is a symbol of the people of God. As the high priest is the representative of that people, the filthy garments which he wears represents our defective characters, which is our iniquity. Joshua's standing before the Angel of the Lord—who is Jesus the Saviour and heavenly High Priest—all clad in filthy garments is a picture of the repentant sinner standing before Christ with all his iniquity, pleading for pardon and cleansing. But as he does so, the enemy is there to discourage him from doing this, so that he will not reap the promised blessing.

In order for us to *receive* the blessing of forgiveness, we must un-

derstand our own personal need. We must be able to see that our real problem is not what we are doing but what we are. Next, we must know that, not only has Jesus promised to take this very thing away from us, but He has all the power and the willingness to do so. Believing that He will do this, we must come and we must ask and receive. If we do not do our part, then the Saviour can never do His. Satan knows this, and so he works very hard to keep the sin in us, for he knows that if he can succeed here, then there is neither fear nor danger that the sin will ever come upon him in the end. So he works to make our sin appear so bad that we would be led to fear that it is too much for the Saviour to ever forgive. Knowing that if he can break our faith in the power of the High Priest to cleanse and forgive, then the Lord can do nothing for us. It must be remembered at all times that, when considered as an illustration of *the daily services,* the Joshua and the Angel experience is a picture of the transfer of sin from the individual to the sanctuary.

But Joshua is shown as one who does come to the sanctuary, and for him the encouraging word is spoken:

"Take away the filthy garments from him and clothe him with a change of raiment.''

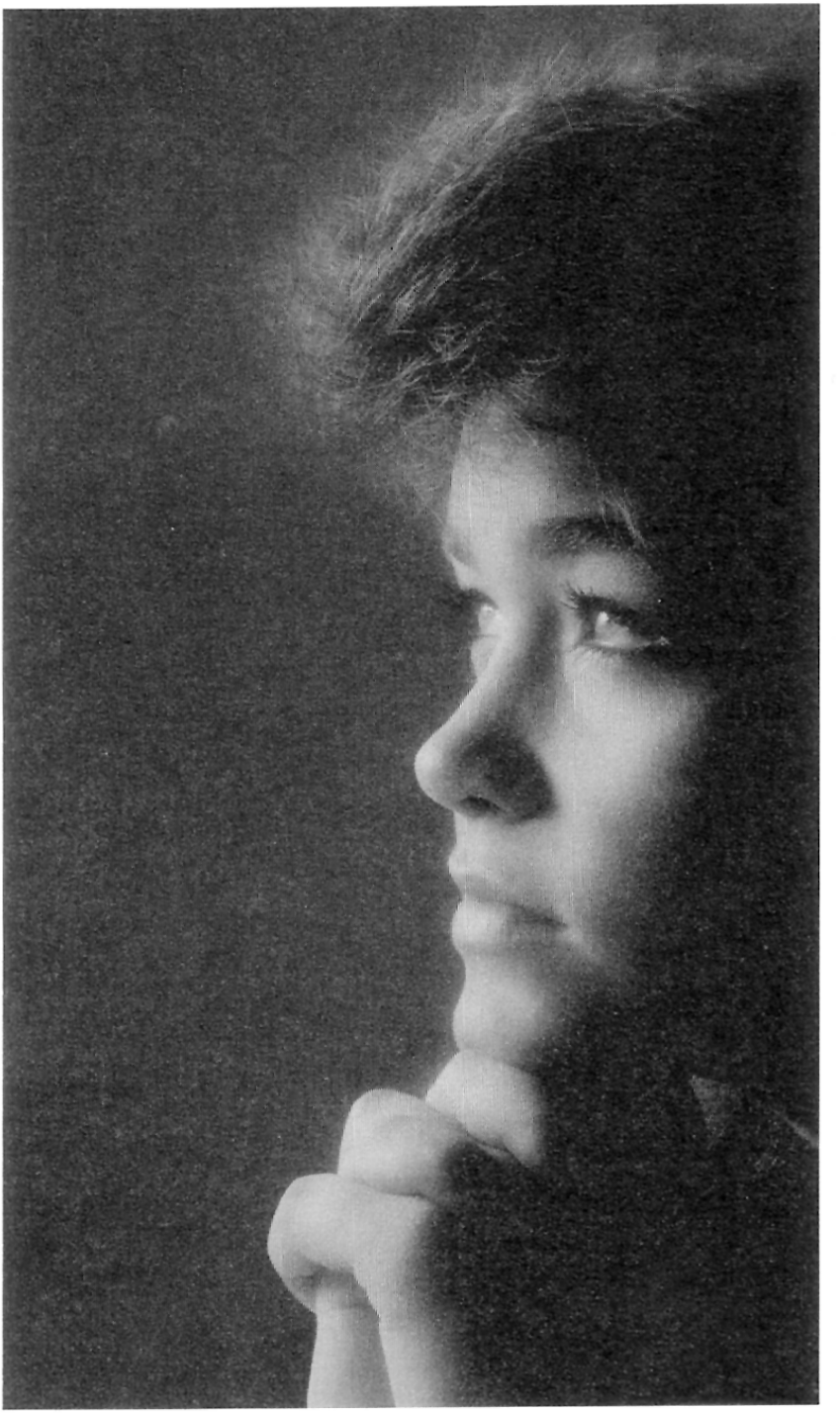
Now it must be obvious that if the garments are taken away from him, then he does not have them any more. Instead, he now has the spotless garments of Christ's righteousness in *the place of* the old filthy garments, which are now in the sanctuary above.

Thus Satan has lost the first round of the battle but not yet the final round. Those sins are not yet on him, and while it is true that they are one step nearer to him, the final court case has not yet taken place, and he can and will present himself at that grand and final assize to defend himself and plead his cause. In that day he will not be in the least concerned about any person who is still wearing his own filthy garments, no matter how zealous that person may be over matters of religion nor how high and wonderful his profession. Satan

OPPOSITE PAGE: The role of the sanctuary in the immediate and ultimate disposal of sin, is so essential to our eternal welfare, that every candidate for eternal life must give the most careful and prayerful consideration to this subject until it is thoroughly understood by him. Each must know for himself that the daily services serve only to remove the sin from the person of the sinner and store it in the sanctuary. That is the application of the parable of Joshua and the Angel to the daily services.

But we must also be aware of the critical need to remove the sin from the sanctuary, and to send it away on the scapegoat. This is the application of the parable to the final atonement.

Only when our iniquity has been firmly loaded on the scapegoat by way of the sanctuary, and sent away beyond any possibility of ever returning to us again, are we rendered secure.



[LDE19]

knows that every such person is secure in his power and that that individual's sins will never come onto him.

But he will be fearfully concerned over every individual whose filthy garments are in the sanctuary, for he is in very imminent danger of their coming right onto him for eternity.

The situation which faces the faithful people of God at the end of the loud cry period, right along with all their other troubles and problems at that time, is that they have an accumulation of sin in the sanctuary, which, unless they do their part in that grim and desperate hour, will come right back onto their own heads again with eternally fatal consequences. To fail now is to fail forever and to lose eternal life. They have a very vital part to play; the nature of which is illustrated in the service of the great day of atonement in the ancient sanctuary service. Then the people had to gather around that building, understand what the high priest was doing, afflict their souls by thorough heart searching, and follow the priest by faith as he went in before the Lord.

So it will be in the last days that the people of God will have to understand exactly what their own personal need will be at that time. They will have to understand that the accumulation of all the sin which they have sent beforehand into the sanctuary must now be finally and fully atoned for by the sprinkling of the blood for them on the mercy seat, by virtue of which it can and will be taken out and placed upon the head of the scapegoat. They will know that this is something they cannot do for themselves in any sense or degree whatsoever. There is only One Person who can do this for them, and that is Jesus, the High Priest of the heavenly sanctuary. They must believe that He can and will do this, and believing that, they must come and actually and specifically commit this work into His charge. Everything will depend upon their maintaining a steadfast faith in that hour; an hour when to maintain faith will be the toughest assignment ever given to mortals.

Satan knows this, and with desperate and ruthless cunning, he will muster every weapon in his armory in order to break their faith in the promises of God. Already we have seen that he will mightily use the witness of sight and circumstances in an effort to convince them that the work of God is a complete failure, and that nothing is to be gained by dying under these conditions and circumstances. He will point to the evidences which suggest that they have been forsaken by both God and man, he will point to the power which is still with him, to the vast numbers—including a multitude of their recent associates who are now numbered as his followers—and will cunningly suggest the "wisdom" of following the multitude to safety.

By all this, he hopes to reduce them to a state of weakness and

uncertainty before striking with his final weapon. This is the softening-up barrage as used in warfare before the main assault. Having really put them through this gruelling process, he will then come at them as the chief prosecutor in the judgment scene, and as they, with anxious hearts, turn their eyes toward the final work of their great High Priest in the sanctuary above, he will present before them the picture of their sinful past in such an evil light as to guarantee that they are much too sinful to ever be forgiven by Jesus, the spotless and pure One.

"The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast." Testimonies 5:473.

Thus the faithful will be assailed with all the power, pressure, and cunning which the devil can gather, and it will be no mild experience to have to pass through. Look back into your own past experience, and remember how hard it was to believe when the witness of sight and circumstances gathered the dark clouds around us. Then think forward to that far greater test and see, that if it was hard to believe when those few dark clouds were there, what is it going to be like when that final storm gathers, of which we have but the faintest concepts at the moment?

Small wonder, then, that this is described as the great, final test. The final test is the one designed to bring out any weaknesses, which previous tests have not been able to find, and it is also final, because there is no other test which can be devised to follow it. So likewise, Satan will have exhausted his resources in this final test, and there will be nothing further which he can bring against them after this but that he has already let them have it by this time.

For the very reason that the great, final test is designed to reveal any weaknesses not previously found under the lesser tests, so the Lord could not and will not give the seal to any until they have passed that test. Some will endure the persecution in the early stages of the loud cry period, and then fall off when the buy and sell decree is passed. Others will pass both of those tests, but when the great, final test comes, will fail then. As Satan says: "when death shall be made the penalty of violating our sabbath, then many who are now ranked with commandment keepers will come over to our side." "He knows what truth is." Testimonies to Ministers, 473, 409, and as he is

speaking to his angels here of what he knows will be, we can see that there will be those who will successfully endure the lesser tests but will fail in the great, final test. Therefore, how could the Lord give the seal of final certification to the people while there is still the possibility of their failing Him in the crisis hour? The answer is, that He obviously could not. This makes it very plain that those who teach that the judgment of the living and the placing of the final seal comes before the latter rain, have only the faintest ideas of what constitutes the great, final test, when it will come, and what it will mean to the people of the Lord.

Understandably, then, there will be a great shaking in that day, a shaking which will take out every soul who has failed to make the most earnest and diligent preparation for the event. But in that hour there will be a remnant who will stand, who will endure, and who will be true to God no matter what the implications might appear to be. They will be a people who in this life have learned not to be terrified by the witness of sight and circumstances; a people who have learned to live by faith in every experience of life; who know their Redeemer; and who know that He lives for them in the sanctuary above. They will be a people who have it forever settled in their minds that they are on the side of the Lord, and will let nothing swerve them from that allegiance. They will be a people who in these days of probation have gained the victory over the claims of appetite, the love of dress and display, the pleasures of sin, and over all the follies of the world. They will be men and women of great strength and character. They will be the one hundred and forty-four thousand who will never see death, and who will follow the Lamb wherever He goes throughout all eternity. They will be men and women wondered at.

But that character, that kind of faith, and that endurance is not won in a day. It is the result of a lifetime of consecrated and thorough preparation. It is the result of gaining the little victories day by day. It is the result of living victoriously over every sin and every besetment as it assails us in the present walk of life; for you can be assured that if you do not have the victory over every sin today, then you certainly will not stand then. Therefore, while it is still called today; while the angels in heavenly mercy and patience hold back the four winds of strife; while there is still, as it were, a fragment of time, let us make our calling and election sure in and through the mighty power of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Lord will bless and help everyone who will really get down and do this as the first and the most important matter in his whole life.

Chapter 25

The Duration of Jacob's Trouble

During the past several chapters of this series, we have been studying that part of the chapter in *The Great Controversy* entitled, "The Final Warning", wherein we saw traced from the opening of the loud cry to its end the development of that final call to men upon this earth. Having brought us to the point where the work is ended and the people of God are forced to flee to the Mighty One for strength as the devil presses upon them with all his power and cunning and with all the power of evil men, we are brought also to the end of a section in the chapter. The remainder is devoted to giving general descriptions and facts about the final warning which will be given in the power of the latter rain.

Now we are interested to learn those events and conditions which shall follow the situation that will have developed as the latter rain comes to its end with the finishing of the mission of the gospel. We have seen that the evil one and the people of the Lord are locked in a titanic struggle at this time. Satan will be working with all his might and skill to break the faith of the people of God, especially as they stand in the judgment of the living, while they, on the other hand, will be determined to hang on and gain the victory. The time of the judgment of the living having commenced in heaven, the books of record will be opened, so that from the accounts contained therein, a determination can be made as to the disposition of the sins which stand in the sanctuary—those filthy garments which have previously been removed from the repentant ones and placed there on their behalf until this very time.

As the true and the faithful upon the earth successfully endure the great final test, because they have been cleansed from all sin and unrighteousness, as has been confirmed by the records in heaven, and as they plead for the Saviour, as their High Priest and Representative before the Father in the judgment, to blot out their sins, Jesus steps to the mercy seat and confesses their sins as He sprinkles His blood thereon. By virtue of this confession on His part in the

most holy place, all the sins which He has confessed therein, ever since He entered that apartment in 1844, first for the righteous dead, and at last for the righteous living, will be taken out of the sanctuary and placed upon the scapegoat—Satan—when Christ reaches this earth. Of this we shall learn later when we come to that point of time in our study.

Then, at the time when Jesus makes that final confession over the mercy seat, human probation is closed, and mercy no longer pleads for the human family. Then will be uttered those awfully solemn words: "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." *Revelation* 22:11, 12.

"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book." *Daniel* 12:1.

The closing of human probation is the beginning of the great time of trouble and of the time of Jacob's trouble. While these two times of trouble have a common beginning in time and run concurrently for quite a period, one extends beyond the other, and the two are not the same. The great time of trouble is that which the wicked experience, while the time of Jacob's trouble is that which the righteous alone pass through. The former reaches right down to the actual second advent of Jesus, while the latter will terminate before that when the voice of God delivers His people from the wrath of their enemies. This we shall see more clearly as we proceed.

Before studying the events of these periods in their sequence, we would do well to clarify the question as to the duration of this time of trouble. It has generally been held in the past that the time of trouble will occupy a whole year, from the close of human probation to the second advent of Jesus in the clouds of heaven. This concept was based upon a certain understanding of *Revelation* 18:8, which reads as follows:

"Therefore her plagues will come in one day—death and mourning and famine. And she will be utterly burned with fire, for strong is the Lord God who judges her."

Knowing as we do the well established principle that a day in prophecy is symbolic of a actual year, then it is all too easy to quickly arrive at the conclusion that this means that the seven last plagues will be one year in falling. But such a conclusion can only be held by overlooking several important facts. In the first case, there are three

other verses in the same chapter which state that they will come "in one hour" (See verses 10, 17, and 19). Now one hour is just as much a time symbol as one day, which means that we seem to have a conflicting witness in this chapter. One could take the weight of evidence and conclude that there are three texts which state that they will come in one hour, to the one which states that they will come in one day, and, therefore, conclude that the plagues will occupy one twenty-fourth part of a year, which is just about fifteen days, more or less.

However, to take this position cannot be satisfactory while there is that text which distinctly says one day. The only remaining position to take is that the year-day principle is invalid at the time spoken of in this chapter, and this is the correct position to take. It is correct, because we have been distinctly told that after the close of the two thousand three hundred day prophecy, prophetic time had ceased.

The infallible word of the mighty Angel, who is no less a Person than Christ Himself *(SDA Bible Commentary* 7:971), has declared that: "There should be time no longer." *Revelation* 10:6. *K.J,V.*

As this was spoken at the time of the bitter-sweet experience, we know that it applies to the termination of the great two thousand three hundred year prophecy, which ended in October 22, 1844. In commenting on this statement, the spirit of Prophecy has this to say:

"This time, which the angel declares with a solemn oath, is not the end of this world's history, neither of probationary time, but of prophetic time, which should precede the advent of our Lord. That is, the people will not have another message upon definite time. After this period of time, reaching from 1842 to 1844, there can be no definite tracing of the prophetic time. The longest reckoning reaches to the autumn of 1844." SDA *Bible Commentary* 7:971.

By this clear declaration, we can know that after 1844 the year-day principle of interpretation no longer applies, so we are not to understand that either the use of the word "day" or "hour" in *Revelation* 18, is intended to reveal to the Bible student the exact length of time in which the plagues will fall. Rather, the idea which is being conveyed is that it will all come suddenly and in a very short period of time. In actual fact, we have no real indication of how long the time of trouble will extend, beyond certain evidences which suggest it will be very much less than a year in duration.

In the first case, we have so clearly seen in our past study that the death *decree* will have already been passed before the great time of trouble actually begins, and that the day set for its execution will fall during this time of trouble. This fact should tell us that the time of trouble would have to be much less than a year. In respect to this we must remember that the fearful calamities and disasters which deso-

late the world during the seven last plagues do not fall upon a world, enjoying, at the time of the beginning of this period, a glorious and sunny prosperity. This will be far from the case, for as the world progressively stiffens its resistance to the truth, the devil has greater and greater control over the elements, so that calamities and disasters increase and spread even before the loud cry begins. One has but to look out today on the world scene to know that things in this field are growing worse and worse, and will continue to do so as the rejection of the truth of God increases:

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, flood, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. 'The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people . . . do languish. The earth also shall be defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' " *Great Controversy,* 589, 590.

If problems are worsening now, what will it be like in the earth as the loud cry progresses? Under the flood-tide of that light, the rejection of the truth will become more and more defiant until the close of probation when it will be absolute, and Satan will have full control of the finally impenitent and of the elements of nature. Therefore, during the loud cry period we can know that disasters and calamities will very rapidly increase until the world is in a very sorry state, even before the seven last plagues are poured out.

Some question why it is that Satan brings destruction upon his own subjects and kingdom when it would appear that he would do better to make a happier and cleaner world in which men could live. But Satan is not concerned so much with making a better world for anyone as he is in saving his own skin. The only way he can do this now is to prove that God is wrong. To do this, he must prevent God from doing what He said He would do: "finish the work and cut it short in righteousness." *Romans* 9:28. Already Satan has succeeded in greatly extending his own life-span by preventing the finishing of the work in the past, and if he could finally destroy the work of God out of the earth, then he would succeed in proving God wrong; that God could not keep His word, that the power of sin was

so great that it was impossible for created beings to be victorious over its power, and that God was demanding too much in expecting created beings to obey His law. Should he succeed in doing this, then he would take away the power of God to punish him with eternal destruction, and would win the fight for reinstatement into heaven on his own terms.

As a means to this end, there is a calculated purpose in his destructive activity in the world which brings him a twofold dividend. In the first case, he causes men to charge God with his work, thus leading them to hate God and join him in his fearful rebellion against the Creator who destroys no one. In the second case "the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors." *Great Controversy,* 590.

Thus the devil is able to provide himself with an instrument with which he can accomplish his long cherished ambition of destroying the people of God, for "if he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete." Testimonies 5:473.

This is the awful truth. All the devil has to do is to prevent the formation of the one hundred and forty four thousand by slaying all those who would be numbered among them, and he has won the great controversy and will have proved his point. He does not even have to wait till then, for if he could destroy every faithful child of God today, then his triumph right now would be complete. But let us praise the God of heaven that "The angel of the Lord encamps all around those who fear Him, and delivers them." *Psalm* 34:7, and will do so until the very end.

"As the Sabbath has become the special point of controversy throughout Christendom, and religious and secular authorities have combined to enforce the observance of the Sunday, the persistent refusal of a small minority to yield to the popular demand will make them objects of universal execration. It will be urged that the few who stand in opposition to an institution of the church and a law of the state ought not to be tolerated; that it is better for them to suffer than for whole nations to be thrown into confusion and lawlessness. The same argument eighteen hundred years ago was brought against Christ by the 'rulers of the people.' 'It is expedient for us,' said the wily Caiaphas, 'that one man should die for the people, and that the whole nation perish not.' *John* 11:50. This argument will appear conclusive; and a decree will finally be issued against those who hallow the Sabbath of the fourth commandment, denouncing them as

deserving of the severest punishment and giving the people liberty, after a certain time, to put them to death. . . .

"The people of God will then be plunged into those scenes of affliction and distress described by the prophet as the time of Jacob's trouble." *Great Controversy,* 615, 616.

Already through the world news services, we have witnessed the wrath of the people and what that can do when street rioting breaks out unrestrained, but how much worse it will be when the wrath of the people will be stirred to fever pitch when they have been deprived of homes, lands, loved ones, health, food, and the comforts of life by, as they imagine, a stubborn minority who refuse to bow to the will of the majority, the church, and the state. What will these frenzied exhibitions of rage be like when the whole world is united in their hatred against a class so small that it would seem but the work of a moment to blot them out of existence.

They cannot do this while probation still lingers, because the four angels are still holding back the four winds of strife: "While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent." *Early Writing,* 280.

This is to say, that from that moment when probation closes, the devil has unrestricted and unconstrained control of the masses of mankind who have rejected the truth of God. Therefore he can do just as he pleases with them. Inasmuch as they share his hatred of the true and the faithful, he and they are joined in a common, desperate, and consuming anxiety to rid the earth of this pestilential minority. Is it reasonable to conclude, in the light of all these facts, that he and they are going to wait for almost a whole year before they carry out the plan to execute the death decree? Why, of course not! Both the devil and his followers will seek to have this done as soon as it is possible to have it done.

At the same time, Satan does not want to make any mistake about it. He knows that to be too hasty would spoil the opportunity too, so he plans the whole scheme with the most careful and thorough finesse, so that not one of the righteous will be left to perpetuate the truth of God and guarantee his destruction.

So it will be as it was in the days of Esther; the death *decree* will be drawn up by the leading men of the earth at some meeting place acceptable to them all. It will be first the work of the ecclesiastical authorities, who must then have it ratified by the powers of the earth; just as the *Jezebel* of old wrote out the death warrant for Naboth, the faithful, obedient servant of God, in the king's name, and sealed it with his seal. See *1 Kings 2*1:8.

This *decree,* as we read above, will give the people the right to be the executioners, which conferring of legal power must be legally done by transmitting copies of the *decree* to every part of the world, just as the writings of the decree in the days of Esther had to be sent first to every part of the realm before the actual plan of slaughtering the people of God could take place.

Knowing as we do that the experience of the people in the days of Esther was a type or a preview of how it will be in the last days, we can know how it will be again, and this fact is confirmed in the following statement:

"Then I saw the leading men of the earth consulting together, and Satan and his angels busy around them. I saw a writing, copies of which were scattered in different parts of the land, giving orders that unless the saints should yield their peculiar faith, give up the Sabbath, and observe the first day of the week, the people were at liberty after a certain time to put them to death." *Early Writings,* 282, 283.

Such will not require a great deal of time. Under present conditions, once the *decree* had been drawn up and passed, the printing and packaging of it, and its dispatch to the farthermost ends of the earth, would be all accomplished in a matter of a few days. Due allowance must be made for the fact that there will be considerable disruption to world communications at that time because of the heavy hand of blight and destruction upon the world, so it might take a little longer, but by no means a whole year. At the most, it could only take a week or two.

Therefore it is most reasonable to conclude that the time of Jacob's trouble will be of relatively short duration, and for this we can well be thankful, for one would really wonder how human nature could possibly endure twelve months of the agony of Jacob's trouble. I went through twenty-four hours of that kind of experience once, in a much milder form, and then I feared I would break down mentally. Relief came before that, for which I was very thankful, and after passing through that experience, I do not know how one could endure twelve months of it without total disintegration, mentally and spiritually.

A statement which is worth some consideration on this question of the length of the duration of the time of trouble is this one from A *Word to the Little Flock,* page 12: "The Lord has shown me in vision, that Jesus rose up, and shut the door, and entered the Holy of Holies at the seventh month, 1844; but Michael's standing up, *(Daniel* 12:1) to deliver His people, is in the future.

"This, will not take place, until Jesus has finished His priestly office in the Heavenly Sanctuary, and lays off His priestly attire, and

puts on His most kingly robes and crown, to ride forth on the cloudy chariot, to 'thresh the heathen in His anger,' and deliver His people.

"Then Jesus will have the sharp sickle in His hand, *(Revelation* 14:14) and then the saints will cry day and night to Jesus on the cloud, to thrust in His sickle and reap.

"This, will be the time of Jacob's trouble, *(Jeremiah* 30:5-8) out of which the saints will be delivered by the voice of God."

This statement tells us that as soon as Jesus has completed the work in the sanctuary as the High Priest, He changes his priestly garments for the kingly robes of justice and vengeance, and immediately following, He rides forth on the journey from heaven to this earth to deliver His people. While He is thus riding forth, the saints upon the earth will be calling upon Him to thrust in the sickle and reap the harvest. Then we are told that the time of Jacob's trouble is the time when this is going on, by which we would instantly know the duration of the time of trouble if we knew how long it will take for Jesus to lay off the priestly attire, put on the garments of vengeance, and fly down from heaven to the earth.

Nowhere are we told just how much time will be occupied on this journey, though we certainly do know that it can be accomplished in seven days and even possibly less, for that is the length of time it will take to make the return journey. The evidence for this is given in *Early Writings,* page 16:

"We all entered the cloud together, and were seven days ascending to the sea of glass."

That much is clear, then, that the journey need occupy but seven days. However, we cannot take the definite position from this that there will be exactly the same length of time taken by Christ. There may well be some other factors not revealed to us, which may extend the period a little, or reduce it somewhat, but it does indicate to us that the length of time will be a great deal less than one whole year.

In reading of the experience of the saints during the time of Jacob's trouble, we find the following in *Spirit of Prophecy* 4:447.

"Could men see with heavenly vision, they would behold companies of angels that excel in strength stationed about those who have kept the word of Christ's patience. With sympathizing tenderness, angels have witnessed their distress, and have heard their prayers. They are waiting the word of their Commander to snatch them from their peril. But they must wait yet a little longer. The people of God must drink of the cup, and be baptized with the baptism. The very delay, so painful to them, is the best answer to their petitions. As they endeavor to wait trustingly for the Lord to work, they are led to exercise faith, hope, and patience, which have been too little exercised during their religious experience. Yet for the elect's sake, the

time of trouble *will* be shortened. *The end will come more quickly than men expect.* The wheat will be gathered and bound in sheaves for the garner of God; the tares will be bound as fagots for the fires of destruction."

The evidence available is that, though of fearful intensity, the time of Jacob's trouble will certainly be much less than a year in length, and will in fact be of quite short duration. To those who have to pass through it, it will seem like a thousand years while it is going on, but terrible and trying though it will be and seemingly beyond the power of human endurance, the strength of the Lord will be the victory of His people, and in that time they shall come off more than conquerors.

Chapter 26

Plagues, and Last Plagues

Having determined from the study in our last chapter that the actual time of trouble will be much, much shorter than has been generally supposed, it is time to study just what is to happen during that period. To do this, it will be necessary to study the period in general terms first. Then we will consider the sequence of events through which the righteous pass, after which we will look at what the wicked will suffer.

It should already be clear, from what we have studied together, that the close of probation marks the very beginning of this time of trouble such as never was. Nevertheless, we would do well to really establish this point from the evidences in the Word of God. The fact we shall see is that the time will come when Jesus will bring to an end the high priestly ministry in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary, and will step out from that position so that there will be no Mediator for man. When that point of time comes, then the wicked are left fully exposed to the power of Satan, who will then plunge the whole world into such trouble as would never have been thought possible.

This is clearly stated in the following reference: "When He [Christ] leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. In that fearful time the righteous must live in the sight of a holy God without an intercessor. The restraint which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan has entire control of the finally impenitent. God's long-suffering has ended. The world has rejected His mercy, despised His love, and trampled upon His law. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation; the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, has been at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection from the wicked one. Satan will then plunge the inhabitants of the earth into one great, final trouble. As the angels of God cease to hold in check the fierce winds of human passion, all the elements of strife will be let loose. The whole world

will be involved in ruin more terrible than that which came upon Jerusalem of old.

"A single angel destroyed all the first-born of the Egyptians, and filled the land with mourning. When David offended against God by numbering the people, one angel caused that terrible destruction by which his sin was punished. The same destructive power exercised by holy angles when God commands, will be exercised by evil angels when He permits. There are forces now ready, and only waiting the divine permission, to spread desolation everywhere." *Great Controversy,* 614.

"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book." *Daniel* 12:1.

"When Christ shall cease His work as mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin. Then the case of every soul will have been decided, and there will be no atoning blood to cleanse from sin. When Jesus leaves His position as man's intercessor before God, the solemn announcement is made, 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still.' *Revelation* 22:11. Then the restraining Spirit of God is withdrawn from the earth. As Jacob was threatened with death by his angry brother, so the people of God will be in peril from the wicked who are seeking to destroy them. And as the patriarch wrestled all night for deliverance from the hand of Esau, so the righteous will cry to God day and night for deliverance from the enemies that surround them." *Patriarchs and Prophets,* 201.

These statements make it very clear that the cessation of the ministry of Christ in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary will mark the point when the restraining presence of the Holy Spirit shall be entirely withdrawn, with the result that the time of trouble will begin fully and in earnest. For the wicked, that will mean the outpouring of the seven last plagues, which is the unmingled wrath of God against the transgressor. That the seven last plagues begin with the closing of the ministry in the sanctuary, is made certain by the following statements:

"When Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary, the unmingled wrath threatened against those who worship the beast and his image and receive his mark *(Revelation* 14:9, 10), will be poured out. The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judg-

ments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people." *Great Controversy,* 627, 628.

"Then I saw that Jesus would not leave the most holy place until every case was decided either for salvation or destruction, and that the wrath of God could not come until Jesus had finished His work in the most holy place, laid off His priestly attire, and clothed Himself with the garments of vengeance. Then Jesus will step out from between the Father and man, and God will keep silence no longer, but pour out His wrath on those who have rejected His truth." *Early Writings,* 36.

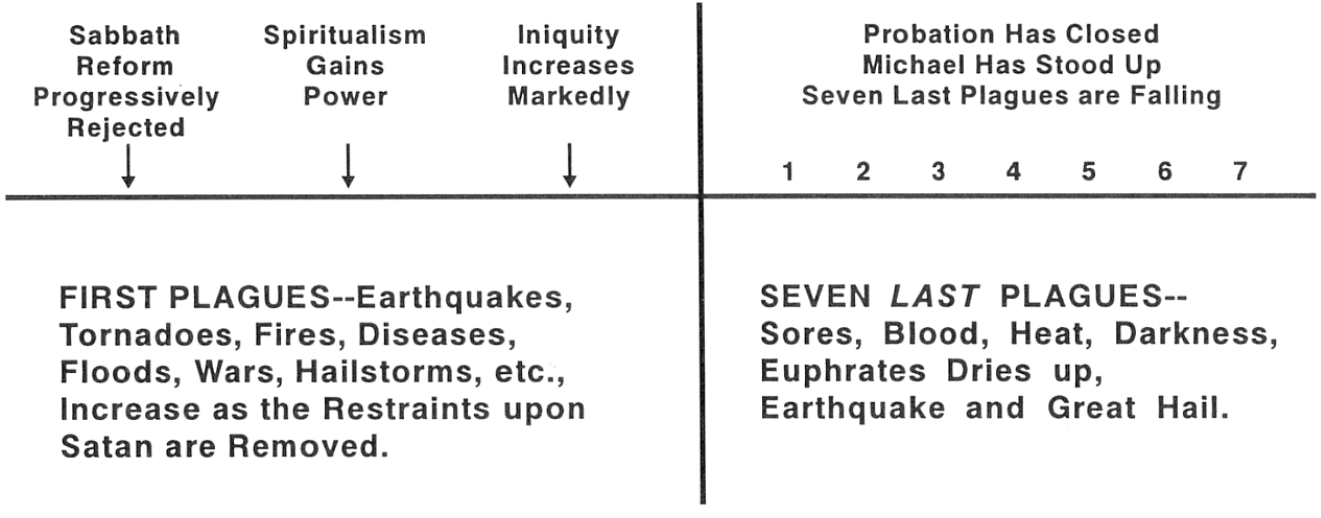
"As Jesus moved out of the most holy place, I heard the tinkling of the bells upon His garment; and as He left, a cloud of darkness covered the inhabitants of the earth. There was then no Mediator between guilty man and an offended God. While Jesus had been standing between God and guilty man, a restraint was upon the people; but when He stepped out from between man and the Father, the restraint was removed, and Satan had entire control of the finally impenitent. It was impossible for the plagues to be poured out while Jesus officiated in the sanctuary; but as His work there is finished, and His intercession closes, there is nothing to stay the wrath of God, and it breaks with fury upon the shelterless head of the guilty sinner, who has slighted salvation and hated reproof." *Early Writings,* 280.

These statements make it very clear that until the ministry of Jesus is completed in the most holy place of the sanctuary in heaven, the seven last plagues cannot, and will not be poured out on the guilty inhabitants of the earth. But just as soon as that mediation comes to its end, then they will be poured out. There will be no delay in the matter whatsoever. Therefore we are established on this truth—that when the ministration of Jesus in the most holy place ends, He puts on the garments of vengeance, and at once the seven last plagues begin to fall upon the unprotected heads of the wicked, while at the same time the people of God upon the earth are plunged into the experience of the time of Jacob's trouble. This much is clear.

The true and accurate understanding of the Word of God is not for the careless and superficial reader, but for the careful, thoughtful, prayerful student who is prepared to compare Scripture with Scripture, and let every word have its true and proper weight. Thus it is, that the first reading of the statements above would give the impression that the beginning of the seven last plagues will be a dramatic entry; introducing a situation so vastly different from that which went before, that all will not have the slightest difficulty in seeing that the seven last plagues have begun.

A careful study of the related events of the time shows that this will not be so, but rather the seven last plagues will be but the final

The Development of the First Plagues Before, and the Seven Plauges After the Close of Probation, When, During the Latter, for the First Time in Eternity, God's Presence will be Wholly Withdrawn from an Inhabited Planet.



intensification of plagues in the world, which are already there as a result of the universal apostasy. So terrible will be these plagues which shall fall before the close of probation, that the coming of the seven *last* plagues will not be anything new and strange to the people of the earth, but rather the same thing in greater severity. The ones which come before the close of probation will blend into those which come after, and no man will be able to tell when those which come before give place to those which come after, no matter how good a Bible student he may be. In fact, not even Satan, who is the best Bible student of all, will be able to tell the difference. The evidences for all this we must now search out and study.

In the very first case, the expression used over and over in the Spirit of Prophecy, "the seven *last* plagues", is in itself very meaningful. They are not called simply the seven plagues, but the seven *last* plagues. If these are the last, then there must be a former plague or more, because something can only be last if there is a first to go before it.

Now we have learned from the statements quoted above that the seven last plagues come entirely after the close of probation, and inasmuch as they begin the moment that human probation closes, then the first plagues must all be located before the close of probation.

Furthermore, we are plainly told that these seven last plagues are the antitype of the plagues which fell on Egypt when God was about to deliver His people from the power of the oppressor back then.

"The plagues upon Egypt when God was about to deliver Israel were similar in character to those more terrible and extensive judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people." *Great Controversy,* 627, 628.

A comparison of that time and the coming period will show how truly the first is the type of the second, and was, therefore, recorded as a lesson of great value for the people of God who will pass through the closing scenes of this world's history.

In both cases, the death *decree* had been passed upon the people of God with the intention of destroying them from the face of the earth. Of this death *decree* in the days of Pharaoh, we read:

"Then the king of Egypt spoke to the Hebrew midwives, of whom the name of one was Shiphrah and the name of the other Puah;

"and he said, 'When you do the duties of a midwife for the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstools, if it is a son, then you shall kill him; but if it is a daughter, then she shall live.' " *Exodus* 1:15,16.

Such a decree can only result in the extermination of the race, for when there were no men left, there could be no next generation. When this decree failed because of the faithfulness of the midwives,

then the king made a second decree which was even more deadly: "So Pharaoh commanded all his people, saying, 'Every son who is born you shall cast into the river, and every daughter you shall save alive.' " Verse 22.

Pharaoh was then the highest earthly power, and so it will be the highest earthly powers again which will make a *decree* designed to exterminate the people of God. But just as God sent those ten terrible plagues before He delivered His people back there, so He will again send the plagues of the last days before the final deliverance of His people. As it was then, so it will be. This would lead us to the conclusion that if there were ten plagues back then, there will again be ten plagues in the last days. If this is so, and if, as we know, the seven last of them are located after the close of probation, then the first three must come before the close of probation.

We are not aware of any place where we can find three exact plagues listed as coming before the close of probation, but we can find abundant evidence to show that the earth will be plagued with disasters and calamities of staggering proportions before that time shall come. In fact, such troubles are already in the land, and becoming worse as the years go by.

Let us trace this through once again in the chapter entitled, "The Impending Conflict", from *The Great Controversy,* pages 582-592. As we have spent some time in this chapter and previously in chapter four of this series, we will but touch the high points here as an introduction to the truth in regard to the seven last plagues, which we need to understand.

Since the year 1844, the great truths of Sabbath reform and the true keeping of the law of God have been held up before the people and the churches of the world. The call has not only gone unheeded, but it has been flatly rejected and strongly resisted by these churches. Now the simple fact is, that it is quite impossible to resist the call of God without suffering terribly as a result. Cause is followed by effect. Every action has its equal and opposite reaction. These churches have sown to the wind, and they will as surely reap the whirlwind. "As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become willnigh universal. The teachings of religious leaders have opened the door to infidelity, to Spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and upon these leaders rest a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world." *Great Controversy,* 587

It is of the utmost importance that these leaders hide from the people the real cause of the troubles which are coming upon them with mounting severity, so that they will turn and blame the desecration of Sunday for it. And this act on their part is a still further rejec-

tion of the claims of God upon them as they seek to set up the false day of worship. So we read:

"Yet this very class put forth the claim that the fast-spreading corruption is largely attributable to the desecration of the so-called 'Christian sabbath,' and that the enforcement of Sunday observance would greatly improve the morals of society." *Great Controversy,* 587.

Such an act only serves further to open the doors to the entrance of infidelity and Spiritualism and as Spiritualism is the power through which Satan works, this gives the evil one greater power to work his will in the earth. It is the plan and the work of this wicked one to appear to men as the benefactor of the race while in actual fact he comes as its destroyer. Thus we read:

"Through spiritualism, Satan appears as a benefactor of the race, healing the diseases of the people, and professing to present a new and more exalted system of religious faith; but at the same time he works as a destroyer. . . .

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people ... do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' *Isaiah* 24:4, 5." *Great Controversy,* 589, 590.

There are two points which bear notice in this statement. First of all we are told that''Even now he is at work." Those words were written something like ninety years ago, having appeared in volume four of *The Spirit of Prophecy,* page 407. Not only were we told that he was then at work, but that "These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous." Those who are living today are witnesses to the awesome truth of these words. These visitations are indeed becoming more and more frequent and disastrous. The past year—1992—was certainly marked by a fearful train of disasters of awful magnitude. Yet, so inured has the world become to such things because of their repeated severity and frequency, that it hardly took more than passing notice of the events.

But the serious Bible student notes that these things are becoming more frequent and disastrous as the moral and spiritual tone of the world descends to ever lower and still lower depths. That descent has never been more rapid than it has been in the past few years. It seems that men are casting off all restraint and abandoning themselves to the pursuit of all and every kind of wickedness, using their bodies in the performance of the vilest lusts and pleasures.

This situation must now become inevitably worse and worse, the result being that the Spirit of God will be withdrawn more and more from the earth, while the power of Spiritualism will become more and more manifest, until these things assume plague proportions.

We know that when the loud cry shall begin, things will have come to the place where it will be said of the churches of the world, that:

"Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and has become a habitation of demons, a prison for every foul spirit, and a cage for every unclean and hated bird!

"For her sins have reached to heaven, and God has remembered her iniquities." *Revelation* 18:2, 5.

This reveals that a state of things is coming when the power of Spiritualism will be far greater even than it is today. Then the church will have become the very habitation of devils and will be the hold of every foul spirit; things being so serious that her sins will have reached clear up to heaven. This means that Satan will then have unlimited power within those churches through whom he will exercise to the fullest extent the malignant and destructive power of Spiritualism.

Today, things have not yet come to quite that point and will not until the churches have all become united in one purpose against the truth of God. But that time is coming, and if the destruction in the world is as bad as it is today—with Satan not yet possessing full power in the churches—then what will it be like when he does exercise unlimited power in and through the churches: It is too frightening even to think about.

But this will by no means be the worst of it, for that will be, as we have learned previously, only the beginning of the loud cry period. At that time the devil will have full control of the churches, but not yet of the world. Therefore Spiritualism will still have some limitations on its power. The contest during the loud cry period will be for the minds of men in general. At the beginning of that time the churches will be fully committed to the devil, and the people of God will be committed to the Lord, but there will be the masses of the earth who will not yet have made their final decision one way or the other. But during the loud cry period such decisions must be made;

and we know that the vast majority will make their decisions on the wrong side.

The point is, that every man who makes his decision on the wrong side thereby increases the power of Satan—which is the power of Spiritualism. The greater the power of Spiritualism, then the more the enemy of souls is able to make it appear that he is a benefactor of the race, while at the same time, the more he is able to work as a destroyer. The whole thing is in direct proportion, so, as the loud cry progresses and more and more people make their final decision for wrong, then greater becomes the power of Spiritualism and the more extensive and terrible the destructions which will fall upon the earth.

If the destructions which we see in the earth today are as extensive and disastrous as they are while the power of Satan is still limited, then what must they be like during the loud cry as he gains greater and greater power in his steady climb to the pinnacle of that power to be realized when the time of probation ends? The whole world will stagger from blow after terrible blow as the calamities of the earth reach plague proportions before probation finally closes. Then, as the devil gains the final and complete control over all the earth, apart from those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, Spiritualism will reach the full and final height of its destructive power as probation closes, and that power will be manifest in the seven last plagues.

Thus it is to be seen that the plagues which fall upon the earth just prior to the close of probation are scarcely less terrible than those which fall immediately after probation closes, and, therefore, those who are living at that time will be unable to tell the difference between the one or the other, or to know when the one ends and the other begins. This is a very important point, and one which we need to keep well in mind as we proceed in this study.

The same is true of the withdrawal of the Spirit of God from the earth. This also is progressive. So far as Babylon herself is concerned, that withdrawal is already complete at the very beginning of the loud cry period—quite some time before the final close of probation. But for the world in general, that final withdrawal is not complete until the close of human probation.

Thus we can know that things are going to become worse and worse as time goes by, until we reach the great time of trouble, the like of which this world has never known. Knowing what is coming calls forth from every intelligent Christian the determination to make the most thorough and careful preparation for what is before us, for only those who have really set their hearts to serve the Lord will stand in that day.

Chapter 27

The Unknown Hour

The close of human probation, which comes with the ending of the ministration of Christ in the sanctuary in heaven and ushers in the seven last plagues, is an event of the most momentous proportions to the human family. Then the fate of every human being will have been decided for eternity; some for everlasting life and the remainder to eternal destruction.

Most of the human race is unaware of the definite coming of such a day, but those who are, usually believe that the day will not pass without their knowing exactly when the event will take place. It is generally believed that some sign will be given whereby the saints on earth will be made aware that probation has closed and that the time of trouble has come upon mankind. But will this be so? We need to carefully examine the evidences to see if there will be an indication to the living that the time of probation has passed and that there is no further opportunity for salvation.

In the first case, let us look and see if the wicked people of the earth will be aware that their probation has passed on to eternity. To find the answer we have but to read *The Great Controversy,* 615, where, in the plainest of terms, we are told that the wicked will not know that mercy's voice is no longer pleading with them to repent and that their fate is forever settled.

"When God's presence was finally withdrawn from the Jewish nation, priests and people knew it not. Though under the control of Satan, and swayed by the most horrible and malignant passions, they still regarded themselves as the chosen of God. The ministration in the temple continued; sacrifices were offered upon its polluted altars, and daily the divine blessing was invoked upon a people guilty of the blood of God's dear Son and seeking to slay His ministers and apostles. So when the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God."



When the irrevocable decision of the sanctuary has been pronounced and the destiny of the world has been forever fixed, the inhabitants of the earth will know it not. The forms of religion will be continued by a people from whom the Spirit of God has been finally withdrawn; and the satanic zeal with which the prince of evil will inspire them for the accomplishment of his malignant designs, will bear the semblance of zeal for God.

To this plain and clear testimony may be added these further words from the same source, pages 490, 491:

"When the work of the investigative judgment closes, the destiny of all will have been decided for life or death. Probation is ended a short time before the appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven. Christ in the *Revelation,* looking forward to that time, declares: 'He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still: and he that is righteous let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. And, behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.' *Revelation* 22:11,12.

"The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above."

These statements clarify the question as to the wicked in that great day. They will not know that the great day of investigative judgment has concluded in the sanctuary above and that there is no longer probation for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. This is quite consistent with the type given in the ancient sanctuary service where we find that the heathen round about knew nothing of the fact that the service of the great day of atonement was going on in the sanctuary of God in Israel. Neither did they know when the service was finished and the priest had come out to the waiting people. So, likewise, they will not know in the great antitype.

The enemy of God and man is a very diligent student of prophecy and of the Bible generally. In this he displays some wisdom, as do the generals of the armies of this world who study most carefully the writings of their enemies and become as closely acquainted with the plans of the enemy as they possibly can. The Bible in which God has revealed His movements in advance is a book which is freely available to all, and Satan does not miss the opportunity. The following statements will clearly show, that not only is Satan a Bible student, but that he understands clearly and accurately what he is reading and studying.

"Let the son of deceit and false witness be entertained by a church that has had great light, great evidence, and that church will discard the message the Lord has sent, and *receive* the most unreasonable assertions and false suppositions and false theories. Satan laughs at their folly, for he knows what truth is." Testimonies *to Ministers,* 409.

"Satan excited the evil passions of men, in order to fasten his rule upon them. When God's written word was given, Satan studied the prophecies of the Saviour's advent. From generation to genera-

tion he worked to blind the people to these prophecies, that they might reject Christ at His coming." *Desire of Ages,* 115.

"He still appears as an angel of light, and he makes it evident that he is acquainted with the Scriptures, and understands the import of what is written." *Desire of Ages,* 124.

"Satan is a diligent Bible student. He knows that his time is short, and he seeks at every point to counterwork the work of the Lord upon this earth." *Testimonies* 9:16.

One might expect, therefore, that if there was anyone who would know when the time of human probation was ended, it would be Satan, and yet we find that he does not know it either. This is stated clearly in the following statements:

"As Satan influenced Esau to march against Jacob, so he will stir up the wicked to destroy God's people in the time of trouble. And as he accused Jacob, he will urge his accusations against the people of God. He numbers the world as his subjects; but the little company who keep the commandments of God are resisting his supremacy. If he could blot them from the earth, his triumph would be complete. He sees that holy angels are guarding them, and he infers that their sins have been pardoned; but he does not know that their cases have been decided in the sanctuary above." *Great Controversy,* 618.

"In the time of trouble, Satan stirs up the wicked, and they encircle the people of God to destroy them. But he does not know that 'pardon' has been written opposite their names in the books of heaven. He does not know that the command has been given, 'Take away the filthy garments' from them, clothe them with 'change of raiment,' and set 'a fair miter' upon their heads." *Review and Herald,* November 19, 1908.

The question is plainly settled as to whether the wicked and their master will know if probation has actually closed at the time when this event takes place. The answer is, that they will not.

We need now to study the question as to whether the saints themselves will yet know if this event has passed in the sanctuary above. This at once raises the question: If they will know it, then how will they know it?

The event itself takes place in heaven wherein all that happens there is hidden from the sight of men. We can only know what is happening there by the fulfillment of a prophesied event down here on the earth or by some God-given sign that is designed to tell us that the event has taken place above. As an illustration of this, we have the prophecy of the two thousand three hundred days, the termination of which declared to the people of God on earth that an event had taken place in heaven—the ending of the ministry in the first apartment and the beginning of the ministry in the most holy place

of the heavenly sanctuary. Thus it was, that when the appointed time came, then, by the sure word of prophecy, the people of God knew what had taken place in the heaven above.

But there is no time in prophecy to tell us when the end of probation will come. This time, for very good reasons, has not been revealed to the sons of men. Of course there are, exactly as has been prophesied that there would be, men in the world today who declare that they know and can tell the very year in which probation will close. These are sadly deceived souls to whom we need not listen, and in fact must not listen, for we have been warned that:

"Should we advance in spiritual knowledge, we would see the truth developing and expanding in lines of which we have little dreamed, but it will never develop in any line that will lead us to imagine that we may know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in His own power. Again and again have 1 been warned in regard to time-setting. There will never again be a message for the people of God that will be based on time. We are not to know the definite time either for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit or for the coming of Christ." *SDA Bible Commentary* 6:1052.

"God has not revealed to us the time when this message will close, or when probation will have an end. Those things that are revealed we shall accept for ourselves and for our children; but let us not seek to know that which has been kept secret in the counsels of the Almighty." SDA *Bible Commentary* 7:989.

Therefore it must be clear to all that we cannot know in advance as to when that day will come, and neither can the devil, for there is nothing in the Word of God to tell us the time. This is something which has been kept secret in the counsels of the Father.

Having settled the question as to whether they will know in advance, the next logical question to ask is whether there is a predicted event which, when it happens, will tell us that at the same time the great event is happening in the sanctuary above or has just happened. This is not a difficult question to answer, and has in fact been partly answered already, for we have seen that the devil is a sound Bible student, and we have also seen that he will not know, even after probation has closed, that the event has actually taken place.

Now these plain facts admit of one conclusion, and it is that there is not one predicted event in the Word of prophecy, the coming of which will mark the close of probation and, therefore, stand as a sign to the people of God that the event has taken place in heaven. If there were such an event marked down in prophecy, then Satan would know it just as well as the people of God, and better, so that the moment it came, then he would know that probation had closed. But he will not know it. Therefore, no human will know it either. This

argument is quite conclusive in itself and would be all that is needed to supply us with this vital information, but the Lord has given us other evidences besides this. Let us take a second look at *The Great Controversy,* 491:

"The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above."

If the situation was to be that the people of the Lord, as students of prophecy, were to be aware of the event, while the wicked were not, then the distinction would have appeared in this statement instead of the exact opposite. The words plainly tell us that both the



"The righteous and the wicked will still be living upon the earth in their mortal state—men will be planting and building, eating and drinking, all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision has been pronounced in the sanctuary above." *Great Controversy,* 491.

righteous and the wicked will be "all unconscious that the final, irrevocable decision had been pronounced in the sanctuary above."

At once some may raise the question as to how this can be when the beginning of the seven last plagues marks the beginning of the time of trouble, which can, in turn, only begin with the closing of probation. It is argued that, as the plagues cannot come until the ministry of Jesus in the sanctuary above has come to its end, then the appearance of the plagues will be a certain sign that the time of probation is ended.

If it were a case of the seven last plagues appearing upon a plague-free earth, then the argument would be of some weight, but as we saw in the study of the plagues and last plagues in the last chapter, the seven last plagues come as the culmination of a mounting plague-ridden situation. To such proportions will the former plagues have developed that the coming of the seven last plagues will appear as nothing new or out of the ordinary, and it will not be possible for the devil to even distinguish that point of time when the former plagues close and the last plagues begin. Added to this will be the exaggerated state of confusion and destruction, so that it will be impossible to interpret any events of the earth with any degree of accuracy. If the devil, excellent, comprehensive, and accurate a Bible student as he is, cannot tell that probation has closed, then the saints certainly will not be able to either.

Clear and distinct as is the evidence pointing to the fact that the close of probation will be unannounced on this earth, there are some who bring forth arguments to say that it will be. We will spend a little time now in studying to see what true weight these arguments have in the case.

At one time in particular, a few years ago a statement was being circulated, purportedly from the pen of inspiration, which stated that when Jesus leaves the sanctuary, literal darkness, such as that which fell upon the earth when Jesus was crucified, will fall upon the earth once again, and this will be a sign to the people of God that the close of probation has come.

As this statement, if it were true, stands in direct contradiction to the other witnesses in the Word of events in the last days, a careful effort was made to check its authenticity. This check has failed to find any proof that the statement is a genuine Spirit of Prophecy statement, and, therefore, it must be discounted entirely. It is true that there are statements which do state that darkness covers the earth when Jesus leaves the sanctuary, but every one of these is referring to spiritual darkness. Otherwise, how could the wicked be going on planting and building, all unaware that the event had taken place, if the earth was filled with intense darkness? It is not until the

fifth plague that literal darkness covers the earth which happens five plagues after the close of probation. If darkness came at the close of probation, then how could the fifth plague darken an already darkened world?

The very wording of the falling of the darkness, which takes place at the beginning of the time of trouble, indicates that this is spiritual and not literal darkness.

"When He leaves the sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 614.

If this were a literal darkness, then it would have said that darkness covers the earth, instead of so specifically saying that darkness covers the *inhabitants* of the earth.

In that grim day when the fall of Jerusalem was imminent, some faithful ones in the days of Jeremiah hid the sacred ark of the most holy place of the sanctuary. In it was the law of God. That ark with the law is still hidden and preserved to this day as the following statement tells us:

"Among the righteous still in Jerusalem, to whom had been made plain the divine purpose, were some who determined to place beyond the reach of ruthless hands the sacred ark containing the tables of stone on which had been traced the precepts of the Decalogue. This they did. With mourning and sadness they secreted the ark in a cave, where it was to be hidden from the people of Israel and Judah because of their sins, and was to be no more restored to them. That sacred ark is yet hidden. It has never been disturbed since it was secreted." *Prophets and Kings,* 453.

But it is not always to remain hidden. There is coming the day when it will be brought out as an exhibit in the judgment as the following statements plainly tell:

‘‘ 'And He [Christ] gave unto Moses, when He had made an end of communicating with him upon Mount Sinai, two tables of testimony, tables of stone, written by the finger of God.' Nothing written on those tables could be blotted out. The precious record of the law was placed in the ark of the testament and is still there, safely hidden from the human family. But in God's appointed time He will bring forth these tables of stone to be a testimony to all the world against the disregard of His commandments and against the idolatrous worship of a counterfeit Sabbath." *SDA Bible* Commentary 1:1109.

"There are abundant evidences of the immutability of God's law. It was written with the finger of God, never to be obliterated, never to be destroyed. The tables of stone are hidden by God, to be produced in the great judgment-day, just as He wrote them." SDA *Bible Commentary* 1:1109.

"When the judgment shall sit, and the books shall be opened,

and every man shall be judged according to the things written in the books, then the tables of stone, hidden by God until that day, will be presented before the world as the standard of righteousness. Then men and women will see that the prerequisite of their salvation is obedience to the perfect law of God. None will find excuse for sin. By the righteous principles of that law, men will *receive* their sentence of life or of death." *SDA Bible* Commentary 1:1109.

Now some have seized upon these statements to prove that the beginning of the judgment of the living will be announced upon this earth by the bringing forth of the sacred ark and the holy ten commandment law written on the two tables of stone. Inasmuch as the judgment of the living, as we have seen in previous chapters, comes at the close of human probation, then, it is argued, the close of probation will be clearly announced by this discovery and presentation. To the superficial reader, this provides a very convincing case, but the earnest seeker for truth is more careful in his judgments.

He will not jump at once to the conclusion that the investigative judgment of the righteous is the one being referred to. He is aware that there is more than the one judgment, and he will wish to see clearly which it is. As he studies carefully, he is left in no doubt as to which he is being referred; as the statements themselves clearly specify which judgment it is. We have but to look to see:

"The tables of stone are hidden by God, to be produced in the great judgment-day, just as He wrote them." "When the judgment shall sit and the books shall be opened, and every man shall be judged according to the things written in the books, then the tables of stone, hidden by God until that day, will be presented before the world as the standard of righteousness."

The judgment day, then, when the law is to be brought forth, will be the "great" judgment day when the cases of "every" man shall be judged.

Over and again we are told that in the investigative judgment, prior to the close of human probation, only the professed people of God are judged. "In the typical service only those who had come before God with confession and repentance, and whose sins, through the blood of the sin offering, were transferred to the sanctuary, had a part in the service of the Day of Atonement. So in the great day of final atonement and investigative judgment the only cases considered are those of the professed people of God. The judgment of the wicked is a distinct and separate work, and takes place at a later period." *Great Controversy,* 480.

By this we know that the time when every person is judged out of those things written in the books, is not the judgment prior to the close of probation, because then, only the smallest proportion of

mankind are judged. This can only be fulfilled at the end of the thousand years when every man having been resurrected from the dead will be standing before the throne of God. This is the final judgment—the great judgment day when every question of truth or error will be forever settled. Then it will be that the Lord will portray before the wondering eyes of the multitudes the scenes of the temptation and fall and the other significant events in the history of the great controversy; especially the scenes of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Then, just as in an earthly court case, the various "exhibits" are brought out, likewise then, the exhibits will be presented to show that there never was any excuse of any kind for sin, that the law has never been done away with, and that it will stand eternally in the new kingdom.

Then it will be that the Saviour will be seen seated upon the throne of judgment, and they will "see in His hands the tables of the diving law—the statutes which they have despised and transgressed." *Great Controversy,* 668. Then there will be point and purpose in bringing out the commandments, for then the question must be settled forever as to the authority and the righteousness of that law. If it were brought out at the time of the judgment of the living, it would be at a time when it would not do the slightest amount of good whatsoever. The cases of all the professed people of God would have been decided, and the rest who were bent on destroying the people of God could not be changed then, for it would be forever too late.

It must be clear, then, to the thoughtful, prayerful student of the Word of God, that the ten commandments, written by God's own finger on the tables of stone, will not be brought forth till the end of the thousand years, there to appear as convincing exhibits in the final and closing scenes of the great controversy when every man will at last acknowledge that God is altogether true.

Thus it is clear that there will be no particular sign given to announce the close of probation, and the event will pass without the devil, or his followers, or the righteous being aware of it.

This is, as must be expected, in harmony with the type of the sanctuary service in the Old Testament. Then the people, even as we do today, knew that the high priest had gone into the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary. As we do today—by faith and not by sight—they followed him as he went before the mercy seat, but they could not, and did not know at what moment of time he sprinkled the blood upon the mercy seat above the ark. It was not until he appeared at the door of the tabernacle that they could know that the service within had been completed. So, too, it will not be until the

voice of God delivers His people and the sign of the Son of Man is seen that we shall know that the service has been completed.

It is essential that during that period of time, we be unaware that the great day of atonement has passed, for it is only as we live by faith and not by sight through that time that it is possible for us to see Satan for what he really is and thus lose every last trace of sympathy with him. The wicked as well will be brought to their turning point.

For now, our great work is to make ready for that day, which hastens greatly and shall come upon us, we know not when.

Chapter 28

The First Four Plagues

Several facts have been established as a result of the study contained in the last two chapters or more. They are that the seven last plagues do not commence to fall on the guilty inhabitants of earth until the work of Jesus in the most holy place of the heavenly sanctuary is completed; the seven last plagues will be the final culmination of a mounting series of plagues and desolations upon the earth prior to the close of probation; so severe will be the troubles before probation closes, that they will simply blend into the ones which come after, so that no one will be able to know when the ones before end and the ones after begin. We learned, too, that the Lord has kept secret the time when probation will close and has given no sign whereby the people on this earth or the devil will be able to know that the time of mercy is passed.

With these facts before us we are now prepared to study and to understand the plagues themselves as they occur in their order. They are described in *Revelation* 16:1-21, while some fuller details of them are given in the following chapter. In their order they are as follows: The first is a terrible sore which eats away the bodies of those who have the mark of the beast and worship his image. In the second the sea becomes as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul dies in the sea. The third is the same scourge but upon the rivers and fountains of waters, so that the angel cries out that the Lord is just in giving them blood to drink, in view of the fact that they have slain the saints of God. In the fourth plague, the sun increases in heat-power to the place where men and beasts are scorched with the ferocity of it.

As we shall see better as we proceed, these first four plagues can be classified together, while the remaining three have a relationship to each other. The fifth plague is the descent of thick and impenetrable darkness upon the seat of the beast. The sixth is the drying up of the great river Euphrates. The final one is the fearful earthquake, combined with the falling of the hail.

The Great Controversy gives little comment on the exact nature of the first four plagues; though quite some space is spent telling of the results of those first four scourges upon the earth. There is no reason to believe that they are symbolic, but rather they will fall upon man just as they read.

The first will be an unspeakably painful and incurable sore which will appear on the bodies of those who have followed after and supported the beast and his image in their warfare against the God of heaven. Medical science, already baffled by the appearance of hitherto unknown maladies and diseases, will be absolutely unable to help in this situation. Not only will they not have anything which will cure the disease, but even if they did, their facilities would be unable to cope with the tremendous demands made by millions of people rushing in to get relief. To make matters worse still, the doctors themselves will be so stricken with the disease that they will be unable to work for the others. No words of man today could ever truly picture the fearful nature of that plague when it falls upon the human family. The very thought of it should be sufficient to stir us all to greater effort to ensure that we will not be among those who have, by that time, been worshipping the beast and his image. And that will be only the first of the seven.

The second and third plagues are very similar; the only difference really being, that while the second turns the sea to blood, the third does the same to the rivers and fountains of waters. This will be a repetition of the first plague which fell upon Egypt when that nation refused to release the children of Israel from bondage. As in the case of the Egyptians, so again the living creatures in the sea will die, and the evil smell of their rotting carcasses will pollute the air that the people need to breathe in order to live. Think of the desperate nature of the water shortage which will be felt by the great cities in that day, the great cities which draw their water from the lakes and the streams.

These plagues, as we have seen, are not the direct act of God, but the outworking of the sins of Babylon herself. They are the result of her sins; punishments which the Lord would have saved them from suffering if they had been prepared to let the Lord save them, but when they would not put their trust in Him, then with His protection being withdrawn, they are left to the outworking of their own evil course of action.

It is as this fearful situation develops in the earth that the angel observers speak out in comment on the justice of the sentence: "And I heard the angel of the waters saying: 'You are righteous, O Lord, the one who is and who was and who is to be, because You have judged these things.

" 'For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and You have given them blood to drink, for it is their just due.'

"And I heard another from the altar saying, 'Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are Your judgments.' " *Revelation* 16:5-7.

This is the fearful outworking of the law, the truth of which we see every day in the world of nature around us, that as we sow, so, in turn, comes the reaping; which reaping is usually in abundance in comparison with the sowing. We sow one seed, especially in a world so productive of evil, and the reaping is one hundred fold. So these evil workers of the last times will have plotted the deaths of the people of God, will have taken their houses and lands, and cut them off from all life support, thereby sowing the seed for an abundant harvest of retribution. As surely as they have done this, so surely will it come. What a fearful death toll must come during this plague, as the people, driven to desperation by the fever in their bodies, occasioned by the sores upon them, seek for water to quench their burning thirst, and there is none to drink!

The testimony of the angels regarding the justice of God brings to view a very interesting and valuable truth, so far as the experience of the saints during this time is concerned. It raises the question as to whether there will be an extensive martyrdom in the last days. This subject is both interesting and important, for those who will face that time need to know what to expect. As John saw the seals being opened one by one, the time came when the fifth was opened as follows: "When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held.

"And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord, holy and true, until you judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'

"And a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they had been was completed." *Revelation* 6:9-11.

The picture here is clear. Following the great martyrdoms of the earlier centuries, these millions cried out, as it were, for the restitution of their lives and the retribution on their persecutors. This is not to be understood in any kind of revengeful spirit but only in the spirit of justice and properness. The great question is, How long will it be before justice is done? The answer is given, that they would have to rest there until at some later time there would be others who would suffer the martyr's death as they had had to do. The question immediately arises as to when that great martyrdom will take place. This

point is quite clear, that up till the present, we are still waiting for it to happen.

The answer is plainly given in these words: "When the fifth seal was opened, John the Revelator in vision saw beneath the altar the company that were slain for the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ. After this came the scenes described in the eighteenth of *Revelation,* when those who are faithful and true are called out from Babylon."SDA Bible *Commentary* 7:968.

Therefore those who will be slain, as they were, will suffer this in the very last scenes of this earth's history when the final work is coming to its conclusion. Further evidence to support this is found in *Revelation* 20:4, wherein is described the company of those who will, among others, live and reign with Christ a thousand years in heaven:

"And I saw thrones, and they sat on them, and judgment was committed to them. And I saw the souls of those who had been beheaded for their witness to Jesus and for the word of God, who had not worshipped the beast or his image, and had not received his mark on their foreheads or on their hands. And they lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years."

Here we are told that there will be those in the kingdom who will have been beheaded because they had not worshipped the beast and his image. Such a refusal and such a beheading could only be possible in the future when the reign of the beast and his image is a fact. Such evidences strongly indicate that many are going to face the martyr's death and shed their blood at the hands of the wicked in the last and final scenes.

There are at least two statements to support this reasoning. They read as follows:

"The two armies will stand distinct and separate, and this distinction will be so marked that many who shall be convinced of truth will come on the side of God's commandment-keeping people. When this grand work is to take place in the battle, prior to the last closing conflict, many will be imprisoned, many will flee for their lives from cities and towns, and many will be martyrs for Christ's sake in standing in defense of the truth. They will be brought before kings and rulers, and before councils to meet the false, absurd, and lying accusations brought against them, but they must stand firm as a rock to principle, and the promise is, 'As thy days so shall thy strength be.' (Deuteronomy 33:25). You will not be tempted above what you are able to bear. Jesus bore all this and far more. The express command of God must be obeyed, for God has been working. *Luke* 21:8-19." *TheEllen G. White 1888 Materials,* 484. See also *Selected Messages* 3:397, and *Maranatha,* 199.

"God's word has given warning of the impending danger; let this be unheeded, and the Protestant world will learn what the purposes of Rome really are, only when it is too late to escape the snare. She is silently growing into power. Her doctrines are exerting their influence in legislative halls, in the churches, and in the hearts of men. She is piling up her lofty and massive structures in the secret recesses of which her former persecutions will be repeated. Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution." *Great Controversy,* 581.

Yet, if this is so, some very interesting problems are raised which require that we study a little *deeper.* In the first case, we are told that these last-day martyrs will be "killed as they were," which shows that the same methods of death employed by the persecutors of old will be repeated in these last days. How was it done back there? Always the Church made the decrees and then went to the state to have them enforced, just as *Jezebel* "wrote letters in Ahab's name," and "sealed them with his seal" *1 Kings* 21:8, when she made the death *decree* against Naboth the Jezreelite. Indeed, the whole emphasis of the symbolism of the image of the beast is to teach and tell us that the ways of the Roman Church, as a persecutor, will be the ways of the modern church in its persecuting role. That is to say, that once again the church will make the laws, and it will be the state which will enforce them.

Now we know that there will be no death *decree made* until the very close of the loud cry period, and even then the date for its execution will be deferred until well after the close of probation. Prior to the date for the execution for this *decree* it will be illegal to kill any of them. We know that no saint will be killed after the death *decree* is passed nor during the time of trouble. (See *Great Controversy,* 631, 634.) We know that it will be determined to strike the blow all over the world in one night, thereby utterly silencing the protesting voice of God's people; and they will come very close to accomplishing their evil purpose. But at the very moment when the swords are about to fall upon the helpless heads of the victims, the darkness blots out the scene, and the purpose of death is defeated.

Under these conditions, how can there be any large scale martyrdom in the last days? The fact will be, that while the one hundred and forty-four thousand do not actually shed their blood and are not actually beheaded, every one of them will be the martyrs spoken of prophetically in *Revelation* 6:11 since the martyring of no others ex-

cept the one hundred and forty-four thousand could result in the release of the martyrs of old. So far as experience is concerned, they will taste and know all that the martyrs of the past knew and understood. Like them, they will have stood for the unpopular truth and been persecuted for it. They will stand for that truth despite the mounting pressure upon them, until, like the martyrs of old, they hear the sentence of death pronounced upon them. Like those of yore, they flee, are hunted and pursued, and are finally found and driven into a corner from which there is no escape. Then, as they bow in prayer with the shadow of death over them, the swords, poised for a single moment over their heads, are ready to flash down on their mission of death. They wait for it, tensed and expectant. As the weapons of old struck, sudden darkness enveloped the consciousness as the saints fell to rise no more till the resurrection morning. Likewise, the one hundred and forty-four thousand will, at the selfsame critical moment, be enveloped in the densest darkness, and they will feel death as surely as if they are dead. Thus they will experience all that the martyrs ever experienced, and, therefore, in God's sight they will be counted as if they had actually given their lives. While in the sight of God the wicked will be counted as if they had actually taken their lives.

In describing the second and third plagues, reference is made in *The Great Controversy,* 628, to the justice of God in giving them blood to drink: "Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares: 'Thou art righteous, O Lord, . . . because Thou hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and Thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.' *Revelation* 16:2-6. By condemning the people of God to death, they have as truly incurred the guilt of their blood as if it had been shed by their hands."

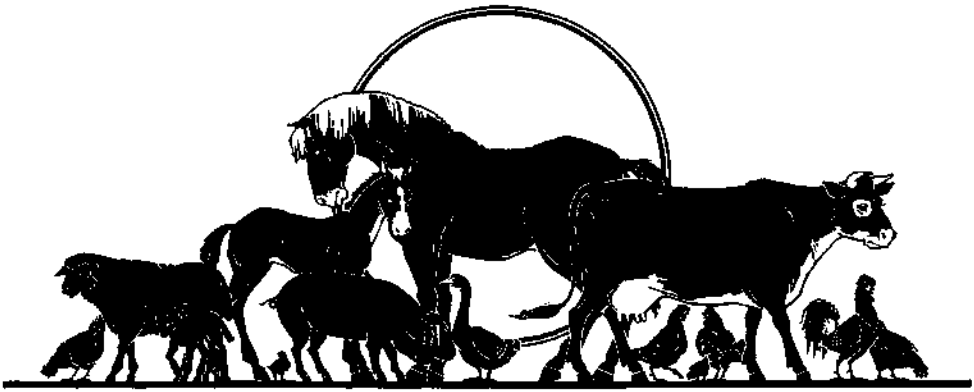
Note how the Bible simply states that "they have shed the blood," but in the explanation of this in *The Great Controversy,* it is stated that they are as guilty as if they had shed it. This implies quite clearly that the blood is not actually shed, but the wicked are no less guilty because of this in view of the fact that the intent was there, and, as far as it could be carried forward, it was. The guilt is upon the wicked as if they all had done it, and the experience has been passed through by the righteous as if they had actually died.

While these facts preclude a great, actual shedding of martyr blood in the final scenes, it does not preclude the possibility of some losing their lives through mob violence, murder, or secret torture during the loud cry period. Time alone will reveal the full extent of the malicious activities of the enemies of the truth then.

The first plague will have afflicted many of the inhabitants of the

earth with that fearful and painful sore. The following two will have cut off vast water supplies and filled the air with the stench of death. Now, if men ever needed cool relief, it will be then, but worse follows, for the fourth plague brings a scorching sun with insufferable temperatures. Imagine the torture to those who in that time are living unsheltered from these calamities. Foretastes of this have been experienced when heat waves have gripped areas of the earth for a period, but never has there been a heat wave of the proportions of this one coming, when men, already groaning under the plagues which will have already come, can least endure this added horror. The death toll of both man and beast will be fearful, adding further to the burden of the living. Food will be so short that famine will stalk the land, while destructive fires will burst forth to heighten the temperatures, imperil and take the lives of many more, and destroy already disastrously diminished food supplies.

The book *Great Controversy* directs our attention to the Old Testament prophecies of this time and situation. "The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: The land mourneth; . . . because the harvest of the field is perished. . . . All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the



The terrible suffering caused by the first four plagues will be felt by domestic farm animals just as much as by humans.

"The prophets thus describe the condition of the earth at this fearful time: 'The land mourneth;... because the harvest of the field is perished. . . . All the trees of the field are withered: because joy is withered away from the sons of men.' 'The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate. . . . How do the beasts grown! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture.... The rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.' 'The songs of the temple shall be bowlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth in silence.' *Joel* 1:10-12,17-20; Amos 8:3." *Great Controversy,* 628.

sons of men.' The seed is rotten under their clods, the garners are laid desolate. . . . How do the beasts groan! the herds of cattle are perplexed, because they have no pasture. . . . The rivers of water are dried up, and the fire hath devoured the pastures of the wilderness.' The songs of the temple shall be howlings in that day, saith the Lord God: there shall be many dead bodies in every place; they shall cast them forth in silence.' *Joel* 1:10-12, 17-20; Amos 8:3." *Great Controversy,* 628.

Of that coming time, a more terrible picture could not be given than this. That the inhabitants of the earth are not entirely cut off, is due to the fact, alone, that these first four plagues are not world-wide. After referring to these first four, our reference above then says: "These plagues are not universal, or the inhabitants of the earth would be wholly cut off. Yet they will be the most awful scourges that have ever been known to mortals. All the judgments upon men, prior to the close of probation, have been mingled with mercy. The pleading blood of Christ has shielded the sinner from receiving the full measure of his guilt; but in the final judgment, wrath is poured out unmixed with mercy." *Great Controversy,* 628.

As we shall see, the following three plagues will be universal, but not so with the first four. They are limited to certain areas of the earth; another reason why it will be difficult to know that it is the seven last plagues which have begun. But, when it is stated that they will be limited to certain areas of the earth, this is not to be understood that the areas will be small, but rather vast with commensurate loss of life and property. The trouble which comes then will be like the bursting of a torrent of destruction upon the world. The suffering will be horrible and unbelievable.

This is that time when this promise is to be fulfilled: "A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.

"Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

"Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your habitation,

"No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling." *Psalm* 91:7-10.

The very same world in which the wicked will be suffering so terribly and dying from the result of the plagues, will be the world in which the righteous will still be found. Hitherto, they have been as dependent on the earth for sustenance as have any other of the sons of men, and now, if they had no better protection than the wicked, they would perish along with them. To some extent, they will suffer along with the wicked, but it will not be from the direct effect of the

plague, but somewhat from the situation of want which the plagues will produce.

"The people of God will not be free from suffering; but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation and suffer for want of food they will not be left to perish. That God who cared for Elijah will not pass by one of His self-sacrificing children. He who numbers the hairs of their head will care for them, and in time of famine they shall be satisfied. While the wicked are dying from hunger and pestilence, angels will shield the righteous and supply their wants. To him that 'walketh righteously' is the promise: 'Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure.' 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.' *Isaiah* 33:15, 16; 41:17.

" 'Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labor of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls;' yet shall they that fear Him 'rejoice in the Lord' and joy in the God of their salvation. *Habakkuk* 3:17, 18." *Great Controversy,* 629.

These are the Elijah people, and like Elijah, their needs in this time of famine and pestilence will be supplied by the angels of heaven. This did not mean that Elijah did not suffer from privation and distress, for he did in that barren and lonely spot, but he did not suffer from the plague back then, as did the rest of sinful Israel. So likewise, even though they will suffer some as an indirect effect of the plagues, the actual plagues themselves will not come nigh the righteous, and they will be sustained with food from heaven.

Their real suffering through this period is the suffering of Jacob's trouble, which is the fearful mental agony occasioned by the fear that they may betray their Lord through the weakness of the flesh, or because they have not put away every sin of which they have been guilty.

Thus, a dying world will writhe in the agony of those terrible scourges which will come upon all mankind as a result of the wanton transgression and sin of this old world. Yet even these four plagues are not the total end—the full and final climax. There is yet to come three more—the fifth, the sixth, and the seventh. When they have completed their work of destruction, then there will be none left alive upon the earth, for the subjects of those plagues will all have been destroyed, either by the plagues or by violence among themselves.

May the Lord so have His way in the directing of our lives that we shall be accounted worthy to escape the plagues, which are soon to come upon the earth.

Chapter 29

The Fifth Plague

Having spent some time and space considering the first four plagues, the time has come for us to study the last three. These are the most significant and extensive of the seven, and it will be seen that while the first four are not universal, because if they were, they would wholly cut off the inhabitants of the earth, the last three are universal, and do cut off the remaining inhabitants of the earth.

The first of these last three plagues consists of a dense and impenetrable darkness which falls upon the seat of the beast, the next is the drying up of the great River Euphrates, and the last is the fearful outpouring of hail, combined with the great earthquake which shakes the whole world as no earthquake has ever shaken it before. At this time whole islands will disappear from view, mountain chains will sink, and seaports will be swallowed up by the raging ocean, while the descending hailstones each weighing fifty-six pounds or twenty-five kilograms will smash the proud cities to ruins. It is beyond the mind of man, even though he had been witness to the destruction of the worst wars, to fully picture and imagine the carnage, desolation, and ruination which will be occasioned by those final plagues.

The first of those last three, as noted above, will be the pouring out of the darkness upon the seat of the beast, whereby his kingdom becomes filled with darkness:

"Then the fifth angel poured out his bowl on the throne of the beast, and his kingdom became full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain.

"And they blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds." *Revelation* 16:10,11.

Once again we must emphasize the need of noting just what the Scriptures actually say. The verse before states that the darkness is poured out on the seat of the beast, and that thereby the whole kingdom becomes filled with darkness. Does this mean that the darkness is first poured out on one localized spot, and that it then spreads forth until the whole kingdom becomes filled with darkness? The text does not say this. It states that the plague of darkness is poured

out upon the seat of the beast, and that being done, the whole kingdom was full of darkness. This would immediately suggest that the seat of the beast and the kingdom of the beast are one and the same thing, each being equal to the other and not one of them a small central part of the other.

Without reading the text to see explicitly what it says, one would be inclined to draw the conclusion that the darkness fell on but the one spot, namely, that which is generally considered to be the seat of the beast—Rome. But when it is seen that the entire kingdom of the beast becomes filled with darkness, then we must know that the darkness is much more extensive than just this localized area, for the kingdom of the beast at that time will truly and literally fill the whole earth. There is no truth which is more clearly taught in the sure Word of prophecy than that the beast will at that time rule the entire world, even though at the present time the witness of sight and circumstances would *decree* that this was the most impossible development which could ever be. But we have learned that the Word of prophecy is far more to be relied upon than the witness of our senses, with its seeming denial of all that which the Word of God predicts.

Let us, then, turn to that Word for the verification of the situation as it shall stand in those last days. In *Revelation* 13:8, after telling of the final restoration of the Papacy, it is written that:

"And all who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

In this verse are brought to view two classes of people. They are those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, and there are all the rest of whom every single one will be worshipping the beast, so the entire territory of the earth will then be his kingdom. It can be said that the entire earth will then comprise the kingdom of the beast, despite the presence of the people of God in the earth, for the very simple reason that the people of God will have been dispossessed of any territory in the earth at that time. They will be but fugitives and outlaws with no place in the whole earth which they could in any sense call their own. Against them the entire world will stand united under the banner of the evil one.

It is true that today there are many nations and kingdoms which are openly hostile to the papal system and have pledged themselves to perpetual hostility toward that system; but there are great changes to take place in the world, and many things will soon be very different indeed. It is hard to believe that such bitter and implacable enemies, as the Jews and the Arabs are, could ever stand side-by-side as common defenders of the papal system, but this is yet to be. Nor should we deem this as being beyond the limits of possibility, for

have we not seen that nations, which in the past were for a time locked in deadly combat with each other, have turned to become great allies and trading partners but a few years later.

There are plain and explicit statements which state in just so many words that there will be this universal union of the powers of this earth under the leadership of the beast. Let us review some of them:

"As America, the land of religious liberty, shall unite with the papacy in forcing the conscience and compelling men to honor the false sabbath, the people of every country on the globe will be led to follow her example. . . . Foreign nations will follow the example of the United States. Though she leads out, yet the same crisis will come upon our people in all parts of the world." Testimonies 6:18, 395.

"History will be repeated. False religion will be exalted. The first day of the week, a common working day, possessing no sanctity whatever, will be set up as was the image at Babylon. All nations and tongues and peoples will be commanded to worship this spurious sabbath. This is Satan's plan to make of no account the day instituted by God, and given to the world as a memorial of creation.

"The *decree* enforcing the worship of this day is to go forth to all the world.. ..

"Trial and persecution will come to all who, in obedience to the Word of God, refuse to worship this false sabbath. Force is the last resort of every false religion. At first it tries attraction, as the king of Babylon tried the power of music and outward show. If these attractions, invented by men inspired by Satan, failed to make men worship the image, the hungry flames of the furnace were ready to consume them. So it will be now. The papacy has exercised her power to compel men to obey her, and she will continue to do so. We need the same spirit that was manifested by God's servants in the conflict with paganism." *SDA Bible Commentary* 7:976.

"The world is filled with storm and war and variance. Yet under one head—the papal power—the people will unite to oppose God in the person of His witnesses." Testimonies 7:182.

"There will be a universal bond of union, one great harmony, a confederacy of Satan's forces.. . .

"In the warfare to be waged in the last days there will be united, in opposition to God's people, all the corrupt powers that have apostatized from allegiance to the law of Jehovah." SDA *Bible Commentary* 7:983.

These statements leave no doubt in the mind but that in the end the whole world will have given their allegiance to the power of the enemy of God and man, as symbolized in the prophecy by the beast.

This, then, makes it equally clear that the kingdom of the beast will encompass the whole world and will have given their allegiance to that kingship, while the people of God who are not of this world will have been dispossessed of any property which was theirs in this world. By this we can know that the darkness of the fifth plague will not be something confined to a limited geographical area such as the city of Rome, but will, indeed and in fact, cover the entire earth. It will be a universal plague such as the first four are not, and, as such, will be the first of the three universal plagues which will bring Babylon's judgment to completion.

It is usually understood that the seat of the government in a kingdom is a relatively small geographical area in the center of the kingdom. Some difficulty may be experienced by the student of the Word in understanding how it can be that the pouring out of the vial on the seat of the beast serves to fill the entire kingdom with darkness.

However, this difficulty is completely cleared up when we understand who the beast actually is and against whom he is warring. There are a number of beasts who appear in the prophecies of *Daniel* and the *Revelation.* There is the lion, the bear, the leopard, the great dragon of *Daniel* seven, the ram and the he-goat of *Daniel* eight, the great dragon of *Revelation* ten, the leopard-like beast, the lamb-like beasts of *Revelation* thirteen, the beast from the bottomless pit of *Revelation* eleven, and the scarlet colored beast of *Revelation* seventeen.

We have thought of these as being the great powers of the earth such as Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome, the Papacy, the rise of Atheism, the apostate Protestant powers, and finally the great ultimate confederacy of apostasy; and in this no mistake has been made. Yet, there is a broader and more accurate view to be taken which, while it does not deny the conclusions so far held, does extend our understanding of those symbols. Instead of thinking of those powers as being the direct enemies of God as such, let us think of them as being the agencies upon this earth through the power of which the great enemy of God has worked to destroy His cause. In other words, let us think of Satan as being the beast who, while himself invisible to mankind, has appeared before the world and the people of God in the visible form of the powers under his control. The visible form, then, such as Babylon or Rome is but the physical manifestation of Satan's power and presence. Therefore he is the real beast.

Justification for this is given in two references at least. The first is in *Ezekiel* 28:12: "Son of man, take up a lamentation for the king of Tyre, and say to him, Thus says the Lord God: "You were the seal of perfection, full of wisdom and perfect in beauty." ' "

Here is a direct message about the king of Tyre, or so it would ap-

pear, but as we read on, it speaks not of the human being upon the earth, but of the arch and first apostate, Satan himself. The king of Tyre who sat physically upon the material throne of that city has never been in the city of God and walked "back and forth in the midst of fiery stones." Verse 14. But, then, neither was he the real king of Tyre. He was but the earthly figurehead through whom the devil worked his will, so that, therefore, Satan, and not the king of Tyre, was the real king of Tyre and the real ruler of that kingdom. So it was, too, with Babylon and the other kingdoms through whom the devil worked. The devil, and not the earthly monarchs, is the real beast of the prophecies.

In *Revelation* twelve, the evil beast there appears as a great red dragon intent on devouring the offspring of the woman, which child would bring deliverance to the church of God upon this earth. We know only too well that pagan Rome was the earthly kingdom through whom the devil worked at this time, yet the Bible distinctly names this dragon as being Satan who was cast out of heaven back in the beginning of things: "So the great dragon was cast out, that serpent of old, called the Devil and Satan, who deceives the whole world; he was cast to the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." *Revelation* 12:9.

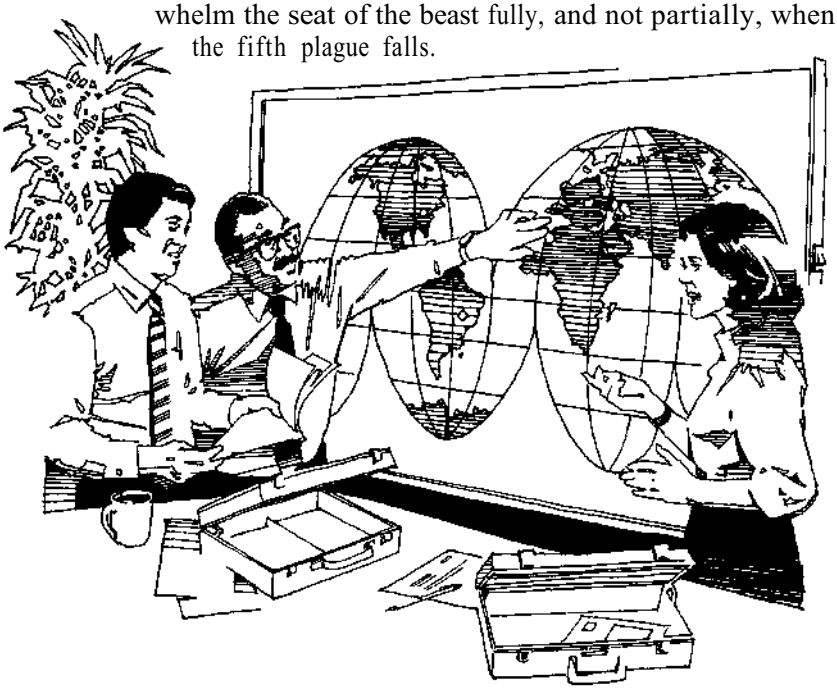
This truth is further borne out by this statement from *The Great Controversy,* 438: "A correct interpretation of the symbols employed is necessary to an understanding of this message. *[Revelation* 14:9, 10.] What is represented by the beast, the image, the mark?

"The line of prophecy in which these symbols are found begins with *Revelation* 12, with the dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth. The dragon is said to be Satan *(Revelation* 12:9); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian Era was the Roman empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome."

This, then, makes it quite clear that only in a secondary sense are the powers of earth the beasts of prophecy. Primarily they are Satan, the different beasts symbolizing the different guises through which he works upon this earth.

When the devil first fell in heaven from his spiritual perfection, he sought to set up the seat of his government and authority right there in the kingdom above, but the war which resulted thrust him out into space, though it did not succeed in curbing his unholy ambitions. What he had failed to do in heaven, he determined to do upon this

earth, after he had gained a foothold here through the deception and fall of Adam and Eve. Through the centuries, he has labored to establish his complete supremacy in the earth so that it will be his base of operations against the kingdom of heaven. It is not a single spot on this earth which is to be his seat of power, but the whole earth as it is pitted against the kingdom of God in the rest of the entire universe. Therefore we must think of this earth as a complete whole, as being the seat of the beast, a great base of hostile operations against the kingdom of God. How proper, then, that the darkness should overwhelm the seat of the beast fully, and not partially, when the fifth plague falls.



The fifth plague is the outpouring of impenetrable darkness on the seat of the beast. To limit this seat to a single geographical location such as Rome, would be to miss the real meaning of this expression, for the peoples of the entire world, having given their total, unqualified support to the man of sin, constitute the seat of the beast, his base of operations against God's universal government. His entire kingdom is his seat so that to plunge his seat into darkness, is to fill his kingdom with darkness.

But there is another good reason why the entire earth is blotted out with thick darkness at this time, and it has to do with the effort on the part of the wicked to utterly destroy God's people from the face of the earth so that the triumph of Satan can be complete.

As was noted in the last chapter, the description of the seven last

plagues is taken up in the last half of the chapter in *The Great Controversy,* entitled "The Time of Trouble". The first four plagues are mentioned in their order, and the remainder of that chapter is devoted to the setting out of the results of those first four plagues. This is a picture of horror, starvation, famine, drought, and pestilence during which the people of God are miraculously preserved as was Elijah at the brook. It cannot be allowed that the first four plagues would be described in their order, without the remaining three also being described in their order. So it is that the very next chapter opens with the events leading up to the outpouring of the final three plagues upon the earth.

The day will have come when the time for the execution of the death decree will be drawing very near, and the peoples of the earth will have decided to exterminate in one night the hated ones whom they imagine have brought all the trouble upon them. It is at this point that the chapter opens.

"When the protection of human laws shall be withdrawn from those who honor the law of God, there will be, in different lands, simultaneous movement for their destruction. As the time appointed in the *decree* draws near, the people will conspire to root out the hated sect. It will be determined to strike in one night a decisive blow, which shall utterly silence the voice of dissent and reproof." *Great Controversy,* 635.

It is important that it be understood that the people of God are not at this time gathered into one place on the earth, but are scattered throughout the length and breadth of it. This is further verified by this statement from *The Review and Herald,* November 19, 1908:

"Then in the day of fierce trial he will say, 'Come, My people, enter thou into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be over past.' What are the chambers in which they are to hide?—They are the protection of Christ and holy angels. The people of God are not at this time all in one place. They are in different companies, and in all parts of the earth; and they will be tried singly, not in groups. Every one must stand the test for himself."

It is because the saints of God will be scattered throughout the world then, as they are now, that Jesus will send His angels to the four corners of the earth to gather them when He comes in the clouds of heaven. Thus it is written:

"And He will send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." *Matthew* 24:31.

They will not then be gathered at Jerusalem, or any other one

place in the earth. The statement in *Early* Writings, page 75, makes it very clear that the people of God will not be gathered in old Jerusalem at this, or any other time. For we are told that "Old Jerusalem never would be built up," *Early Writings,* 75, and that, therefore, the people of God were neither to anticipate or plan to go there again.

So it will be, that all over the world in different places the wicked will be preparing for the work of death planned to sweep the righteous out of existence.

"The people of God—some in prison cells, some hidden in solitary retreats in the forests and the mountains—still plead for divine protection, while in every quarter companies of armed men, urged on by hosts of evil angels, are preparing for the work of death. It is now, in the hour of utmost extremity, that the God of Israel will interpose for the deliverance of his chosen. Saith the Lord: 'Ye shall have a song, as in the night when a holy solemnity is kept; and gladness of heart, as when one goeth ... to come into the mountain of the Lord, to the Mighty One of Israel. And the Lord shall cause his glorious voice to be heard, and shall show the lightning down of his arm, with the indignation of His anger, and with the flame of a devouring fire, with scattering, and tempest, and hailstones.' *Isaiah* 30:29, 30." *Great Controversy,* 635.

Thus the stage is set for the final attempt by the forces of evil to win the battle against truth and righteousness; in which dark hour the Lord will interpose to deliver His people. The moment *agreed* upon by the wicked comes, and they rush madly on to destroy the righteous entirely.

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, *deeper* than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth." *Great Controversy,* 635, 636.

It is to be noted that the wicked have conspired to strike the blow at night. No doubt they had determined the hiding places of the saints previously, and surrounded them in the daylight hours to wait impatiently until the hour agreed upon by them for the slaughter. Then in the midnight hour they rush upon their prey; no doubt carrying lights to illuminate the work of death and destruction. The whole plan goes successfully forward until that moment when the weapons are raised to cut down the people of God, at which instant the darkness of the fifth plague falls upon the earth. It is a darkness so dense that everything is blotted from view, despite the lights they carry, and it will be so sudden that the upraised weapons will never fall on their intended victims. This absolutely unexpected event will serve to completely upset the plans of the wicked to destroy the people of

God. That is what will make it a plague of fearful proportions and significance for Babylon the Great. The devil, the real king of Babylon, knows at this time that everything now depends on his being able to destroy the people of God from off the face of the earth. He has not succeeded in making them sin, so they must be destroyed so that the Holy Spirit, whereby the presence of God remains upon the earth, will have no foothold whatsoever in the earth, and, thus, Satan would have undisputed control over all the earth at last.

For six thousand years he will have been battling for such a situation as this, and here he will have come to the very point when success is but the blow of a weapon away, when the darkness stops the whole thing—with the saints still living—by being safely hidden from view in the depths of an impenetrable darkness, far *deeper* than the darkness of the night itself. Can we even begin to imagine the agony of frustration, the terror occasioned by the implications of this defeat, and the horror which will overspread the wicked and their leaders as they see what this is all going to mean to them: It is no small wonder the Bible says, "and they gnawed their tongues because of the pain." *Revelation* 16:10.

The wicked servants of the woman *Jezebel,* the great apostate system of ecclesiastical oppression, have been thoroughly convinced by the priests and leaders that the plagues, which have swept away all they have and reduced them to such terrible straits, are caused by the refusal of the hated minority to yield to the Sunday sabbath and that there is no hope of any relief and return to temporal prosperity until these are destroyed. Glad anticipation of this relief will spur them on to the work of murder, only to find in the last moment that the prey eludes them in the dense darkness.

On the other hand the leaders know that all hope for final supremacy rests in the destroying of the people of God, as does also their master, the devil, and likewise they are dismayed to desperation and horror by this development.

For the people of God, the experience is equally terrible at first. There they are bowed in prayer, pleading with the Lord for deliverance, with every appearance telling them that their last moment has come. They are aware of the uplifted weapons, and they brace themselves for the blow. The wicked are screaming in their hatred and rage. All is terror and confusion with bright lights flashing on them. They are expecting death in the next instant, and in that next instant they are plunged into impenetrable darkness in which everything is blotted out of sight.

That is exactly the experience of the martyrs of old. They were hunted and pursued until the weapons were raised aloft above their heads. The next instant there descended upon them the impenetra-

ble darkness of death. Thus the one hundred and forty-four thousand will experience death without actually dying. In fact, it will be worse than that which the martyrs experienced, for the darkness for them was the cessation of consciousness and, therefore, of experience, but for these last martyrs, they will retain consciousness in the midst of the darkness. Therefore they will think that they are dead, and at the same time experience the fearful sense of horror at the thought of it. It will mean to them that all is lost, for they, too, understand that everything in the final victory depends upon their retaining life till the very end.

Thus the fifth plague of dreadful, suffocating darkness is a terrible experience for all concerned. But it does mark the turning point for the people of God and the beginning of the great awakening for the wicked, which leads to their completely withdrawing their support from Babylon the Great, whereby her total and final fall is accomplished. But, while Babylon's suffering is the coming to the end of her existence, for the righteous, the suffering is but the birth agonies into life eternal.

How important and needful it is that today, while it is called today, we make our calling and election sure so that we escape the plagues which are to fall upon Babylon the Great.

Chapter 30

The Hour of Deliverance

The inky, impenetrable darkness of the fifth plague marks the beginning of quite dramatic changes in the whole scene of the closing events of this earth's history. For the wicked, it means the complete frustration of all their plans to exterminate the people of God and thus gain the victory for the devil, which for six thousand years he has worked to achieve. The darkness so completely hides the righteous from the view of the wicked that they cannot find them to do them harm at all.

But this is not all. Immediately after, there appears a shining rainbow encircling each of the praying companies as the witness of the special regard and consequent protection which the Lord has for His people. This is no ordinary rainbow, for it is written that it shines with the glory of God. The wicked are conscious of the supernatural nature of this glory, and as a result, they are absolutely stopped in their tracks, and, unable to move, they witness the divine recognition of the hated of all the earth. In the last chapter, the paragraph *The Great Controversy* which told of this darkness is the paragraph which goes on to tell of the arresting of the wicked in their onrush to destroy the saints. To gain the connection, the entire paragraph is quoted here:

"With shouts of triumph, jeering, and imprecation, throngs of evil men are about to rush upon their prey, when, lo, a dense blackness, deeper than the darkness of the night, falls upon the earth. Then a rainbow, shining with the glory from the throne of God, spans the heavens and seems to encircle each praying company. The angry multitudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness." *Great Controversy,* 635, 636.

Thus for the wicked, the darkness is followed by even greater dismay and terror as they see that the very ones whom they believed to

be the cause of the judgments of God upon the earth are, instead, the ones whom the Lord loves and is protecting. Thus the great onrushing river of vengeful humanity is stopped in its flow, after which, as we shall shortly see, it is dried up, so far as its intended course is concerned, to roll back as a great destroying flood upon Babylon herself.

But that which for the world is terror and confusion, is for the people of God the opening of a new day of hope and expectation. In fact, this is the point of time when the agony of Jacob's trouble comes to its end; they are released from that into the joy of their eternal deliverance. The darkness, having been followed by the glory of the rainbow, is now followed by the voice from heaven directing them to look above to the glory of the heavens where they see the Son of man seated on His Father's throne.

"By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up,' and lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father and the holy angels, 'I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.' *John* 17:24. Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying: They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of My patience; they shall walk among the angels;' and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith, utter a shout of victory." *Great Controversy,* 636.

While it would be true that the wicked are not able to see all that the people of God can see, yet they see enough to make them realize the implications of the terrible and eternal loss which they are now to sustain. For them, this is the great moment of revelation of the truth as it really is.

In the chapter under consideration in *The Great Controversy,* the subject we are looking at is the experience of the people of God, while the next chapter, "The Desolation of the Earth", carries us along over the same ground, but this time from the point of view of the experience of the wicked. On page 654, reference is made back to a point of time mentioned in the previous chapter, from which the above quotations have been taken. "When the voice of God turns the captivity of His people, there is a terrible awakening of those who have lost all in the great conflict of life."

The voice of God will turn the captivity of His people, as can be seen from the study of page 636 of *The Great Controversy,* immedi-

ately after the darkness of the fifth plague and the appearing of the rainbow around the people of God. That is the time when the wicked have their great awakening; the time when the deceptions of the enemy of souls lose their power over their minds. The whole of pages 654 and 655 describe this awakening. This is too lengthy to be quoted in full here, but it is recommended that the reader take the book and read it over for himself. Here, though, are the main thoughts and developments of this time.

"While probation continued they were blinded by Satan's deceptions, and they justified their course of sin." *Great Controversy,* 654. It is very important that it be understood that the devil is not the direct master of the human race. They are controlled by their evil natures which fires the evil passions of their corrupt and fallen humanity. The clear proof that the devil is not the undisputed master is given in the fact that he has to send forth his evil spirits to work miracles to *deceive the world* into following him. Note how clearly this is testified to in the following statements:

"Fearful sights of a supernatural character will soon be revealed in the heavens, in token of the power of miracle-working demons. The spirits of devils will go forth to the kings of the earth and to the whole world, to fasten them in deception, and urge them on to unite with Satan in his last struggle against the government of heaven. By these agencies, rulers and subjects will be alike deceived." *Great Controversy,* 624.

If the devil was the supreme master of the earth and of every individual in it who is possessed of the carnal nature—as the people of the earth mostly are—then it would not be necessary for Satan to deceive them into giving to him their power and allegiance. Instead, he would command them to line up their forces under his supervision and get behind his cause against God in Heaven. The great problem with the kingdom of Satan is, that it is motivated by the spirit of self-supremacy, so that each and every individual within it desires to be the king, with all the others serving him. Both Satan and his subjects are motivated "by a power from beneath." *Testimonies to Ministers,* 407.

That power is the power of sin. That is the controlling power which Satan seeks to stir up and inflame, and at the same time control and channel into full and undivided support for himself in his warfare against heaven. All too often, though, his plans misfire as his subjects devote their time and energies to the development of their own interests and their own kingdoms. Thus the whole of the devil's kingdom is filled with strife and confusion. See how at the present time the Arabs and the Israelis, for instance, are spending their strength and energies in fighting one another, when Satan desires

that they pool their resources and power in the combined support of his warfare against God. The time will come when they will do this, but not without a great deal of cunning, deceptive persuasion on the part of the evil one and his angels.

The methods by which he will make this persuasion effective will be a combination of destruction and of favoring.

"Satan has control of all whom God does not especially guard. He will favor and prosper some in order to further his own designs, and he will bring trouble upon others and lead men to believe that it is God who is afflicting them." *Great Controversy,* 589.

The statement that Satan has control of all those whom the Lord does not especially guard may seem to contradict the facts revealed in the statements already quoted, until it is seen from the context of the above that it is referring to the control which Satan has over the bodies and possessions of these people. He can destroy or prosper them at will, but this does not mean that he can control their behavior or command their allegiance at will.

The ones upon whom he will bring great affliction will be those who are slow in coming into line with his organization and planning, while those whom he will prosper are those who are co-operative. As the power of Spiritualism increases, so will the fearful troubles in the world, until it is reduced to a state of economic ruin and disaster.

"While appearing to the children of men as a great physician who can heal all their maladies, he will bring disease and disaster, until populous cities are reduced to ruin and desolation. Even now he is at work. In accidents and calamities by sea and by land, in great conflagrations, in fierce tornadoes and terrific hailstorms, in tempests, floods, cyclones, tidal waves, and earthquakes, in every place and in a thousand forms, Satan is exercising his power. He sweeps away the ripening harvest, and famine and distress follow. He imparts to the air a deadly taint, and thousands perish by the pestilence. These visitations are to become more and more frequent and disastrous. Destruction will be upon both man and beast. The earth mourneth and fadeth away,' 'the haughty people … do languish. The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant.' *Isaiah* 24:4, 5." *Great Controversy,* 589, 590.

Men will exhaust the powers of mind and body in their efforts to solve the multiple crises which shall thus come upon them. Kings, dictators, presidents, and prime ministers will be forced, through sheer desperation, to recognize that the situation is quite beyond them. It has always been the way of sinful men to look for help from God when the troubles of the earth multiply around and upon them, and so it will be again that they will turn toward God for help. But

this generation has cast off the God of heaven, and even in the hour of calamity they have no mind to have their hearts and their ways changed. Satan knows this too well, and so he who is the cause and executor of all the troubles which will have brought the world to this place, then declares deceitfully that it is the God of heaven who is manifesting his displeasure over the desecration of the Sunday.

"And then the great deceiver will persuade men that those who serve God are causing these evils. The class that have provoked the displeasure of Heaven will charge all their troubles upon those whose obedience to God's commandments is a perpetual reproof to transgressors. It will be declared that men are offending God by the violation of the Sunday sabbath; that this sin has brought calamities which will not cease until Sunday observance shall be strictly enforced; and that those who present the claims of the fourth commandment, thus destroying *reverence* for Sunday, are troublers of the people, preventing their restoration to divine favor and temporal prosperity." *Great Controversy,* 590.

Thus the devil, having divorced men from God by causing them to hate and despise the messages of truth, will then have unsheltered mankind at his mercy, a situation of which he will take the utmost advantage. He will reduce what will be left of the unprotected human family to a state of utter desperation in which they will see God as their only hope. But, to his intense satisfaction, Satan will understand that his victims have no desire to be saved from his power within, but only from the plagues, destructions, and pestilences without. The great enemy will then present himself before the masses of the world as the god whom they can accept, the one who will return them to temporal prosperity. As proof of his power and willingness to use it for the benefit of the perishing, he performs the most remarkable miracles in the sight of the multitudes who are totally deceived by this performance.

Having gained total allegiance from the peoples of the entire world, Satan, with great and convincing authority, will point to the true God's faithful ones as being they who will have incurred the wrath of Jehovah on all mankind whose troubles, he declares, shall not cease until these troublers of the people are exterminated.

With great care and patience the evil one has formulated and built this plan, the whole success of which depends upon deception, for the people of the world will instantly cease to serve him, should they discover they are being duped. This provides the devil with an added incentive to destroy the faithful, because both their lives and the witness of their message are perfectly calculated by God to uncover the real nature of the work of Satan. With what anxiety, then, must he approach the moment when the death decree is to be exe-

cuted, and with what terror, alarm, and dismay must he view the coming of the fifth plague, with the following glory of the encircling rainbows and the delivering voice from heaven. Then, with despairing and quaking fear will he see the mask of deception torn away, so now in his real character he stands exposed before the eyes of those who but so shortly before will have been giving him their full and undivided support. Then the wicked will know and understand that they have been serving Satan instead of the God of heaven. They will be filled with regret, but it will not be the regret of having been at war with God, but instead, that this position has cost them their supremacy and kingship.

"The wicked are filled with regret, not because of their sinful neglect of God and their fellow men, but because God has conquered. They lament that the result is what it is; but they do not repent of their wickedness. They would leave no means untried to conquer if they could." *Great Controversy,* 654.

As fully as the whole world, apart from the sealed saints of God, will be on the side of Satan, they will, in turn, see that they have been deluded, and as fully turn against him so that there will not be a single individual on his side. He will have staked all to win all, but will, instead, find that he will lose all. Both the people, who are the deceived masses and the ministry, who will be the principal agents in executing this work of deception, will see the path along which they will have been led, and will react with violent and blood-thirsty speed.

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. 'We are lost!' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin;' and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed." *Great Controversy,* 655, 656.

Thus the very last opportunity for Satan to win the great controversy this side of the advent of Jesus will have passed away forever. Those servants upon whom, through the power of deception, he has depended for success, now prove to be his enemies and would-be destroyers. Thus the coming of the fifth plague does indeed introduce a

vast and sudden change in the whole framework of the end times. It is the beginning of the final ending of the plots and plans of wickedness, and it is the time for the deliverance of the people of God.

So great and tremendous will this change in proceedings be, that even nature itself will be turned upside down and out of its course. It is time to return now to page 636, whereon is to be found the direct reference to the coming of the darkness, the glory of the encircling rainbow, and the opening of the heavens to the saints, whence they hear the voice delivering them from the power of the kingdom of darkness. Here we learn that it will be "at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying, 'It is done.' *Revelation* 16:17."

This statement confirms that the attempt to destroy the righteous does indeed take place in the dead of the night. It is reasonable to conclude that the wicked will be using artificial light to locate and kill the people of the Lord. This give us some idea of the denseness of the darkness, which is so great that it is darkness far exceeding that of the darkness of night itself. If this darkness had descended during the brightness of the noonday hour, the contrast would have been very great, but we would have had but little to enable us to understand how truly dark that darkness will be. But when we see that it is darkness greater than the physical hour of darkness in which the act is to be done, then we can see that it is darkness of the deepest kind; a darkness through which even the brightest electric lights will not be able to shine. As such it will be symbolic of the depth of the darkness to which the wicked will have descended.

Then, in that midnight hour the sun appears, shining in its strength. A greater convulsion of nature than a switch from midnight to midday is hardly possible, and it is understandable, that "everything in nature" will seem to be turned "out of its course." Ominous to the wicked with the portent of oncoming destruction will be the coming up of the dark, heavy clouds which will, in the violence of their coming as generated by the complete turning of the whole world out of its natural course, clash wildly and stormily against one another. In the midst of all this fury and thundering will be that one clear space of indescribable glory from which will utter forth the

voice of God Himself, with the brief and climactic declaration, "It is done!"

Reference to *Revelation* 16:17, shows that this voice is heard immediately upon the outpouring of the seventh vial upon the earth. Reading further on to page 637 of *The Great Controversy,* it is seen that the full fury of the seventh plague does follow right on in the correct order on this page. There is the earthquake and the hail, by which the total destruction of all the palaces and temples, the business houses, and the houses of sin are brought down to final and total ruin.

However, the study of the sixth plague must come before that of the seventh. Thus far, it does not seem to have appeared. The fifth plague is described on the top lines of page 636, while at the bottom of the same page is found the declaration from God, which is the very first event of the seventh plague. Elsewhere we have found that both in the Bible and in *The Great Controversy,* the plagues are introduced in their order, so that we would naturally be led to expect that the fifth and the seventh plagues should appear here with the sixth in between them.

Yet, it is true that there is no mention made at all of the great river Euphrates, by actual name, on this page under consideration. There is the darkness of the fifth plague with the events which follow right on thereafter, but not a word of the river Euphrates, by name, nor of the nations which are located on or around that river.

Does this mean that the sixth plague is omitted from this study as set out in *The Great Controversy? Does* this mean that that plague which has been the focal point of so much interest and study should have no mention at all in this book? There are many who have expressed with considerable surprise the thought that nothing is said in the Spirit of Prophecy writings in regard to the drying up of the great river Euphrates, and so little in regard to the great and final battle of Armageddon.

But it is to be seen that the sixth plague has not been recognized as such, and, therefore, has not been seen for what it actually and really is on this page of *The Great Controversy* where it should and does appear between the fifth and the seventh plagues. A failure to understand the true principles of prophetic interpretation has led so many to look for the wrong thing, even though they look in the right place. This is not an uncommon mistake in history. The Jews are still looking for the coming of the Messiah—without knowing that He has already come and gone—simply because they were and are looking for a very different kind of person from the One who actually appeared, even though they looked where and when they should have been looking, and even though He came exactly as prophesied.

Having studied in some detail the first five plagues and having reached the point of time in our study when the sixth plague is to be seen and understood exactly and actually as it is, we shall turn, then, to the study of the principles of interpretation, which will plainly show just what the sixth plague actually is. Then we shall have not the least difficulty in seeing it right there in its proper place in *The Great Controversy,* right between the fifth and the seventh plagues.

Chapter 31

The River Euphrates

The sixth plague is the drying up of the great river Euphrates so that the way of the Kings from the East might be prepared.

"Then the sixth angel poured out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water was dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared." *Revelation* 16:12.

There is material in this text to provide a great deal of study for the earnest student of the Word of God, but there will not be space enough to cover it all here. Rather, an effort will be made to lay down the main points concerning this climactic event, and leave the reader to pursue the topic further for himself. A separate series on this topic alone is planned in the future.

A beginning must be made in understanding just what the sixth plague is by asking the question, What is the river Euphrates and what is the drying up of it?

This question will at once turn the mind of the average reader to the river Euphrates which flows through modern Iraq into the Persian Gulf. This, in turn, revives visions of that great city, Babylon, which in ancient times sat astride that river, and continued to do so until the waters of it were dried up as a preparation for the coming of the king from the East, Cyrus, the anointed of the Lord. Then came the fall of that city, never to rise again.

But the physical river itself still flows on its way down to the sea, much as it did in those far gone times. When the river again appears in the book of *Revelation,* as still having significance in these last days, then the minds of the average students turn to that geographical feature, and look in that spot on the earth for the fulfillment of the text now under consideration. It is concluded by them that the countries which dwell astride the river must be dried up, so that the way of the kings from the eastern nations of China and Japan can find an unobstructed way of access to the plains of Esdraelon where, as they suppose, the battle of Armageddon is to be fought.

This is unfortunate, for this method of interpretation is in violation of one of the most fundamental and most easily proved of all principles of interpretation. Furthermore, it is a violation of the basic

principles of the gospel as it attaches more significance to where you are than it does to what you are.

It is essential to see and understood that where you are is not the important thing, so far as God is concerned. That which is the great concern of the Lord is what you are, no matter where you may be. Therefore it is to be seen that geography has nothing at all to do with the identification of Bible symbols in the sure Word of prophecy.

This principle is easily proved. Long ago there rested astride the great river Euphrates a great city named Babylon, which was described by Jeremiah again and again as the King of the North—the great destroyer and enemy of God's people. It is a mistake, however, to suppose that when God looked down upon that city, He saw it as a political power in a fixed geographical location. What God saw was a great apostate religious system at war with the most basic principles of the gospel and in full support of the devil. What God saw was that religious system using the power of the armies of that city for the furtherance of her war against Heaven, so that the political machine in the geographical location of that place served but to further the ends of the apostasy.

The time came when the city, as a geographical location, was reduced to utter ruin at the same time as the political power of Babylon passed away, never to rise again. But Babylon, the apostasy which was Babylon—as God saw Babylon—did not pass away. True, it ceased to be found in that geographical location, but this did not mean that she ceased to be found, for in her new geographical location, Babylon was still Babylon in every sense of the word. She was exactly the same in character, in intentions, in spirit, and in her subtle camouflaged warfare against heaven. Her geography had changed, but her character and work had not, and as surely as the Lord called her Babylon when she was upon the banks of the Euphrates, so surely does He call that same evil power Babylon wherever she finds a base of operation. It is not a matter of where she is, but what she is, which determines her name.

No one seems to have any difficulty in seeing this in regard to Babylon. When the modern Bible student reads the references to Babylon in *Revelation,* his mind does not go seeking her within the geographical limitations of the location of the ancient city by that name. He seeks, instead, the real Babylon which was within that city and rode upon her political and military power, and he finds her in all the world, marshalling the political and military powers of the whole earth in preparation for her final attempt to overthrow the government of God, and to establish her own supremacy in its place.

This same principle must, and does hold good for every other identification of last day powers. Israel is the name which was held by

a nation of people in ancient times, but again God did not see there a political kingdom with the power of its money and armies, but He looked down and saw His truth and the people who held to that truth.

I am not saying that every Israelite was a power for the truth, for there were the false mingled with the true. Those who were faithful to the light from heaven were those whom Jehovah recognized as being true Israel, not the rebels, the careless, or the apostates.

The political power of Israel still exists today, but the truth is no longer there, except for the possibility of there being some faithful souls hidden from our view. There will certainly be some found there when the loud cry breaks.

But in the meantime, we do not find the truth there, nor do we find the people of the truth there. Both have moved away to find refuge in other geographical regions, and as surely as the truth of God has never ceased to exist, then just so surely Israel has never ceased to exist. Israel is to be found wherever the truth of God and the people of God are to be found.

This is also true of the third and one remaining power—Egypt—the king of the south. While Babylon is apostate and counterfeit religion, and Israel is the truth of God, Egypt is atheism, for she waged open, avowed warfare against the God of heaven, such as is the stand of the Communist and heathen worlds of today. Just as both Babylon and Israel appear in the last book of the Bible, so does Egypt—the king of the south. The reference is found in *Revelation* 11:8. No doubt or question as to who and where Egypt is at the time *referred* to in the prophecy is left in our minds, because in *The Great Controversy,* 269, we are most plainly told that it was to be found in the land of revolutionary France at that time.

Here is the statement:

‘‘ The great city' in whose streets the witnesses are slain, and where their dead bodies lie, is 'spiritually' Egypt. Of all nations presented in Bible history, Egypt most boldly denied the existence of the living God and resisted His commands. No monarch ever ventured upon more open and highhanded rebellion against the authority of Heaven than did the king of Egypt. When the message was brought him by Moses, in the name of the Lord, Pharaoh proudly answered: 'Who is Jehovah, that I should hearken unto His voice to let Israel go? I know not Jehovah, and moreover I will not let Israel go.' Exodus 5:2, *A.R. V.* This is atheism, and the nation represented by Egypt would give voice to a similar denial of the claims of the living God and would manifest a like spirit of unbelief and defiance. 'The great city' is also compared, 'spiritually,' to Sodom. The corruption of Sodom in breaking the law of God was especially manifested in licen-

tiousness. And this sin was also to be a pre-eminent characteristic of the nation that should fulfill the specifications of this scripture."

A careful reading of this statement shows that not the least consideration is given to geography when identifying the power referred to as Egypt. The only consideration given was to the character of the power sought. When that character was discovered, then spiritual Egypt was rediscovered; not then located on the banks of the Nile, but over in France, as it then was, that is, during the French Revolution. Likewise, today Egypt is still with us, and is to be found wherever the spirit of open, avowed warfare against God is alive.

These evidences should be sufficient to show that geographical considerations have nothing to do with the identification of prophetic symbols, which did have geographical locations in ancient times. Therefore, there is no need to even begin to look in the direction of the modern, physical river Euphrates to find what the river signifies in *Revelation* in order to learn what the drying up of the river signifies. Instead, we must find the character of the river as it appeared in Old Testament times, and then trace that character through to the end. Then, when we have found that, we shall know where and what the river is today, and will be able to understand the drying up of it as well.

The river Euphrates first appears in the Garden of Eden, and was one of the rivers of life which supported the living creatures in that perfect creation. As the river of life in the paradise of God, it was clearly symbolic of the living power of God's Spirit flowing out to the sustenance of both the physical and spiritual life of the human family, and it would be the plan and purpose of God that it would always be that. God never intended that any other power should supplant His power in the support of the creatures made by His hands.

This is not because God is highly possessive of that which He has made, and jealously and selfishly refuses to share this dominion with another, as is the case with earthly and Satanic potentates. God knows that He is the only One with the power to sustain life and provide for the happiness of all His creatures. He knows that His is not just the best way, but that it is the only way of fulfillment and happiness. There are no alternatives. Every other way is a way of sorrow, ending in death. It is from this that the Lord desires to save His creation, and it is for this reason, a reason which is entirely in their interests, for which He is responsible, that the Lord intends that no authority shall replace His own.

But this is not understood by those who have been deceived by Satan's sophistries. Accordingly, they turn away from the River of Life which in Eden was called "the Euphrates". The living waters carried God's sustaining, healing power to all who drank from it, just

as the River of Life in the new earth will do the same for all who will drink from it there.

No longer is physical Eden, the Garden of God, located on this earth, and therefore, the Euphrates, which is the River of Life, is not to be found down here either. There is another stream—the outflowing of the Holy Spirit who is the living presence of the power of God in the earth and in the soul—which today sustains the believer in Jesus and which is symbolized by the flowing of the great river Euphrates as it was found in the Garden of Eden. When that dries up by our grieving away the Holy Spirit, the soul is left destitute of the power of God.

Fearful as this loss is, the soul is unaware that the Spirit of God has departed from him, and blames the world around him for his troubles, rather than recognizing that it is in himself that the trouble now lies. Then it is that the evil one is right there to offer the substitute power—the power of compulsion and force, which is the way of his kingdom—as an alternative to the power which has been lost. This is accepted quite eagerly and gladly, and wherever it is, there you find Babylon built, not now upon the river of God, but upon the river of sin. That is but to say, that it is built, not upon the power of God and His Spirit, but upon the power of force and compulsion, whereby each individual is forced to do the will of the powers that be.

See this in ancient Babylon, when, the image having been erected, the king commanded that all should bow and worship it, or suffer, as the alternative, a fearful death in the burning fiery furnace. Nor was the furnace there merely as a threat which the king did not really intend to carry out, for when those three, who alone of all that company were filled with the Holy Spirit, demonstrated that there was a power in them greater than the power of Babylon, they were thrown into that furnace from which they escaped only by the power and presence of God.

Perhaps nowhere is this better illustrated than in the way in which the beast was formed in the rise to power of the Roman Catholic system in the early ages. The following quotation from *Great Empires of Prophecy,* 472, by A. T. Jones, plainly sets forth the facts of this:

"The church was fully conscious of her loss of the power of God before she sought the power of the State. Had she not been, she never would have made any overtures to the imperial authority, nor have received with favor any advances from it. There is a power that belongs with the gospel of Christ, and is inseparable from the truth of the gospel; that is, the power of God. In fact, the gospel is but the manifestation of that power; for the gospel 'is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.' As long, therefore, as any or-

der or organization of people professing the gospel of Christ maintains in sincerity the principle of that gospel, so long the power of God will be with them, and they will have no need of any other power to make their influence felt for good wherever known. But just as soon as any person or association professing the gospel loses the spirit of it, so soon the *power* is gone also. Then, and only then, does such an organization seek for another kind of power to supply the place of that which is lost.

"Thus was it with the church at this time. She had fallen, deplorably fallen, from the *purity* and the *truth,* and therefore from the *power,* of the gospel. And having lost the power of God and of godliness, she greedily grasped for the power of the State and of ungodliness. And to secure laws by which she might enforce her discipline and dogmas upon those whom she had lost the power either to convince or to persuade, was the definite purpose which the bishopric had in view when it struck that bargain with Constantine, and lent him the influence of the church in his imperial aspirations." Emphasis original.

It follows, then, that Babylon is built upon the coerced powers of the people. In fact, one has but to read the history of the Papacy and of the Protestant Reformation to see that the papal church was powerless to do anything unless she had the authority of the king behind her. There were times when the church determined the death of certain Protestants, but because she could not secure the authority of the king, she was not able to execute her baleful will. Therefore God has but to take away the power of the state, which is the power of the people, from Babylon and she is powerless, having neither the power of God to win the people, nor the power of the state to force them. This is exactly how the Lord reduced the power of the papacy by the power of His written Word, when its messages were made clear by the presence and power of His Holy Spirit. It was the presentation of the Holy Scriptures which robbed the Papacy of the support of kings and princes, and brought about her complete downfall.

Now the important point is this: When the church turns away from the power of God and takes up the alternative people-power, and money-power, she does not do this in open, avowed warfare against God, but rather declares that she is still the servant and vicegerent of God in the earth. To convince the world, the apostate church adopts a counterfeit of everything which belongs to the true.

Thus it is that everything in that system is the counterfeit of the real and the original, and because it is a counterfeit, intended to deceive, that deception could not be complete nor completely effective unless the counterfeit was called by the same name as the true. Now everything in that system which has been counterfeited includes the



The great symbolical river, the Euphrates, on which Babylon depends for her support, is money-power and people-power. Let that be dried up, and Babylon's fall is an absolute certainty. On the other hand, God's true people are not in the least dependant on these resources, for God's power is sufficient for them.

power which sustains it, which power, while they claim it to be the power of God in their midst, is nothing of the kind, but rather the power of human support and Satanic support.

The power of God, as symbolized by the river of Life—the great river Euphrates in the Garden of Eden—was the great original. Therefore, if every other thing which appertained to the kingdom of God was counterfeited and in its counterfeited form was given the same name as the original, either in symbolic or real form, then must

we not expect that the name of the river of God, as a symbol of God's power, should be given to the river of Satan as the symbol of his power?

In the Paradise of God in the Garden of Eden, the kingdom of God was built around the great river Euphrates. Satan knew this, and, as it was his plan to reproduce as perfect a counterfeit as possible of the kingdom of God in this world—the masterpiece of that being Babylon of old—he chose to have it built astride the great river Euphrates, so that men, when looking for the real, might find the false with no detail missing, and thus be induced to serve the false in the place of the true.

The river Euphrates was, indeed and in fact, a river of life to ancient Babylon. It provided both sustenance and protection to the city. Babylon was no ordinary city wherein the inhabitants usually lived within the protection of the walls and then went outside to farm the land and provide food and clothing for themselves. The walls of the city enclosed well over a thousand acres. Within those walls there was space for farming, to the extent that they were able to grow enough food to withstand a siege indefinitely, even though there should come a drought upon the land. The everflowing river provided a reliable and ceaseless supply of water. Thus the river was a source of physical sustenance to the dwellers within.

But it also provided protection, for around the city was a wide, deep moat which was fed and kept filled by the waters of the river. This made the storming of the walls an impossibility. Thus the river also provided protection for the city, making it a river of life in the double sense that it preserved the existing life of Babylon from the danger of attack, and it sustained the life of the city by guaranteeing it a permanent water supply, both for drinking and for agriculture. It is important that this be noticed, for it has a bearing on the river Euphrates of the last days.

All that Babylon was back there in that confined geographical location was a type of what Babylon is and will be in the last days of earth's history, and has, in fact, ever been, wherever and whenever the devil has rebuilt her. And this is so because the intentions and purposes of Satan have never changed. He has a determination to set up a rival kingdom against God, and to lead the whole world into the service of that kingdom, so that he can establish his claims against the God of heaven.

Therefore, when he failed to achieve that, as a permanent dynasty on the physical banks of the ancient river, he neither abandoned his intentions nor sought to achieve it in any other way. This, then, is to say that he will again build his city—Babylon—and again he will sit it astride the great river Euphrates. Only this time we do

not look for a physical city of buildings as the geographical confines of that attempt, nor do we look for a physical river of actual water on which that mystical city will be standing.

To find the city, we look for the same system, the same character, the same rule of force, the same counterfeiting of all that is God's or that is called God, and the same relentless hatred against the true people of the Lord. Having found that, we have found that great city Babylon. Then, to find the river, we look for that to which she looks for sustenance and protection; for the modern river Euphrates, which is connected to Babylon in the closing up of the earth's history, must bear the same relationship to Babylon today as it did back there in the days of Daniel.

The same power to which the great city looks today for her sustenance and protection is the power of the people; which is the power of kings and presidents. We are distinctly told in *Revelation* 17:15, that:

"The waters which you saw, where the prostitute sits, are peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues."

These words are spoken to us to explain the picture as given in verse one where John was told he would be shown

"the judgment of the great prostitute who sits on many waters."

In verse five her name is revealed as being "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF PROSTITUTES AND OF THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH."

Exactly then, as we find in the Old Testament Satan's early attempt to build an everlasting counterfeit of the kingdom of God, (the great city Babylon was then built astride the waters of that river Euphrates, which was the symbol of the power and the life that was both the protection and sustenance of that city), so the picture given to us of the Babylon of the last days is that she is sitting astride many waters, which are a symbol of the power of the peoples and nations of the earth. It is most obvious that if the counterfeit name given to the symbol of Babylon's power back then was Euphrates, then inasmuch as Babylon claims she "never errs nor can err," there can be no change in the counterfeit name of the powers to which she now turns in the place of the power of God. Those many waters upon which symbolic and mystical Babylon ride are indeed the waters of the Euphrates River.

In the original fall of Babylon, it was the drying up of those waters which prepared the way for the kings of the East, namely Cyrus and his armies. And in the final fall of Babylon, those waters, which will then be the support of the masses of the people, will be completely dried up to open the way for the kings of the East, who, as we will learn, will be the perfect counterpart or antitype of King Cyrus.

It follows, then, that if we are going to understand the fall of modern Babylon, we must be conversant with the fall of ancient Babylon; for the very way in which the Lord took away her protection and support then, is the same way in which He will take away her protection and support in the near future.

Chapter 32

The Sixth Plague

In our search to understand just what is meant by the drying up of the river Euphrates so that the way of the kings of the East might be prepared, it has been found that in the interpretation of last day symbols, geography has no weight and no bearing whatsoever. We have learned that originally the Euphrates was found in the Garden of Eden, as the river of life in that Garden; so it was a symbol of the living power of God to sustain the life of all creation.

We saw that when men turn away from the power of God, they seek an alternative, which is the power of force vested by God in the hands of the earthly kingdoms. We saw how Satan built his kingdom astride the Euphrates as the counterfeit of the kingdom in the Garden of Eden which was built around the original Euphrates river. That kingdom, built in the days of the mighty Nebuchadnezzar, having failed, the devil in the last days seeks to rebuild mystical Babylon again on the waters of the symbolic Euphrates, which waters are the vast river of human support upon which Babylon is dependent for sustenance and protection.

The rebuilding of Babylon will be by the self-same warfare which the evil one has waged against the Lord from the dawn of time, and the Lord's reply to it will be the unchanging answer of righteousness. Therefore the Lord will deal with the building of Babylon the Great today exactly as He dealt with the Babylon of Daniel's day; by which we can be assured that the study of the way in which the original Babylon fell will be to us a clear revelation of the way in which modern Babylon will fall.

One has but to compare the history of what happened there with the declaration in *Revelation* of the fall to come, to see that it will be the most exact repetition of events, though on a much wider and grander scale.

Back there Babylon had reached the height of her apostasy when she was prepared to take the sacred vessels of the Lord and drink from them in her drunken exaltation of her system of worship. So, too, in the last days the sins of Babylon will have reached to heaven when she takes the sacred things of God and uses them for her own worship.

Back there the Euphrates was dried up so that the way of the kings from the East might be prepared, by which they entered the city which fell in one night, never to ever rise again. So, too, the Word of prophecy in *Revelation* 16:12 declares that the sixth angel will pour "out his bowl on the great river Euphrates, and its water" will be "dried up, so that the way of the kings from the east might be prepared."

Back there that city fell to rise no more. Likewise, modern Babylon will fall, never to rise again.

Not only is this parallel true for the rising and falling of Babylon in those first and final instances, but it is true wherever we find Babylon. Some will point to *Revelation* 9:14, and claim that the principle is violated there, because, as they believe, the Euphrates there symbolizes Turkey. But this is to misunderstand the symbolism of the chapter. The river Euphrates in this chapter represents exactly what it represents in any other chapter of the Bible. In the first instance when in Eden, it represents the power of God. In the second instance, it represents the power which takes the place of the power of God; which power is the power of force or the power of sin. In *Revelation* 9, there is neither deviation from, nor denial of this principle.

The whole subject of *Revelation* 9 is the battle between the King of the North, which is Babylon, as centered in Rome at that time, and the King of the South, which is atheism, centered in the Ottoman Empire at that time. Atheism is the Beast from the bottomless pit, as is made plain from the prophecy in *Revelation* 11. There is not the space to explore this fully here, but the proof of this is found by comparing *Revelation* 11:8 with *The Great Controversy,* page 269. The comparison of these two references will make it quite clear that the power which comes up out of the bottomless pit is atheism.

Then turning to the beginning of the ninth chapter of *Revelation,* we find that, to the star was given the key of the bottomless pit, which he opens, and out of it, not out of the Euphrates, comes these Mohammedan powers which went forth when released against the empires under the control of and in support of the Papacy.

The Papacy is the Babylon of the Middle Ages. She sat in the city of Rome, protected on all sides by a vast circle of nations, which not only sustained her by pouring their wealth in a never ending flow into her coffers, but protected her from her enemy, the King of the South. In order for the powers of the Turks to reach and destroy Rome, they would first have to cross the waters or peoples in between, or effectively dry up those waters.

But there is only One who can dry up the waters and that is God. This is true, even though it was an atheistic general from what had become an atheistic nation which took the Pope prisoner in 1798.

But it was not the power of atheism which had dried up the river of human support so that the Pope found himself without a protector at that time. It was the power of the gospel in the Reformation which had taken away his power. No one can study the history of the Reformation without coming to this conclusion.

The picture in Europe during the Middle Ages was that there was Babylon surrounded by the nations of Europe, which, being the people of the land, were symbolized by waters; as the people of the world always are in Bible prophecy. But they were the water which gave their sustenance and support to Babylon. Therefore, they must be the waters of the Euphrates. Then beyond those nations, at the very banks, as it were, of the Euphrates, were those atheistic nations which had come up out of the bottomless pit and which lusted to pass through those waters to destroy the heart of Babylon.

This they could not do while the four angles held in check the four winds of strife. In order to hold back that strife, these angels must stand between the two powers facing each other. If we think of Europe as the Euphrates—the nations of Europe upon which water Rome was built and sat—then you must think of the Turks as being at the very banks of that mighty stream with the angels who hold back the four winds of strife between them and Rome which then was Babylon. This would mean that the four angels would be at the very banks of the Euphrates, bound there to do their work of restraint until they should be loosed. Then when they were loosed, the Turks would have nothing to restrain them from advancing into the waters on their journey to Rome.

The rendering of the text in the authorized or old King James Version of the Bible tends to be misleading in this respect, for it speaks of the four angels being bound in the great river Euphrates, whereas the German translation and the Revised Standard Version both render the text "at the great river Euphrates." This is a more accurate version of this particular text, and conveys the true meaning of the prophecy. It is worthwhile noting that although at this time the physical Euphrates was there in the territory of the Turks, it had nothing to do with the symbolism of the prophecy. Its being there did not make it the symbol of the Turkish Empire at all, and it would be a serious mistake to suppose that it did, for to do so would mean violating the principles of prophetic interpretation.

One may raise the question as to what river was dried up in the fall of Babylon in 1844. This is a valid question, for Babylon can never fall except there be the drying up of the river first. Yet it is true that in 1844, there was no river of human support dried up.

In reality, we should not expect that there would be, for the fall which overtook Babylon in 1844 was not the same fall which over-

took Babylon in the days of Daniel and which will overtake Great Babylon again in the end of time. This fall in Daniel's day was the physical and material fall into permanent destruction, whereas the fall in 1844 was the spiritual fall into the true Babylonian condition, which spiritual fall is the drying up of the true river Euphrates of which the river in the Garden is the symbol.

In 1844, as a result of their rejection of the message of the first and the second angels, the Spirit of God left the churches, and they became destitute of the river of life which flows from the throne of God to His true people. This, then, leads the churches to turn to another source of power and strength, the support of the power of the state, which is the power of nations and kindreds and tongues and peoples.

Intensely, the churches are courting the world today, until the time will come when they will have gained the full protection and support of the powers of this world, who will finally go forth in obedience to her will to destroy God's people from off the face of all the earth. Thus it has to be seen, that in the experience of all those who are finally lost, there must be two falls following the two dryings up of the two Euphrates; the first is the drying up of the true, the second is that of the counterfeit.

First, the river of God's power—the indwelling presence of His Spirit—dries up as a result of the rejection of the truth. This is a fall into spiritual death and apostasy. Then there is the turning to the alternative power of force, which power serves only as long as the great deception continues. Then it dries up to leave no other sources of life and sustenance, with the result that the fall which then comes is one from which there is no rising.

When these principles are understood, there is not the least difficulty in seeing the sixth plague as being located exactly where it should be located; right there between the fifth and the seventh plagues, on page 636 of *The Great Controversy*.

As the fifth is about to fall, we see the vast multitudes of all the earth rushing in one predetermined night upon the true people of God to effect their destruction. Like a mighty, destructive flood, this torrent of humanity bears down upon its prey. This is the time when Babylon holds full sway over all the world as a result of her having deceived all nations, and kindred, and tongues, and peoples into giving to her their sustenance and support. But there will be this one class of people, few in numbers, scattered throughout the whole world, and despised of all nations, who will have refused to bow to the supremacy of Babylon, and who, because of the power of God within them, threaten the security of Babylon through their power to unmask the deception by which she alone is able to continue.

THE GREAT ORIGINAL RIVER EUPHRATES AND ITS COUNTERFEIT

The River of Life was in the Garden of Eden
When Sin Entered, Man had no Access to that River
The People suffered a Spiritual Fall
They Then Turned to People-power and Money-power
This was a Counterfeit Euphrates
This was Babylon's Supporter.

THE DRYING UP OF THE RIVER EUPHRATES IN THE COMPLETE FALL OF ANCIENT BABYLON

The Babylonians Were an Apostate Religious System
They Depended on that Great River for Life Support and Protection
They Depended on it in the Place of the River of Life
For a Time it Fulfilled that Purpose in Respect to Physical Life
By Drinking Babylonian Wine From Sanctuary Vessels, Their Apostasy became Complete.
The Kings from the East, led by King Cyrus, Dried up the River
Thus the Way of the Kings from the East was Prepared
Babylon, Long Since Spiritually Fallen, now Fell Physically
She Would Never Rise again
Cyrus was a Type of Christ Who Alone has the Power to Destroy Babylon
King Cyrus was Called of God to Set the Captives Free

THE GREAT RIVER EUPHRATES UNDER THE SIXTH TRUMPET

The Application of the Symbol (The Euphrates) must be Consistent
So, the Euphrates Here Must be the Multitudes Supporting Babylon
They were the Nations of Europe which Surrounded Rome and Saved her
The Locusts From the Bottomless Pit were Atheistic Powers
These (the Mohammedans) Aimed to Dry up the River but Failed
Even so, they Effected an Immense Toll of Human Life

THE DRYING UP OF THE GREAT RIVER EUPHRATES UNDER THE SIXTH PLAGUE

The Drying up of the Euphrates Prepares the Way for the Kings from the East
Christ and His Armies are the Kings from the East
There can be no Second Coming until the Waters are Dried Up
When the Waters are Dried Up, Babylon's Fall will be Complete
There will Come the Night when a Great Flood of the Wicked will Rush out to Kill the Saints Under Babylon's Commands
Their Weapons Will be Raised to Destroy
Before They Can Fall, the Blackness of the Fifth Plague Intervenes
The Angry Multitudes (the Great River Euphrates) are Suddenly Arrested
Then a Rainbow Encircles Each Praying Company
The Voice of God Delivers His People
The Great River of Support for Babylon, Euphrates, Completely Dries Up
This is the Sixth Plague
The Earthquake and Hail of the Seventh Plague Follow
The Kings from the East, Christ and His Armies, Appear
Great Babylon Has Fallen, Never to Rise Again Anymore

Therefore this great mass of people, who are doing the will of Babylon thereby provide her protection and her support, and, therefore, are those waters which symbolically are called Euphrates. This is the water to be dried up under the sixth plague to make way for the coming of the Kings of the East. But, at this moment, Babylon will be very confident that so vast and so united a stream of loyal humanity, opposed by so few, could never be dried up, so she will exult that complete victory is within her grasp.

In the very last possible moment of time remaining, wherein the blow will not yet have fallen upon the saints of God, darkness blots the whole scene from view. The wicked are unable to direct their weapons, and the people of God escape from the death, which a moment before, seemed to be so certain.

Then, in the next moment, there appears the rainbow, shining with that glory from the throne of God, which not one of the wicked would either dare or have the power to penetrate. "The angry multi-

tudes are suddenly arrested. Their mocking cries die away. The objects of their murderous rage are forgotten. With fearful forebodings they gaze upon the symbol of God's covenant and long to be shielded from its overpowering brightness." *Great Controversy,* 636.

The great river is suddenly drained of all forward motion, just as it was when Cyrus diverted its flow into the side trenches which led to the marshes. But worse is to come. Upon their startled senses, scene after scene passes in rapid succession, each one, in turn, arousing new areas of awareness in their minds. At first the suspicion is implanted that maybe they have made a terrible and fearful mistake: that they are the subjects of a mighty deception. Then, as they hear strange voices from heaven, obviously in communication with those whom they had but a moment before been determined to kill; as they see the lighting up of the countenances of those who were but so recently the subjects of the most bitter persecution; as they hear the shouts of victory; as they see the sun appear at midnight; the complete reversal and upheaval of all nature; the streams ceasing to flow; the dark angry clouds rolling in violent clashings and thunderings against one another, there in the midst of the heavens—that one clear space of indescribable glory—the voice of God like the sound of many waters is heard proclaiming that all is accomplished.

By the time they have been witnesses to all this, suspicion has developed into the firm and terrible conviction that they are totally lost and all because of the fearful deception practiced upon them by Babylon. So obvious is the fact of this, that even the ministers frankly confess their work of deception. Now the fury of the multitudes will know no limits as with bloodthirsty and revengeful violence they turn upon the ministry—the prime servants of Babylon. Euphrates will again have dried up and Great Babylon comes to her end and finds that she has none to help her. She has turned away from the power of God, so she can find no help there. She has basely deceived the nations into helping and sustaining her, and now that they see the deception practiced upon them to their utter ruin, they withdraw all their help from her, leaving her nakedly exposed to their vengeance. There is no one else to turn to; nowhere else to go and no place to hide. All is lost and as the millstone which the angel flings into the deepest depths of the ocean sinks to rise no more, so does Babylon the Great go down to rise no more at all.

It is worthy of note that the very river which was to Babylon both protection and sustenance became, in turn, the medium of her destruction, for it provided the very way into the heart of Babylon by which she fell. So again, those very peoples who will be providing both the sustenance and the support of Babylon will become the

very means whereby she is brought to final destruction, for it will be the weapons in their hands which will slay the ministry.

That great river is dried up to prepare the way for the Kings of the East. This, then, raises the question, Who are the Kings of the East?

Those who look to a geographical interpretation, look to the nations in the east such as India, China, and Japan as the ones who are to fulfill this prophecy. But the fact is, that in the last days all the kings of the whole earth will be united under the banner of the Papacy. There will be that one vast confederacy of evil; that one united front against God. If the whole world is in the one camp, then what nations of the earth are left to come from the East? The answer must be that there will be none!

There were kings from the east in the destruction of the original Babylon, and the only way to understand who are the kings from the East in the final battle is to go back and study the character and work of the kings of the east back there. Then we shall understand who will be the kings from the East in the final battle.

The sure Word of prophecy had quite a deal to say about King Cyrus before he was even born. Such divine predictions are to be found in *Isaiah* 41 and 45. First, the questions are asked in reference to Cyrus, "Who raised up one from the east? Who in righteousness called him to his feet? Who gave the nations before him, and made him rule over kings? Who gave them as the dust to his sword, as driven stubble to his bow?" Isaiah 41:2.

"Thus says the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held—to subdue nations before him and loose the armour of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not be shut. . .

"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways; he shall build my city and let my exiles go free, not for price nor reward." Isaiah 45:l, 13.

Here are given to us a list of the details concerning him who was the king from the east in the old time. And because that king was the type of the final King from the East, then what was said concerning him, so far as he was the type, will be true in regard to the King in the end.

Here is the list: He was called in righteousness to be the instrument of God in the destruction of Babylon, the great enemy of God; He was God's anointed; All his ways were directed of God; He built the city of God, Jerusalem; He let go the captives of Babylon, neither for price nor reward.

Could the non-Christian nations of the far east ever fulfill these specifications as laid down in the type? Are they called in righteousness? Will all their ways be directed of God? Will they build the city of

God, which is the church of God, and will they set free the captives of Babylon when they will be a part of the city themselves? The answer to all this is a very obvious, No!

Then who is the anointed of the Lord who will lead forth these armies which will destroy Babylon? Who alone in these last days has the power to dry up the waters and take away her dominion forever and ever? Who alone can build the church of God, and who alone can set free the captives of Babylon without price or reward? The One called in righteousness from the East, Christ, the Wonderful Redeemer. He is the great King from the East who will do all these things in the end.

But the Scriptures use the plural. It does not say that the way of the King of the East is prepared, but that the way of the Kings of the East will be prepared. How can this be when Christ is but the one King? The fact is, that Christ will not come alone. With Him will be other kings, such as Elijah, Moses, Enoch, and the others who were raised when Christ was raised. All of these are kings in heaven now, as all the redeemed will be in the eternity to come. Does not the Word say, that "If children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ." "And has made us kings and priests to His God and Father." "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne." *Romans* 8:17; *Revelation* 1:6; 3:21.

These Scriptures, along with others, make it very plain that the saints of God will be kings when they go to heaven, therefore, Moses, Enoch, and Elijah are most certainly kings in the kingdom of heaven at this very time. Equally certain is the fact that when Jesus comes again, they will come with Him. So it will not be but the one King coming from the East, but it will be a number of kings.

Those kings cannot come until the purpose of the great controversy has been fulfilled. That purpose is the revealing of the character of Satan on the one hand to the point where all forsake him, and the character of God on the other where all men see that He is just and kind and good. In the drying up of the Euphrates, all the wicked see that they have been deluded, and the ministry even confess their work of deception, which means that Satan has not one single follower to stand by him. The purpose of the controversy thus being fulfilled, there is nothing further to delay the advent of the Saviour, and He will then return; it being in this sense that the drying up of the Euphrates makes way for the coming of the Kings of the East.

Thus it will be, that the sixth plague will bring about the end of Babylon so that she will rise no more forever.

Chapter 33

Jacob's Trouble

The whole story of the great time of trouble, which follows the close of probation and sees the coming of the plagues in their order, is the story of two parallel experiences; the experience of the wicked as they suffer the judgments of God, and the experience of the righteous as they go through the agony and the uncertainty of that terrible time. It is impossible to trace through the experiences of either party without reference to the other, and yet it is not possible to cover both of them fully at the same time. Thus, so far, the study has been concerned with the falling of the seven last plagues which do have some effect upon the experience of the righteous, but which are fully felt by the rejecters of the truth. Therefore the study of the seven last plagues is essentially a study of the events which shall befall the wicked.

However, during this time the righteous will not be mere spectators of the drama, but will be passing over some difficult and trying ground themselves. The fifth and sixth plagues mark the end of troublous times for the righteous, for thereafter, they will have been released from all struggle and agony to watch spellbound the final fate of their enemies. Before proceeding to the study of the seventh plague and the second advent of Christ, it would be well to go back to the close of probation and trace through the experience of the people of God up till the beginning of the seventh plague.

Just as the close of human probation is the point of time when the seven last plagues shall begin to fall, so it will also be the time when Jacob's trouble will begin. This is made quite clear in the following quotation:

"Jacob's experience during that night of wrestling and anguish represents the trial through which the people of God must pass just before Christ's second coming. The prophet Jeremiah, in holy vision looking down to this time, said, 'We have heard a voice of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. . . . All faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that none is like it: it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it.' *Jeremiah* 30:5-7.

"When Christ shall cease His work as Mediator in man's behalf, then this time of trouble will begin." Patriarchs *and Prophets,* 201.

This will be the time for the flight of the people of God to the most solitary and desolate hiding places on the face of the earth. Before this time, they will, to a large extent, have withdrawn from society, for the *decree* enforcing the papal sabbath—which is the setting up of the Beast and his Image—will be the sign to leave the large cities in preparation for the final flight. This is made clear in the following statement:

"It is no time now for God's people to be fixing their affections or laying up their treasure in the world. The time is not far distant, when, like the early disciples, we shall be forced to seek a refuge in desolate and solitary places. As the siege of Jerusalem by the Roman armies was the signal for flight to the Judean Christians, so the assumption of power on the part of our nation in the *decree* enforcing the papal sabbath will be a warning to us. It will then be time to leave the large cities, preparatory to leaving the smaller ones for retired homes in secluded places among the mountains." *Testimonies* 5:464, 465.

The making of the image will be the indication of very troublous times ahead for the people of God, and they will completely abandon the large cities at that point of time. Of course, those who are well aware of the directions of the Lord will have sought country homes long before that, for the people of God should today be living out of the large cities altogether. Those who cannot immediately extricate themselves from their work and businesses should be planning, for their own sakes, to do this as soon as possible. Otherwise they will lose all, as did Lot in Sodom, and subject themselves to trials far in excess of that which they would have to bear in the country.

The wise instruction to escape from the cities is a general order from the Most High, designed by Him to prepare us for receiving and obeying the specific order which will not only tell us when and how we are to depart, but will direct us to the refuge prepared for us. See the Chapter titled "General and Specific Orders", in the book God's *Sabbath Rest,* available from Destiny Press.

It is to be expected, however, that there will be at least a number of city dwellers who will receive the message of the loud cry and will thus be called out, not only from Babylon the church, but also from Babylon the cities to join with those who will already have come out of both.

That coming out of the large cities will be but the first movement toward ultimate flight. As the death *decree* is imposed upon them so that the entire protection of human laws is removed from them, and they are abandoned to the executioners, then they will take their flight into the most remote and solitary places on the earth.

Of this flight it is written: "I saw the saints leaving the cities and

villages, and associating together in companies, and living in the most solitary places. Angels provided them food and water, while the wicked were suffering from hunger and thirst." *Early* Writings, 282.

This flight will not pass unnoticed by the enemies of God's people, who will by this time be keeping a very close watch over them. Because of the opposition which they have manifested to the Sunday decrees, and because of their absolute refusal to enter into the keeping of Sunday, they are marked men and women upon whom the whole blame will be resting for all the troubles in the world.

The wicked, therefore, will be thirsting for revenge and ever watchful and suspicious that the righteous may be plotting some new scheme to further increase their suffering. So it will be, that:

"As the saints left the cities and villages, they were pursued by the wicked, who sought to slay them." *Early Writings,* 284.

The blood of the martyrs was seed from which sprang up an abundant harvest of precious souls and a strong and powerful Protestantism, but in the time of Jacob's trouble no such good fruits from the death of the righteous are any longer possible, for all who can be saved will be saved, and the harvest will be complete.

Furthermore, it would be entirely a victory to the devil if he could have power over the lives of the faithful in that time. Therefore, just as the three faithful Hebrew youth who refused to either eat the king's meat or bow before his image, were delivered from death, so the true and the faithful will not be permitted to fall under the enemy's power at this time.

"I was pointed back to faithful Noah. When the rain descended and the flood came, Noah and his family had entered the ark, and God had shut them in. Noah had faithfully warned the inhabitants of the antediluvian world, while they had mocked and derided him. And as the waters descended upon the earth, and one after another were drowning, they beheld that ark, of which they had made so much sport, riding safely upon the waters, preserving the faithful Noah and his family. So I saw that the people of God, who had faithfully warned the world of His coming wrath, would be delivered. God would not suffer the wicked to destroy those who were expecting translation and who would not bow to the decree of the beast or receive his mark. I saw that if the wicked were permitted to slay the saints, Satan and all his evil host, and all who hate God, would be gratified. And oh, what a triumph it would be for his satanic majesty to have power, in the last closing struggle, over those who had so long waited to behold Him whom they loved! Those who have mocked at the idea of the saint's going up will witness the care of God for His people and behold their glorious deliverance." *Early Writings,* 284.

So it will be, that as the saints leave the cities and villages to find their hiding places in the most desolate places of the earth, and as the wicked rush after them to cut off their escape and destroy them then and there, even before the time of the death *decree,* the angels will intervene to protect them from this fate. Of this it is written:

"But the swords that were raised to kill God's people broke and fell as powerless as a straw. Angels of God shielded the saints. As they cried day and night for deliverance, their cry came up before the Lord." *Early Writings,* 284, 285.

This experience of deliverance from the wicked is one which occurs before the deliverance when the fifth plague of darkness falls, for here we see that the people of God continue their agonizing cries for deliverance after the wicked fail to destroy them, whereas their final deliverance from the last attempt of the wicked to destroy them, is followed by that great shout of victory and thankfulness. It would appear that when the first attempts to destroy the fleeing saints are prevented by supernatural power, the wicked, ascribing, as they will, this power to the power of the devil, whose servants they are quite convinced the saints are, will determine to plan more thoroughly and securely the death of the saints. For this reason a certain night will be chosen, so that they will determine to strike in one night that decisive blow by which the voice of reproof will be forever silenced. They plan by sheer weight of numbers to overpower the people of God, despite the great and mighty power which has been working on their behalf. No greater mistake could they make, as they will learn to their endless sorrow.

The fact that the wicked do seek to destroy the saints before the official time for it, is further established in this statement:

"In some places, before the time for the *decree* to be executed, the wicked rushed upon the saints to slay them; but angels in the form of men of war fought for them. Satan wished to have the privilege of destroying the saints of the Most High; but Jesus bade His angels watch over them. God would be honored by making a covenant with those who had kept His law, in the sight of the heathen round about them; and Jesus would be honored by translating, without their seeing death, the faithful, waiting ones who had so longed expected Him." *Early Writings,* 283.

It is during this time, from the close of probation right through until the voice of God delivers them from the power of the enemy forever, that the believers pass through the time prophetically described as the time of Jacob's trouble. This is the antitype of Jacob's experience when he returned to his own country after the long exile in a strange land.

Just so, the people of God will be returning to their own land, the

land of the heavenly Canaan, when they will pass through the same experience. In fact, just as they will be on the very borders of that heavenly land, so it was that Jacob had reached the borders of the earthly land of Canaan.

But Jacob was not allowed to enter the land of his fathers without the fearful threat of total destruction at the hand of his twin brother. This was the brother who had been born with identical opportunities as himself, and with him should have possessed the fullness of a true connection with God and have inherited the spiritual birthright. But Esau had sold it for the things of the flesh and, thus, had lost it forever. He had chosen the transitory things of this world instead, and now, with the prospect of the return of Jacob, he was fearful that even this was to be taken from him. Therefore in order to preserve that which to him was of prime value, he determined to slay his brother.

So it will be, that in these last days the wicked will be those who had the same opportunities to enjoy the spiritual blessings as had the true people of God, but they will have chosen to cherish the things of this world as being of the first value. In the time of trouble they will see these things passing away from them in drought, disaster, and pestilence, and they will be as convinced as Esau was, that it is the righteous who are depriving them of all their earthly possessions. So, they will determine to destroy the saints, just as Esau determined to destroy Jacob.

It is worthy of quite serious thought to realize that Esau had considerable justification for his attitude, even though it was still, strictly speaking, unjust for him to feel the way in which he did. But he could not forget the deception practiced upon him by his brother when he went in before their father and deceived him into thinking that he was Esau, when he was in fact Jacob. Thus Jacob had secured the blessing for himself which Esau desired to have. Jacob had desired the spiritual blessing, but Esau only desired the material blessing that he might prosper and be wealthy and influential. It was really unjust for Esau to feel revengeful after this, for he had deliberately and wantonly sold the birthright to Jacob, and, therefore, no longer had any just claim to it, but this did not justify Jacob in practicing deception on his father in order to get in ahead of his brother. This gave ample occasion to Esau, who, sinful man as he was, did not even stop to consider the rightness or the wrongness of his cause, but only that Jacob's behavior had given him excuse to gain the revenge which he sought. He was motivated only from the question of his own personal interest and gain. Nothing else concerned him.

As Jacob approached the land of Canaan, under the leadership and guidance of the Lord, he heard the news that Esau was ap-



In the birthright which was inherited by the eldest son in the family when Jacob and Esau contended for their rights, were incorporated both the promise of spiritual blessing as well as material wealth. To Jacob, the spiritual blessings were those upon which he placed the greater value, while Esau fixed his affections on material wealth.

Today, there are those in the vast majority whose entire interest and effort are concentrated on acquiring material wealth. So successful has this generation been in this quest that we live in an era of unparalleled prosperity and financial power.

But there are still many Jacob's who see only one prize worthy of their pursuit—the spiritual and the heavenly. Of such is the kingdom of heaven.

preaching at the head of a band of armed men with the intention of slaughtering his whole company. Jacob could well have met this danger without fear, but for the consciousness that his own sin had brought this threatened disaster upon his head. This filled him with the unspeakable dread that because of his sin, he could not possibly escape his impending fate. He had no army to defend him, carried no weapons of his own, and, therefore, to all earthly appearances, he was doomed. This did not worry him so much, so far as his own person was concerned, but he was terribly burdened for the honor of God's name and the future of God's cause. He understood that the righteous Seed by which all men should be saved was to come down

through the royal line of Judah, his son, and should he be destroyed, then the whole plan and promise of God would come to nothing, and all would be lost. God had spoken, and declared that the righteous seed should come and that He would come as the Son of Abraham. The power of God is in that word, and the devil has labored right down the stream of time to make that Word of none effect. If Satan could cut off the sons of Abraham so that the promise could not be fulfilled through them, then he would have proved that he had power to break the Word of God, and this would have been but to assure to him the whole victory in the contest.

For Jacob to *realize* that his own sin had brought about this threat to the whole plan of God was that which filled him with the greatest soul agony. This fact is clearly stated as follows:

"On reaching the borders of the land, he was filled with terror by the tidings of Esau's approach at the head of a band of warriors, doubtless bent upon revenge. Jacob's company, unarmed and defenseless, seemed about to fall helpless victims of violence and slaughter. And to the burden of anxiety and fear was added the crushing weight of self-reproach, for it was his own sin that had brought this danger." *Great Controversy,* 616.

There is but one place to which he could now turn, and it was to the pardoning love of his great Redeemer.

"His only hope was in the mercy of God; his only defence must be prayer. Yet he leaves nothing undone on his own part to atone for the wrong to his brother and to avert the threatened danger. So should the followers of Christ, as they approach the time of trouble, make every exertion to place themselves in a proper light before the people, to disarm prejudice, and to avert the danger which threatens liberty of conscience." *Great Controversy,* 616.

Little do we *realize* today how things, which may seem even innocent in themselves, will be taken up in those days and used as an occasion against us. If innocent enough matters will be thus used, then how much more those things which have been mistakes and sins. It will be with an intensity never reached before that the devil will appear at this time as "The accuser of our brethren." *Revelation* 12:10.

Through the agency of his servants upon the earth, whom he will endow with marvelously sharp memories, he will recall all the sins and mistakes of the people of God and heap these upon them to cause them to despair that the Lord could ever deliver them. This grim experience begins with the judgment of the living. It does not stop there, but carries right on through into the time of Jacob's trouble. Then, as it was with Jacob, so with them it will be that "their only hope is in the mercy of God; their only defense will be prayer.

As Joshua was pleading before the Angel, so the remnant church, with brokenness of heart and earnest faith, will plead for pardon and deliverance through Jesus their Advocate. They are fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they see their weakness and unworthiness, and as they look upon themselves they are ready to despair. The tempter stands by to accuse them, as he stood by to resist Joshua. He points to their filthy garments, their defective characters. He presents their weakness and folly, their sins of ingratitude, their unlikeness to Christ, which has dishonored their Redeemer. He endeavors to affright the soul with the thought that their case is hopeless, that the stain of their defilement will never be washed away. He hopes to so destroy their faith that they will yield to his temptations, turn from their allegiance to God, and receive the mark of the beast.

"Satan urges before God his accusations against them, declaring that they have by their sins forfeited divine protection, and claiming the right to destroy them as transgressors. He pronounces them just as deserving as himself of exclusion from the favor of God. 'Are these,' he says, 'the people who are to take my place in heaven and the place of the angels who united with me? While they profess to obey the law of God, have they kept its precepts? Have they not been lovers of self more than of God? Have they not placed their own interests above His service? Have they not loved the things of the world? Look at the sins which have marked their lives. Behold their selfishness, their malice, their hatred toward one another.' '' *Testimonies* 5:473, 474.

This will be indeed a terrible time for the people of God, as Satan thus casts all the sins of their past lives before them. This will provide added fuel to the fury of the heathen against them, providing them with what they will regard as more than ample justification to destroy them.

May the people of God today learn what this means and stretch every effort to remove every occasion which can be used against God in those last days. Let us put away every disposition to tell, outside the church of the Lord, the troubles which the devil stirs within it because of the frail humanity with which we are still cursed and the lack of faith to conquer it. Every such story will be eagerly listened to, stored away in memory's hall, matured to an evil fullness, and brought out again in the last days in a form which will both *amaze* and horrify us. Then how much we would give to have never betrayed the church of God today.

There has been a tendency among the Advent people to become very sharp in business, to see to it that we always get the best end of a bargain, paying the least possible price for what we buy, and selling

at the best possible price. This leads us to consider ourselves as being good business men, and there is no question but that the Lord expects us to buy and sell wisely. But there is a difference between this and being a hard bargainer. How often the professed people of the Lord come away from a transaction feeling very pleased with themselves over the deal they have made, but little realizing that the men of the world with whom they have dealt have marked them as men to be watched and guarded against. There is nothing the world despises more than a professed Christian who is sharp and exacting in business. All our business dealings should ever be marked with modest, Christian courtesy, wherein we are prepared to pay fair value for the thing which is offered to us, and not fight to get the very last possible concession out of the other man. We may feel that we have done very well today, but our thoughts will be very different in the day when these things come back on our heads again.

Let us learn to treat all the business people, our neighbors, and the people we come in contact with but once in our lifetimes with that Christian courtesy and love which will recommend the people of God and the truth of God to them, and which will store up for the people of God a credit of good works against the last days. We will thus escape much suffering then, but what is most important, we shall thus avoid giving occasion for the enemies of the truth to rail against the God whom we represent. Let us never have the attitude toward anyone that they are there to serve us, that they owe us something or the like. Let us make it plain by our attitude that we appreciate the burdens and problems of their work, and we would do all in our power to lighten those burdens if we could. Let us learn to genuinely feel that whatever we ask them to do for us in the course of business is not an obligation which they owe us and had better give us, but rather that they are doing us a fine favor. If we unaffectedly feel and act this way, they will detect it and be influenced to think favorably of the God we represent.

Such are among the preparations needed for the coming day. "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven." *Matthew* 5:16.

Chapter 34

A Sinless People

In the time for the closing of probation, the righteous will be "fully conscious of the sinfulness of their lives, they" will "see their weakness and unworthiness; and they" will be "ready to despair." *Prophets and Kings,* 588.

That will be serious enough, but what is still worse will be the consciousness that the wicked will also know the worst there will be to know about them, and will use this knowledge to justify their bid to exterminate the righteous from the face of the earth, and thus gain the victory for the devil in his long standing controversy against Christ. This will be a trial to the righteous of considerable proportions, but it will not be the only burden which they will have to bear during that period. They will also be living with the fear that they themselves have not yet been cleansed of every sin which is in them.

It is important that we understand that by this time the saints will in fact be a sinless people. They will have to be in order to pass through this time without a Mediator in the sanctuary. Once the Mediator pronounces that His work in the mediatorial office has been completed, the sanctuary will be forever closed against the receiving of any more sin of any kind whatsoever. Probationary time will have ended when the time of Jacob's trouble begins.

This tells us that the sanctuary will have been cleansed of all the defilement which had been taken into it as a result of the confessions of God's people. Once the sanctuary in heaven has been cleansed, it will never be defiled again, not by so much as a spot, or a wrinkle, or any such thing.

Therefore any sin in anyone after the close of probation must remain within him forever, for there is no place to send it. From that time forward, wherever he goes, the sin must also go. Inasmuch as that sin will then be forever inseparable from him, and inasmuch as no person with sin in him can ever go into heaven, then such a person cannot be numbered among the people of God, nor be assigned a place in heaven.

Anyone who is to be numbered as a child of God then, must be cleansed of all sin forever. God will have a pure people at this time, and as surely as He will, then just as surely will that people be a sin-

less people. At that time there will be no halfway mark, no place in between righteousness and iniquity. Either we will be holy or we will be unholy, righteous or unrighteous, clean or unclean. It will be at the close of human probation when Jesus ends His work as Mediator for the human race that He will stand up and say: "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still; he who is filthy, let him be filthy still; he who is righteous, let him be righteous still; he who is holy, let him be holy still.

"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work." *Revelation* 22:11,12.

Thus when probation closes there will be but the two classes of people; those who are righteous and those who are unclean and unholy. It is to be noted that this uncleanness is the actual, literal uncleanness of sin, while the righteousness is the actual state of being righteous. In neither case will it be a standing of uncleanness or of cleanness, but the actual state of it. No one will have the least difficulty in understanding that when Jesus will say of the unrighteous, let him be unrighteous still, that those words indicate that that person is in an actual state of unrighteousness in himself. That will be a description of his actual condition, not a description of something apart from him which will be reckoned against him. If those words mean that in regard to the unholy and the unclean, how can we place a different interpretation on the words: "he who is righteous, let him be righteous still." This cannot be done! As surely as the words "be unholy" mean what they say, then so surely do the words "be righteous", mean what they say.

The fact remains, that the people of God will be a people completely without sin during the time of Jacob's trouble and for that matter for the eternity of life, which will be theirs thereafter.

"Those who are living upon the earth when the intercession of Christ shall cease in the sanctuary above are to stand in the sight of a holy God without a mediator. Their robes must be spotless, their characters must be purified from sin by the blood of sprinkling. Through the grace of God and their own diligent effort they must be conquerors in the battle with evil." *Great Controversy,* 425.

These words are clear, yet there are those who hold the view that the people of God will not be cleansed from all sin until the day when Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven. Such a view is refuted, not only by the fact of the closing of the sanctuary at the close of human probation some time prior to the actual appearing of the Saviour in the clouds of heaven, but also by the plain words of the following statement:

"We are preparing to meet Him who, escorted by a retinue of holy angels, is to appear in the clouds of heaven to give the faithful

and the just the finishing touch of immortality. When He comes He is not to cleanse us of our sins, to remove from us the defects in our characters, or to cure us of the infirmities of our tempers and dispositions. If wrought for us at all, this work will all be accomplished before that time. When the Lord comes, those who are holy will be holy still. Those who have preserved their bodies and spirits in holiness, in sanctification and honor, will then receive the finishing touch of immortality. But those who are unjust, unsanctified, and filthy will remain so forever. No work will then be done for them to remove their defects and give them holy characters. The Refiner does not then sit to pursue His refining process and remove their sins and their corruption. This is all to be done in these hours of probation. It is *now* that this work is to be accomplished for us." *Testimonies* 2:355.

In no plainer words could it be shown that Jesus will not cleanse us from sin when He comes in the clouds of heaven. All such cleansing work must be done before that time. What is more, we are plainly told how long before that time this work will have to be accomplished. It will be during these hours of probation. This limits the time, then, in which this work can be done; that limitation being while probation lasts. This means that, if the work is not completed while probationary time lingers, then all opportunity for it to be completed will be forever past, and we will then have to perish in our sins.

Thus it is made very clear and plain that the righteous will have become truly and fully righteous and will have no sin in them, or on them, whatsoever during this period. But while this will be true in fact, it will not be known to them. Instead, they will be distressed by the terrible fear that there is still some hidden root of evil still within them during this time of fearful trouble.

If they could know that probation has ended, then they might resign themselves to whatever their fate might turn out to be, but they will not know that probation has closed; they will not know that their eternity is sealed to them, and, because they do expect that the end will come very soon, they will fear that it will come upon them while they are unprepared to stand sinless without a mediator through those final and trying scenes.

A truly sinless person is a truly selfless person. A selfless person is one whose concern is not for a moment in regard to himself and what will happen to him, but he is concerned only for the cause for which he is responsible, in part or in whole, as the case may be. The believers will be, therefore, a selfless people during the time of Jacob's trouble, so the fear and the trouble which they experience will

not be on any account of concern for themselves, but rather for the Lord with whose cause they are concerned.

All around them they will see the wickedness of the wicked, which will arouse within them the strongest possible desires to see the whole chapter of sin and rebellion brought to a close.

"On every hand they hear the plottings of treason and see the active working of rebellion; and there is aroused within them an intense desire, an earnest yearning of soul, that this great apostasy may be terminated and the wickedness of the wicked may come to an end." *Great Controversy,* 619.

But they will understand that this work of making of an end of sins and bringing in everlasting righteousness on this earth, cannot be accomplished unless it first will have been done in the lives of the children of the Lord. They know that the power of Satan in the world cannot be ended until it first be ended in them. By this fact they will understand that if there is still sin in them, then the Lord cannot close the work and bring evil to its end.

But, as was set out in Chapter 24 of this series, it will be a time when it will appear as if the whole of God's work has once again failed under the masterful attacks of Satan. It will appear that the loud cry has come to nought, just as every other revival in the past has done. This appearance of things will be so overwhelmingly convincing, that it will constitute a fearful trial to the saints of God at this time. They will know, even as we know already, that the work of God never fails because of any shortcoming on His part, but only because the people of God themselves have come short of the full provisions of His power and might. Therefore they will be persuaded that the whole failure of the battle, as it appears to be in their eyes and as Satan seeks to press this conviction upon them, is the direct result of their failure to put away every sin and uncleanness.

If it would be but their own lives and interests which will be at stake, this would be but a small thing in their eyes, but they will know that the issues are far more tremendous than that. They will know that the Lord is depending on their faithfully standing by Him in this crisis so that He can finish the work and make an end of the horror of sin forever. But they will feel that they have let the Lord and His cause down just when He needed them the most. It will be from this fear and this conviction that the real agony of the time of Jacob's trouble will arise just as it was with Jacob of old.

But while they search their hearts with the closest self-examination, they cannot bring to light any sinfulness in themselves—the simple reason being that they will not be able to find what is not there to be found. They cannot find sin where there is no sin to be found.

Some may wonder about this and suggest that when a person

reaches a state of sinlessness, surely he would know it. However, we have but to look back on our own experience in salvation from sin to see how this would not be so. When we first came to the Lord in the new birth experience, and He washed away the very nature of sin from us so that we became new creations in Christ Jesus, then search our hearts as we might, we could find no further sin there for the time then present. But as the days went by and the work of education and reformation went a little further along, then the Lord brought up to us things which we had never even thought about before and showed them to us. In turn, we put that away to enjoy, once again, freedom from the possession of conscious sin, only, in turn, to find later that there were other things still which needed to be seen and delivered over to the great Cleanser from all sin.

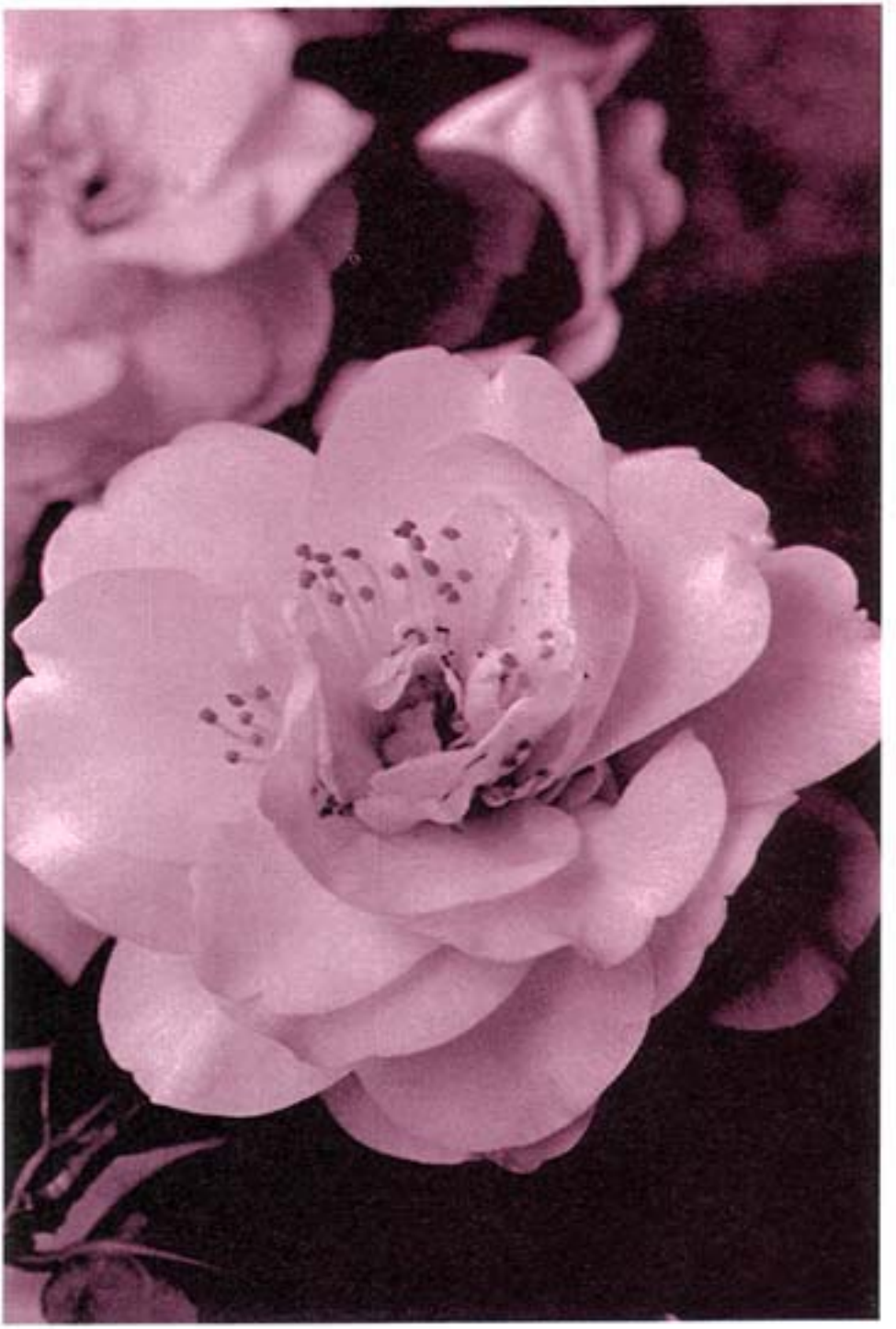
Each time could well have been the last so far as we could see, for it seemed that during every such exercise in heart-cleansing, we had reached and been cleansed of the last of our sins, only to find that there was another one ahead.

It reminds me of an experience I once had in climbing a tall mountain. From the base of the mountain, all we could see was the first lowly ridge, and it looked like the one and only one from where we stood. But, on conquering this first ridge, we found another confronting us, while the summit remained hidden from view. So, throughout the long day, it was a case of coming to many points lower than the actual summit, which we were led to believe was the last, only to find another before us.

So then, when we do actually come to the last cleansing, how are we going to distinguish this one from the previous experiences, which were always followed by the appearance of hitherto unrecognized and unsuspected faults? The simple answer is that we will not. When the last sin is removed, we will not know that the bottom of the barrel has been reached. This being so, it is easy to understand how it will be that during the time of Jacob's trouble we will still be searching our hearts to see if there is still something there which needs to be dealt with; something which is preventing the Lord from doing His final and finishing work in the world. We will not know until the voice of God announces the deliverance of His people right down under the sixth plague, that we are sealed for eternity and sinless in fact.

But if we were able to bring to light any unconfessed sins then, it would be impossible for us to stand in that hour.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The spotless purity, beauty, and perfection of this lovely flower is a fitting illustration of the spotless perfection of character in which the saints will be found during the period of Jacob's trouble.



"Had not Jacob previously repented of his sin in obtaining the birthright by fraud, God would not have heard his prayer and mercifully preserved his life. So, in the time of trouble, if the people of God had unconfessed sins to appear before them while tortured with fear and anguish, they would be overwhelmed; despair would cut off their faith, and they could not have confidence to plead with God for deliverance. But while they have a deep sense of their unworthiness, they have no concealed wrongs to reveal. Their sins have gone beforehand to judgment and have been blotted out, and they cannot bring them to remembrance." *Great Controversy,* 620.

Without studying further, some have concluded that this statement declares that the righteous will have suffered a complete loss of memory so far as the sins of their past lives are concerned. But the Bible meaning of the word "remembrance" goes somewhat *deeper* than that, and it is to be seen that one may have no sins to bring to "remembrance", and yet have a full memory of all the experiences of his past life. This underlines the fact that we must never interpret the words of the Bible according to our understanding of those words, but only in the sense in which the Bible uses them. There is nothing unusual or strange about this, as any traveler has learned. Words assume different meanings as you travel from land to land and from age to age.

To illustrate this point, let me relate the following experience which I had in Tennessee in 1967. We had been invited to present the message of living righteousness to a group of Sabbath observing people a few miles to the south of Chattanooga. After the presentation we suggested that they might like to join us for the Sabbath afternoon study which would be several days later. The lady of the house stated that so far as she was concerned she would be more than pleased to come, but she would have to check with her husband, and if he had no objections, they would be there for certain. She asked us to telephone her on Friday afternoon for her answer, after she had consulted her husband. The decision rested with him.

So it was that we called by telephone on Friday afternoon to receive this reply: "My husband does not care to come, so we will be there." English was her normal language and she knew no other, yet I would have been very confused by her reply if I had interpreted her words the way in which I would have used them. I would have said: "My husband does not care to come, so I am sorry to say we will not be there." For me to understand the message she intended to convey, I had to understand what she meant when she said those words, not what I would have meant had I used them. What she was really saying was that it was no care or burden for her husband to attend, so they would be there.

So in the Word of God, which was translated so long ago, and in the Spirit of Prophecy which speaks the same language as the Bible, we must ask the question, What does the Word of God mean when it uses certain expressions? To find the answer, we do not interpret the words according to our usage of such words, but in accordance with the way in which the Bible uses them. We will always find clear examples of this somewhere in the Word.

In respect to the meaning in Bible terms of the word "remembrance", we have but to go back to the word of God as recorded in *Deuteronomy* 25:17-19. "Remember what Amalek did to you on the way as you were coming out of Egypt,

"how he met you on the way and attacked your rear ranks, all the stragglers at your rear, when you were tired and weary; and he did not fear God.

"Therefore it shall be, when the Lord your God has given you rest from your enemies all around, in the land which the Lord your God is giving you to possess as an inheritance, that you will blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. You shall not forget it."

The judgment was to be deferred for close to four centuries until they had settled in the promised land, but they were never to forget to "blot out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven."

"For four hundred years the execution of this sentence had been deferred; but the Amalekites had not turned from their sins. The Lord knew that this wicked people would, if it were possible, blot out His people and His worship from the earth. Now the time had come for the sentence, so long delayed, to be executed." Patriarchs *and Prophets,* 627.

Israel did not forget this instruction. They did utterly and completely blot out that foul''remembrance".

At first glance this usage of the word "remembrance" would seem to be as contradictory as the statement by the lady in Tennessee, but only because we have our own definition for the word "remembrance", which differs from the usage of the word in the Bible. To understand the text, we have to understand what the Word of God says when it uses that expression, not what we would mean if we would us it.

It must be clear that there is a difference in the mind of God, between "memory" or "recollection", and "remembrance". The whole record of Amalek's sin is right here in the Word of God, which in turn will be in heaven during the thousand years as a source book in the judgment of the wicked. If the blotting out of the "remembrance" of the sin of Amalek involved the destruction of the very memory of their sin, then why did not God instruct them to erase

from the sacred writings the chapters which tell of their sin? It is because there is a difference between the two.

Today, every "remembrance" of the Amalekites has been erased from the face of the earth. King Saul was commissioned to destroy them, as recorded in *1 Samuel* 15. However, while he destroyed all whom he could capture, except for the king and the cattle, there must have been some who escaped from him, for it was the Amalekites who later burned Ziklag while David was away. He pursued after them and destroyed all but five hundred men who escaped on camels. See *1 Samuel* 30. The last we read of them in the Bible is when certain Simeonites "defeated the rest of the Amalekites who had escaped." *1 Chronicles* 4:43.

Thus was fulfilled the command of God to blot out the "remembrance" of the Amalekites. Today, every trace of that people has vanished from the face of the earth. Nothing is left of their writings, their culture, their buildings, or anything else which is a "remembrance" of that people. It is all gone, even though the historical accounts of their existence and deeds remain. In other words, it is impossible to find anywhere in the world any "remembrance" of that people—any tangible, material thing which would be a "remembrance" of their being on the earth. All that is left is the written record of their being what they were, and of what they did to the people of God back there.

Likewise, the people of God will not be concerned during the time of trouble with the sins which they can remember having committed throughout their past lives. These they know have been safely taken care of by being sent on beforehand into the sanctuary for the judgment. That which they will be concerned about will be any sin which is still in them, which has not been sent on to the sanctuary. To find if this is true, they search to see if there is any residue of the evil habits, theories, and ideas remaining—anything which in itself is the "remembrance" of the thing itself, just as a ruined building, a writing on clay tablets, or some relic of the Amalekites would be a "remembrance" of their existence. But search as they might, they cannot find any living presence of sin in them. It has all been taken away. Every "remembrance" is gone, just as every "remembrance" of the Amalekites has been cleansed out of the earth by the living power of God through His people. The very purpose of the recording of the experience of Israel with the Amalekites is to provide us with an illustration in the Old Testament of the way we are to understand the experience of God's people when they cannot bring their sins to "remembrance".

For a more detailed study on the differences between the "memory" of sin and the "remembrance" of it, see God's *Way in the*

Sanctuary, the chapter entitled, "The Blotting Out of Sins", by F. T. Wright.

Thus the period of Jacob's trouble will be the period of the final contest between truth and error; between righteousness and unrighteousness. For his part the devil will be doing his uttermost to break the faith of God's people in the cause of God so that he can have them also on his side. If he could do this, then he would prevent his final exposure before the eyes of men, thus preventing the fulfillment of the purpose of the long standing controversy, which purpose, as we have seen, is to bring things to that place where Satan is fully and truly seen by both men and angels to be what he is. Only a people who under the utmost pressure can maintain the fullness of righteousness at its best, can expose sin at its very worst and thus remove all support from Satan.

It is essential, then, that during this period the believers live by faith and by faith alone. Never will there be a time when the people of God will have been so fully deprived of any witness of sight or circumstances in favor of their faith, or found piled against them such a formidable mountain of sight and circumstances calculated to deny their faith. Every appearance within them and around them will testify that the Lord's cause is a failure, and that only defeat and destruction await them if they stay faithful to God. Under the fearful pressure of that hour, that alone which will bring them through, will be the fact that through the gospel they will have lost all self-interest, and will be interested only in the cause and the work of God. If this were not so, then they could never stand in that time, for self-interest would cause them to abandon God in order to save their own lives.

In the light of this, we can understand why it is that the Lord will not reveal the time when the close of probation has taken place. If He did, then the people of God would not need to live by faith but by sight. They would know that the fate of each one of them was unalterably sealed and that it would be pointless to search their hearts or give any ear to Satan's arguments and pressures.

It is for this reason that we must learn to live by faith today and become very strong in this experience. When the time comes for us to live by faith in the absolute sense of the word, then it will be too late to develop the kind of faith which alone will see us through.

"The season of distress and anguish before us will require a faith that can endure weariness, delay, and hunger—a faith that will not faint though severely tried. The period of probation is granted to all to prepare for that time. Jacob prevailed because he was persevering and determined. His victory is an evidence of the power of importunate prayer. All who will lay hold of God's promises, as he did, and be as earnest and persevering as he was, will succeed as he sue-

ceeded. Those who are unwilling to deny self, to agonize before God, to pray long and earnestly for His blessing, will not obtain it. Wrestling with God—how few know what it is! How few have ever had their souls drawn out after God with intensity of desire until every power is on the stretch. When waves of despair which no language can express sweep over the suppliant, how few cling with unyielding faith to the promises of God.

"Those who exercise but little faith now, are in the greatest danger of falling under the power of satanic delusions and the *decree to* compel the conscience. And even if they endure the test, they will be plunged into deeper distress and anguish in the time of trouble, because they have never made it a habit to trust in God. The lessons of faith which they have neglected, they will be forced to learn under a terrible pressure of discouragement.

"We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises. Angels record every prayer that is earnest and sincere. We should rather dispense with selfish gratifications than neglect communion with God. The deepest poverty, the greatest self-denial, with His approval, is better than riches, honors, ease, and friendship without it. We must take time to pray. If we allow our minds to be absorbed by worldly interests, the Lord may give us time by removing from us our idols of gold, of houses, or of fertile lands.

"The young would not be seduced into sin if they would refuse to enter any path save that upon which they could ask God's blessing. If the messengers who bear the last solemn warning to the world would pray for the blessing of God, not in a cold, listless, lazy manner, but fervently and in faith, as did Jacob, they would find many places where they could say: 'I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved.' Genesis 32:30. They would be accounted of heaven as princes, having power to prevail with God and with men.

"The 'time of trouble, such as never was,' is soon to open upon us; and we shall need an experience which we do not now possess and which many are too indolent to obtain. It is often the case that trouble is greater in anticipation than in reality; but this is not true of the crisis before us. The most vivid presentation cannot reach the magnitude of the ordeal. In that time of trial, every soul must stand for himself before God. 'Though Noah, Daniel, and Job' were in the land, 'as I live, saith the Lord God, they shall deliver neither son nor daughter; they shall but deliver their own souls by their righteousness.' *Ezekiel* 14:20." *Great Controversy,* 621-623.

Chapter 35

Cleansing from Earthliness

In the previous chapter considerable emphasis was laid on the fact that the people of God will have been cleansed from all sin prior to the beginning of Jacob's trouble, so that they will be a sinless and a selfless people during that period of time. It has been shown that, inasmuch as the way for the removing of sin from the actual life of any individual will be closed forever before the time of Jacob's trouble begins, then it is of necessity that all sin must be removed from them before this period commences.

One may well ask then, how it is that the following words are written in regard to the experience of the righteous during that self-same period of which it has been testified that they no longer and, in fact, can no longer have any sin in them at all.

"Jacob's history is also an assurance that God will not cast off those who have been deceived and tempted and betrayed into sin, but who have returned unto Him with true repentance. While Satan seeks to destroy this class, God will send His angels to comfort and protect them in the time of peril. The assaults of Satan are fierce and determined, his delusions are terrible; but the Lord's eye is upon His people, and His ear listens to their cries. Their affliction is great, the flames of the furnace seem about to consume them; but the Refiner will bring them forth as gold tried in the fire. God's love for His children during the period of their severest trial is as strong and tender as in the days of their sunniest prosperity; but it is needful for them to be placed in the furnace of fire; their earthliness must be consumed, that the image of Christ may be perfectly reflected." *Great Controversy,* 621.

Here is a picture which speaks of a refining and cleansing process which will consume their earthliness until the image of Jesus is perfectly reflected. What is more, this is to take place after the close of probation, during the period of Jacob's trouble.

This certainly appears to contradict the truth that all sinfulness must be cleansed from the righteous before the time of Jacob's

trouble begins. When confronted with a seeming contradiction such as this one, the natural human tendency is to choose which of the two statements is more appealing, while ignoring the other completely, or by forcing the meaning of them. This is not the approach of the true Christian who willingly accepts both statements as valid truth, trusts the Lord to remove the seeming contradictions, and patiently waits for Him to do so. Such a procedure will never bring disappointment.

The facts are that in the cases of those who shall pass alive through Jacob's trouble, absolute sinless perfection must firstly be attained, but their earthliness will not be cleansed away until the end of Jacob's trouble.

Those who hold the view that we cannot be sinless until the second advent of Christ, when the Lord shall change these vile bodies into the likeness of His glorious body so that incorruption will take the place of corruption and immortality the place of mortality, take the word earthliness to mean sinfulness. However, to do this is to admit that there is a contradiction in the Scriptures, but this there can never be, for there is only the most perfect consistency in the written, as well as the spoken Word of God. God never contradicts Himself, for the moment that He does, then He would make Himself to be a liar. That is to say, if He spoke what was truth in one place, and elsewhere spoke that which was a contradiction of that truth, then the second statement could not also be the truth. It would have to be a denial of the truth, and this is a lie. Therefore, there can be no real contradictions in the Scriptures, even though many may seem to be present in the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy. Even then they only appear to be contradictions, because we have not learned to see and understand the Word of God correctly.

Thus it is, that we have before us clear statements which show that all sinfulness must be removed from the people of God before the close of probation, so that they, even when under the greatest pressure of discouragement and trial designed to *reveal* the slightest imperfection, shortcoming, or weakness, cannot even find the least existence of any remembrance of sin in them.

On the other hand, we have this statement which speaks of a refining and purifying process designed to completely consume all our earthliness, so that the image of Jesus might be fully and perfectly revealed. It is our task by diligent, prayerful, thoughtful study to come to the place where we understand just what earthliness is, and why it is not fully removed before the close of probation, even though all the sinfulness of the character is.

To assist us in this understanding, we turn to the following state-

ment from *The Review and Herald,* August 12, 1884, (also in Our *High Calling,* 321).

"The time of trouble is the crucible that is to bring out Christlike characters. It is designed to lead the people of God to renounce Satan and his temptations. The last conflict will reveal Satan to them in his true character, that of a cruel tyrant, and it will do for them what nothing else could do, uproot him entirely from their affections. For to love and cherish sin, is to love and cherish its author, that deadly foe of Christ. When they excuse sin and cling to perversity of character, they give Satan a place in their affections, and pay him homage."

One must take care not to misinterpret the first sentence in this statement. It does not say that the time of trouble will give us Christ-like characters, but that it will bring out Christlike characters. It is the truth that affliction can only bring out what is already there. If we have an evil character, then the crucible of affliction will bring out the evil which is already in us, and develop it to a higher pitch of evil, but if we have a Christlike character already, then the crucible of affliction will bring that out into full and beautiful display and development. It is for this reason that Paul said,

"Knowing that tribulation worketh patience." *Romans* 5:3 *K.J.V.*

Everyone knows by experience that tribulation works impatience, because this is the truth in the lives of the unregenerate, and all of us have been in that state. But Paul is not here speaking of the unregenerate but of those who, "having been justified by faith . . . have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

"through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." Romans 5:1,2.

The real point and message of the statement quoted above is that during the time of Jacob's trouble, the people of God will so come to see Satan in his true light and character that they will forever renounce all affection and sympathy for him. It will bring about a condition of such hatred for his principles that a full and total separation from him will be effected.

Some may argue that this is equivalent to a further and final cleansing from sin, but there is a difference. The difference is revealed in the experience of the unfallen angels who were brought to the same place where their affections for Satan were finally uprooted by the demonstration of the fullness of righteousness upon the cross of Calvary. This truth is made plain in the following words which describe, first the way in which the evil one went to war upon Christ at the cross, and then goes on to show the result of this, so far as he and the loyal angels were concerned.

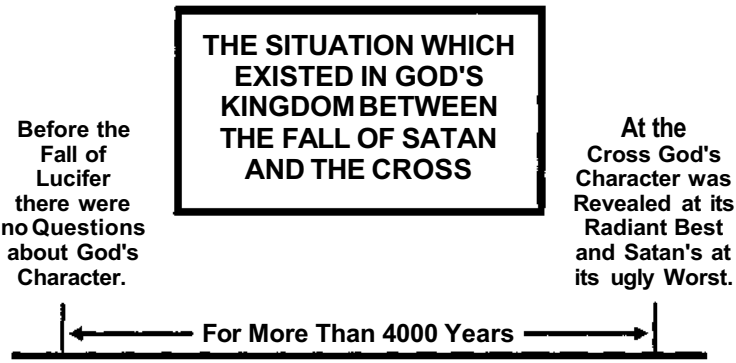
"Could one sin have been found in Christ, had He in one particular yielded to Satan to escape the terrible torture, the enemy of God and man would have triumphed. Christ bowed His head and died, but He held fast His faith and His submission to God. 'And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.' *Revelation* 12:10.

"Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had uprooted himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken." *Desire of Ages,* 761.

Now in this statement the word "sympathy" is used in regard to the connection still held between Satan, who was once Lucifer, the greatly beloved of the angels in heaven, and the loyal angels who had never fallen into actual sin. One may argue that there is a difference between sympathy and affection, and it is true that there is. However, this difference does not deny the fact that there was a lingering affection for Satan in the hearts of the loyal angels up until the time of Christ's death on the cross. This is made clear enough in this following statement:

"In this choice [that of the Jews and Romans in Christ's trial and crucifixionl the principles of Satan were made manifest; and the hosts of heaven, and all the worlds that God had created, judged that Satan was an accuser of the brethren, a liar, and a murderer. In heaven and among the unfallen worlds the question of Satan's deceiving power, of his malignant principles, was settled, and the perfect purity and holiness of Christ, who was bearing the test and trial in behalf of fallen man, was forever proved. Through the development of Satan's character and principles, he was forever uprooted from the affection of the unfallen worlds, and the controversy concerning his claims and the claims of Christ was forever settled in heaven. The righteousness manifested in the character of Christ was forever to be the anchor, the saving hope, of the world. Every soul who chooses Christ can say with faith, 'The Lord my righteousness.' " *Selected Messages* 1:348.

These statements, then, establish the fact that until the crucifixion, the loyal angels were still loyal to God, but not without reserva-



The rebellious angels were deceived by Satan to whom they gave their unreserved allegiance.

The loyal two-thirds were not able to answer the charges against God's government yet still served God despite these questions. They did so by living faith for more than 4000 years.

During that period, Satan, though shut out of heaven, awaited the loyal angels as they left the heavenly courts, to taunt them with questions they could not answer. Consequently, they served God with reservations. They could not give God totally unreserved and loyal service. This did not make them to be sinful.

But at the cross every question of truth and error was forever answered for the loyal angels.

But men have not yet seen all that the angels have seen. The time must come when they too must be delivered from all sympathy with Satan's lies by their seeing all that the angels saw at Calvary.

Then the End will come.

tions. They still possessed a degree of affection for Satan, and a certain level of sympathy still existed between him and them. This was because, in the first case, they had had a very deep love for him and a rich and wonderful fellowship with him, which gave considerable weight to his arguments in respect to the faults which he claimed to have found in the government of God. Those arguments were so convincingly and cunningly presented that they could not be lightly dismissed and passed over, all of which bound the angels in a degree of sympathy and affection to the arch deceiver right down through those four thousand years of time.

The point is, though, that the fact that they did have this sympathy and affection for the devil himself did not make them sinners, nor did it fill them with that sinfulness which would have required their expulsion from heaven. Though they had reservations about God, they remained loyal to Him; being prepared to trust Him to work things out to the place where they could see for themselves that that which He had declared to be so was actually so. While they had both sympathy with and affection for the arch deceiver, in no sense of the word had they gone over to his side to join him in his work of rebellion against God. Therefore they had not become sinful. Yet, while they did not need to be cleansed from sinfulness, they did need to be cleansed or freed from this affection and sympathy before the kingdom of God could be established in absolute and eternal security. That this might be achieved, the controversy was permitted to go on until this objective should be reached. For the angels and the inhabitants of the unfallen worlds, it was largely reached when righteousness gave its fullest and most powerful demonstration on the cross of Calvary.

That which had to be done for the pure and the perfect angels must also be done for men, both for those who have joined Satan in his rebellion against the government of God and for those who have broken with him and have joined God in His warfare against sin. For the vast majority of mankind this will be done at the end of the thousand years, when they are given a full and complete view of the great controversy from its very inception, but in order for that picture, then, to really tell the story, there has to be a time when the issues on each side are fully developed during the period of the great controversy itself. This is to say, that things must come to that point where no question is left while men are still living upon the earth; so that both the righteous and the wicked will see things as the angels saw them—that Satan and his ways are no good at all.

There will be a difference, though, between the way in which the wicked will see this and the way in which the righteous will view it. For the wicked, the regret over the loss and the anger projected

toward the one who has caused them the ruin will not be because they hate the sin, but only because they do not want to suffer its consequences.

On the other hand, the righteous will hate the sin itself, and will want nothing at all to do with it forever. They will be totally and eternally cured from it by this final experience, when they will be forever deprived of all affection and sympathy for Satan and his ways.

Today we may think that we have no sympathy with or affection for Satan. We may think that we are wholly on the Lord's side, but this is only because we do not yet understand that every time we follow out a principle in our dealings with others which in the least degree sets self and self interest first, then, to that very *degree,* are we showing affection for and sympathy with Satan. Let us never forget that we were born of our father the devil, as well as of our flesh and blood human parents. Satan is the husband of the human race, and we have produced much in connection with him. Therefore, just as there was a deep bond of union and fellowship formed between Satan and the angels before he fell, so there is a deep bond of fellowship between Satan and the human family today. Even though we have been born again, and come into the family of God, much of that affection remains and must be taken away. But this is only partially achieved in the lives of those who have gone down into the grave, and are scheduled to rise in the resurrection of the just.

Even so, in order that heaven may be eternally secure, every one who shall reside therein must be totally cleansed from both sinfulness and earthliness, even though every such person had gone down into his grave without this work being completely done in and for him. The question is: "How will these acquire the same total deliverance from sinfulness and earthliness as those who will learn it firsthand under fearful pressure?"

First of all, there was a sanctuary service designed to take care of sins of ignorance so that, if a person died with an unknown sin in his life, he could still come up in the resurrection of the just. For further study on this point, see the chapter, "The Atonement for Sins of Ignorance", in the book God's *Way in the Sanctuary,* by F. T. Wright.

However, while those faithful ones who died with sins of ignorance, can still be cleansed and taken to heaven, they still need to see the real nature of those sins to the point where they totally and permanently abhor those sins, so much so that they will never be in danger of committing them again. To accomplish this God will keep a faithful and complete record of the achievements of those who will be cleansed from all sinfulness before probation closes, and from earthliness after it closes. This will be available for study by all the angels, and by the righteous of all ages. What they will thus learn will

reveal God's glorious character at its radiant best, while exposing Satan's evil character at its ugly worst. From this, they will unconditionally lose all sympathy with the devil, and will withdraw all support from him. Just as the angels could be in a sinless state and yet be cleansed from all sympathy with Satan when Jesus was crucified, so the righteous who are resurrected will, in their sinless state in heaven, be cleansed from all sympathy with Satan.

Seeing that the earthliness must be removed from an already sinless people, we are led to understand that more than righteousness is necessary in God's people before the end can come. The angels of God lived for four thousand years in righteousness before the time came when they lost all affection and sympathy for the devil. During that time they were able to see far more of the devil and his works than we can upon this earth; for so much that is hidden to us is open to them. The righteous dead will likewise have become fully and eternally righteous before they see the true and real character of the devil and thus lose all affection for him, for it will not be until after their resurrection unto eternal life that this will be achieved for them.

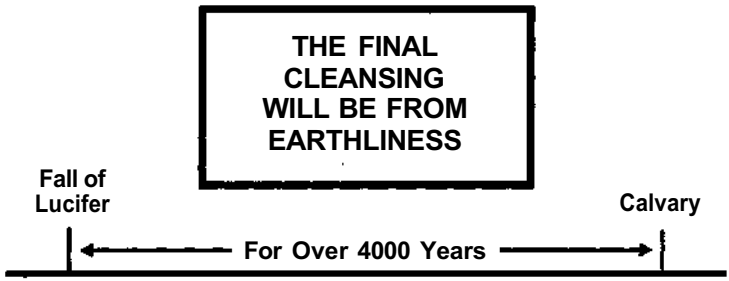
This, then, would indicate to us that no man, while he still has any sinfulness in him, can possibly be fully and completely divorced from the devil to the point where any sympathy or affection is forever taken away. These facts are in perfect harmony with the experience of the righteous during the period of Jacob's trouble. They will enter that period a perfected and wholly righteous people in whom there will be no sin whatsoever. It will all have been cleansed away during the hours of probation, so that, search their hearts as they will, they will find nothing of any remembrance of sin in them at all during that period. Thus they will be as pure and holy as the angels, but, like the angels before the cross, will still need to be cleansed from all sympathy with, and affection for the devil. This is the work which must be done for them through the time of Jacob's trouble. This is the removing of their earthliness, not their sinfulness.

The question now is: "What is earthliness?"

It is probably easier to say what it is not, in the light of the foregoing facts, which reveal that it is not sinfulness and cannot be; for the righteous will be a sinless people, even though still needing to be cleansed of earthliness.

If earthliness is not sinfulness, then what is it? In the light of that which we have been studying in the foregoing paragraphs, it is evident that there must be some connection between earthliness and affection for and sympathy with Satan. We know that he is the prince of this earth, and we also know that:

"In all ages, temptations appealing to the physical nature have



The loyal angels still retained a measure of sympathy with Satan's claims and propositions.

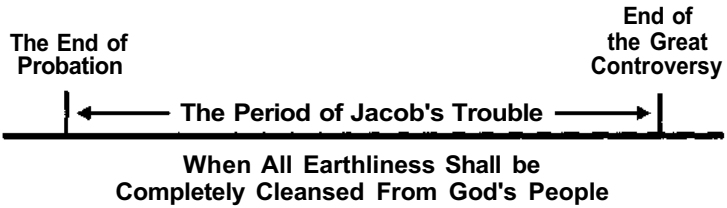
This led them to consider that there might be some light in the ministry of self-service, which is earthliness.

But, on the cross, Jesus demonstrated that only in selfless service is eternal life to be found.

This demonstration was so effective that the angels were then fully and finally delivered from Satan's sophistries.

However, mankind was not delivered then but will be by the cleansing from earthliness during Jacob's Trouble.

Then the last link of sympathy between the saints and Satan will be forever broken.



When All Earthliness Shall be Completely Cleansed From God's People

been most effectual in corrupting and degrading mankind." *Desire of Ages,* 122.

Built into the human nature—which is the earthly nature—is the powerful law of self-preservation as well as the possibilities of illicit and self-destroying pleasures, which are very attractive in varying degrees to the humanity of everyone of us. We depend upon the earth and its productivity to sustain the physical life, and when there is the threat of the removal of this, then there is a cold fear which grips the heart and creases the brow with the furrows of anxiety. Under such circumstances there is the tendency to take matters into our own hands and to adopt measures which are motivated by self-interest alone.

In our humanity we have a tendency to quickly forget that it is not the soil but the God of heaven who is the real sustainer and provider of all our needs—both physical and spiritual. We do not *realize* that any and every tendency to depend upon the physical environment for support is showing a sympathy for Satan and his ways, and a lack of trust and dependence upon the God of heaven. The law of self-preservation is not sinful in itself, nor is it actually sinful to have fear grip our hearts when the threat of loss faces us, (provided that that fear is not due to sinful unbelief but is only from our humanity) but it does become sinful when we let that fear decide what course we shall follow when the threat of loss faces us. The presence of the fear is but the pressure of temptation, and temptation is not sin. It only leads us into sin when we yield to the pressure, and do what the temptation is directing us to do.

The time is coming, however, when, during the time of Jacob's trouble, the people of God will have become so completely divorced from Satan and his earthliness that the law of self-preservation will have no pull upon them whatsoever anymore. Our only trust will be in God, and into His hands will our lives be so completely surrendered, that, come what may, it will be all the same to us, provided that His righteousness is forever established and sin and sinfulness brought to a complete and proper end.

Today we may think that our lives are completely surrendered to God, but let your mind dwell for a moment upon a picture, such as the receiving of notice that you have lost your job; a black ban has been placed upon your services; you are to be evicted from your home without compensation; or to be exiled off without a penny in your pocket to a poverty stricken, overcrowded country where they speak a foreign language. Let your mind dwell on this and then study your feelings. If your mind could really imagine this happening to you in reality, and then you found that it left you perfectly calm and rest-

ing in God, then you could believe that earthliness had been cleansed out of you, and you were ready for translation.

However, it will require an exceedingly tough training course to produce this quality of experience—a course available only to those who shall be alive upon the earth during Jacob's trouble. The latter rain must revive and strengthen them to face this gruelling pressure of temptation, the severest any believers will have ever faced apart from Christ's incredible agony in Gethsemane. Therefore, no person has yet been fully cleansed from earthliness, nor will be until the end of Jacob's trouble.

What a people they will be, who, while living upon this earth, come to this place where they have the fullness of the character of Christ within, and have become completely divorced from all sympathy with, and affection for the enemy of all souls. They will be the means whereby the Lord will be able to display the fullness of His righteousness to the place where even the wicked will see the real nature of Satan and his principles, and will leave him forever even though they will still retain their enmity against the Lord of heaven and earth. Then the purpose of the great controversy will have been achieved, and the Lord will be able at last to return and take His faithful children home to be with Him in eternity. Here are the one hundred and forty four thousand who will fulfill their special role of revealing in a special way the wonders of God's love and compassion throughout eternity. May the Lord give to the faithful of the present generation the privilege of being that company.

Chapter 36

The Seventh Plague

Thus far *we* have traced through the successive plagues as they have fallen one by one in their order. We saw that the first four will not be universal, but it is very clear that the last three will be. As we have traced through these events, we have seen the very decided difference between the experience through which the people of the Lord will be passing and the experience which will be the portion of the wicked.

While on the one hand the wicked will suffer the full weight of the plague which is present in their particular area, so far as the first four are concerned, they will at the same time be very sure that they are wholly on the right side, being, as they will be, fully deceived by Satan through the medium of Babylon the Great. Instead of reading in their sufferings the message that they are receiving punishment for their sins, they will blame all their troubles upon the righteous, whom they will be convinced are the full cause of the calamities in the earth. That which will help to convince them of this will be the fact that the righteous themselves will not be wholly free from suffering either. They will be suffering from hunger and thirst to some extent, and the great mental and spiritual agony through which they will be passing will be looked upon by the wicked as indicating a very troubled conscience on their part.

While on the one hand the wicked are so certain that they are right, the righteous are filled with the very real fear that they are what they are accused of being—the troublers of the people. This state of affairs will continue right up until the drying up of the great river Euphrates, when things will take a very different turn indeed. When the Lord shall turn the captivity of His people, the wicked will see that they themselves are eternally lost, and it is then that they will recognize that those whom they had thought to be the children of the devil are in fact, God's elect with the right to eternal life in Paradise above.

Then it will be that the words of *Revelation* 3:9 will be fulfilled.

"Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and know that I have loved you."

What a complete reversal of things this will be. From now on and with increasing intensity, right up until the time of the deliverance of the people of God from their enemies, those who claim to be the true people of God, but who, in fact, are on the side of the great apostate, will deride and accuse God's true people of being children of Satan and the cause of all their calamities because of their stubborn refusal to bow to the Sunday law.

These counterfeit religionists, empowered by the considerable authority of civil governments and the awesome might of spiritualism, will clothe themselves and their cause in a religious sanctity designed to bring back spiritual life and interest among the people. They will be able to make it appear that the people of God are indeed on the side of the enemy of all righteousness, and, as such, are under Heaven's curse.

But then will come the time when the very ones who have heaped all these accusations upon the people of God and who have sought so desperately to destroy them, will come and actually bow down and acknowledge before all that they have been mistaken and that the very ones whom they accused as being the enemies of God are, in fact, the only true children of God in the earth. Naturally, the ministry, who will have led out in the promotion of the Sunday law, will be the ones who will be foremost in their accusations against the people of God on the one hand, and in their claims to their own sanctity on the other.

Therefore they will be the ones in particular who will come and throw themselves at the feet of the saints and acknowledge how wrong they have been in their evil work of maligning the characters of the truly righteous. This will be a very terrible hour for them, darker than which one could not imagine, yet they will have no excuse, for the warning will have been sounding in the messages of the first, second, third, and fourth angels of the fearful consequences of setting up the beast and his image in these last days. God will have done all on His side and for His part which could ever be done to save them from this; if only they would accept that which the Lord has for them. Yet, in the face of that final warning, given in the fullness of the power of the latter rain, they will be determined to set up the image of the beast, and in doing this, they will reap the fearful consequences of their actions.

Today is their day in which it will appear as if they have all things their way. But the day of reckoning is coming when the situation shall be so dramatically and eternally reversed.

"I saw that the priests who are leading on their flock to death are soon to be arrested in their dreadful career. The plagues of God are coming, but it will not be sufficient for the false shepherds to be tormented with one or two of these plagues. God's hand at that time will be stretched out still in wrath and justice, and will not be brought to Himself again until His purposes are fully accomplished, and the hireling priests are led to worship at the feet of the saints, and to acknowledge that God has loved them because they held fast the truth and kept God's commandments, and until all the unrighteous ones are destroyed from the earth." *Early Writings,* 124.

So it will be, that the time will come when every man and woman and child upon the earth will know just where they stand. The wicked shall know that they are eternally and hopelessly lost with no chance ever to gain salvation. They will know that they have made the wrong choice and, worse still, have persecuted and sought to destroy the very ones who did make the right choice and who threw in their lot with the God of Heaven—the all-powerful One. So fully will this knowledge be known to each one, and so fully will each understand it, that none will see any further use in pretense or hypocrisy at all. Thus they will acknowledge it fully and openly to themselves and to all around.

As we have seen previously, the ministry will not only confess before the saints that they have done an evil work, but they will confess this even to the very ones whom they have deceived and led into the pathways of death and destruction.

"Ministers and people see that they have not sustained the right relation to God. They see that they have rebelled against the Author of all just and righteous law. The setting aside of the divine precepts gave rise to thousands of springs of evil, discord, hatred, iniquity, until the earth became one vast field of strife, one sink of corruption. This is the view that now appears to those who rejected truth and chose to cherish error. No language can express the longing which the disobedient and disloyal feel for that which they have lost forever—eternal life. Men whom the world has worshiped for their talents and eloquence now see these things in their true light. They realize what they have forfeited by transgression, and they fall at the feet of those whose fidelity they have despised and derided, and confess that God has loved them.

"The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their

work of deception. The multitudes are filled with fury. 'We are lost!' they cry, 'and you are the cause of our ruin;' and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed." *Great Controversy,* 655, 656.

The anger which will be generated at this point will be beyond the imagination. With uncontrolled fury, the masses fall upon those who have led them to this point of no return. It will be the horror story of all time.

"It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements. The Lord gave them His law; they might have compared their characters with it and learned their defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; but in order to secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. They have endeavored to compel God's people to profane His Sabbath. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse. They chose whom they would serve and worship. Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.' Malachi 3:18." *Great Controversy,* 639, 640.

As surely as the wicked will know that they are lost, just as surely the righteous will know at this point of time that they are eternally saved. They will know that they now cannot and will not be lost, but that they will soon enter into and enjoy the glories of the eternal home created anew for them. For the righteous, all suffering and anxiety will be ended. Their minds will now be at perfect rest in the knowledge that the battle has been fought and the victory won and that their cases are sealed forevermore. This will bring them joy unspeakable as they realize that the long dark night of sin is about to end and that the devil is at last brought to utter defeat.

Here are the prophetic words describing that moment when the message shall reach them that they are eternally secure:

"By the people of God a voice, clear and melodious, is heard, saying, 'Look up,' and lifting their eyes to the heavens, they behold the bow of promise. The black, angry clouds that covered the firmament are parted, and like Stephen they look up steadfastly into heaven and see the glory of God and the Son of man seated upon His throne. In His divine form they discern the marks of His humiliation; and from His lips they hear the request presented before His Father

and the holy angels: 'I will that they also, whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am.' *John* 17:24. Again a voice, musical and triumphant, is heard, saying: They come! they come! holy, harmless, and undefiled. They have kept the word of My patience; they shall walk among the angels;' and the pale, quivering lips of those who have held fast their faith utter a shout of victory.

"It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in its strength. Signs and wonders follow in quick succession. The wicked look with terror and amazement upon the scene, while the righteous behold with solemn joy the tokens of their deliverance. Everything in nature seems turned out of its course. The streams cease to flow. Dark, heavy clouds come up and clash against each other. In the midst of the angry heavens is one clear space of indescribable glory, whence comes the voice of God like the sound of many waters, saying: 'It is done.' *Revelation* 16:17." *Great Controversy,* 636.

But for the wicked, the knowledge that they are eternally lost brings no relief, no abatement to their sufferings, no cessation of the great time of trouble; so much of which they will have already endured. On the contrary, their very worst sufferings will at this time be coming upon them, for prior to this point they had the belief that they were right to buoy them up and the supposed assurance that they had but to destroy the saints in order to regain the favor of heaven and the return to temporal prosperity.

Now they will know that all such hopes were in vain and that they are facing a terrible and an eternal extinction without God and without hope in the world. They will know that they have forfeited heaven to gain this world, and in doing so will lose all of that too. To suffer when one has a cause and when one has the hope that there will be an end to it with a better beyond is one thing. This makes the suffering tolerable, purposeful, and endurable, but it is quite another thing to have to suffer the ultimate in destructive horrors when the end of it all is total and eternal annihilation.

In order for us to comprehend the experience of the wicked as the last plague descends upon their shelterless heads, we need to understand the state of mind in which they will be when it comes upon them. Now we are to see that the seventh plague is, from their point of view, the very worst calamity which could befall them.

To the man of the world who has sacrificed the truth of God, the most important thing is material possessions and the security which they represent to him. They are to him the assurance of life, and the guarantee of the perpetuity of his name and influence. To assure the personal control and possessions of the largest possible amount of this world's goods is the all-consuming passion of unconverted men.

We have seen how they will scheme and cheat, how they will rob and defraud, and how they will murder and lie to gather it all together. To hold all this treasure, they will in the end totally repudiate and reject the call of God and seek to destroy the people of the Lord from off the face of the whole earth.

While they will have been attempting to do this, they will have been enduring the first of the plagues, but none of these plagues utterly destroy the possessions of mankind. True, they do take away his temporal prosperity. The fierce burning of the sun with no rain, for instance, destroys the crops, dries up the streams, and kills thousands upon thousands of earth's inhabitants through the oppressive heat. But men have passed through such droughts before and better days have followed, though not this time.

But now the time will have come when men see that they have lost heaven and God eternally and that the plagues which have been falling upon them have been because of their own sins and rebellion. Now that they know where they stand and why they have been suffering as they have, their hearts are filled with the greatest dread as to what might yet be coming. They look with trembling fear at their proud cities, their fine homes, their banks with their treasures of gold and precious things, their cars and aircraft, their boats and their trains. Is this all to go too? So far these things have survived the first of the plagues. They look so solid and so fine and so permanent. Perhaps the thought might pass through their minds, that at least, if they have lost God and heaven, they still have all this and can live on without God anyway. After all, it was by their own power that they had built all this. So they will think as did Nebuchadnezzar of old. Thus they will reason that since they had built it without God, then they could continue in the enjoyment of it without God.

But if these thoughts shall pass through their minds, they will be but short-lived, for there shall descend upon them the last and most terrible of all the plagues—the seventh. It will come upon a people, who, having given up God in preference to this world and its treasures, will see in this last plague everyone of those treasures swept away in utter and total destruction; for the seventh plague will literally and actually destroy the earth.

"Then the seventh angel poured out his bowl into the air, and a loud voice came out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, 'It is done!'

"And there were noises and thunderings and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such a mighty and great earthquake as had not occurred since men were on the earth.

"Now the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of

the nations fell. And great Babylon was remembered before God, to give her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.

"Then every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.

"And great hail from heaven fell upon men, every hailstone about the weight of a talent. And men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail, since that plague was exceedingly great." *Revelation* 16 .-17'-21.

Of all the destructive forces known to man, a great earthquake is the most sudden, the most terrifying, the most violent, and the most destructive. Furthermore, an earthquake never comes alone. It brings with it fire and tidal waves and, in this case, savage storms and tempests, the shrieking of the hurricane, and the bombardment by huge hailstones; the like of which men have never seen before in the total history of this planet.

In the past, fearful earthquakes have shattered portions of the earth, but the geographical areas have always been limited. Here is coming an earthquake which is to have no geographical limitations. There will be no corner of the earth free from its heavings. In describing this, *The Great Controversy* states: "The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea." page 637.

"The mountains shake like a reed in the wind, and ragged rocks are scattered on every side. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury. There is heard the shriek of the hurricane like the voice of demons on a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Its very foundations seem to be giving way. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. The seaports that have become like Sodom for wickedness are swallowed up by the angry waters. Babylon the great has come in remembrance before God, 'to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath.' Great hailstones, every one 'about the weight of a talent,' are doing their work of destruction. The proudest cities of the earth are laid low. The lordly palaces, upon which the world's great men have lavished their wealth in order to glorify themselves, are crumbling to ruin before their eyes." *Great Controversy,* 637.

Can any mind today picture the destruction involved in this last and most terrible plague? Those who would come nearest to it would be those who had experienced one of this earth's terrible earthquakes, but for the rest of us it is beyond the power of the human mind to even begin to conceive.

Try to picture, if you can, a situation where the whole surface of the earth is in the fluid state of rolling waves. See the tall and stately trees rolling this way and that as the earth moves beneath them, and as they are wrenched by the violence of it all; huge limbs will be torn

from them and flung with crushing force upon whatever is below. The great mountain chains sink down as if their very supports had been taken away, while entire islands with their inhabitants sink like bottomless ships into the depths of the ocean.

Great open fissures will appear in the ground, bridges will collapse, and roads will be rent and ruined beyond repair. Great and lordly palaces, skyscrapers, and other great monuments to man's wealth and skill will literally be torn apart to collapse in great heaps of ruins and clouds of smothering dust, burying countless of their owners and tenants beneath them. The great caverns, opening and shutting beneath the sea, will send colossal tidal waves surging across the surface of the oceans to crash against the continental shores and flood inland over vast areas. The great seaport cities, notorious for their sinfulness and immorality, will be buried beneath millions of tons of turbulent, boiling water which will carry away all before it. Great ocean liners will be lifted up and carried far inland to be left dumped and wrecked far from the sea by the receding waters. Buildings, already overthrown by the earthquake, will be swept along as so much rubble to be piled in indiscriminate heaps of rubbish here and there.

Thus, on land and by sea, the destruction will come, but this is final and total war, and such war today involves land, sea, and air. So while these forces are working on the surface, the earth will be subjected to the most terrible bombardment it has ever experienced. Great hailstones, each the weight of a talent, will batter and pulverize the whole surface of the earth. A talent is estimated to be about sixty-six pounds or thirty kilograms in weight. There are those of us who have experienced the effect of a hailstorm when the stones weighed a mere two or three ounces in weight, and we have read and seen photographs of the effect of a hailstorm when the stones were as large as a cricket or a baseball, weighing perhaps a pound or a pound and a half. The destruction was unbelievable. Crops were cut right down to the ground, roofs were punctured, windows smashed, and animals killed. But imagine the effect of great blocks of ice, each a talent in weight, smashing at high speed from thousands of feet above in an unending barrage upon the surface of the entire earth.

To the eternally lost, it will be the horror of all horrors, the terror of all terrors, the full fruit of their course of sinfully neglecting their obligations to the God of heaven. It will be the fullest realization of the Bible principle, that any man who seeks to save his life shall as certainly lose it, while those who are prepared to lose their lives and all of this world's goods for the sake of Christ, will save it unto life eternal.

While the wicked are perishing by their millions and vainly en-



deavoring to find a place of refuge from the tempest, the righteous are kept safe and secure by the protective hand of God. They simply stand and see the destruction of the wicked, experiencing at this time the fullness of the promises contained in *Psalm* 91:

"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High Shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.

"I will say of the Lord, 'He is my refuge and my fortress; my God, in Him I will trust.'

"Surely He shall deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the perilous pestilence.

"He shall cover you with His feathers, and under His wings you shall take refuge; His truth shall be your shield and buckler.

"You shall not be afraid of the terror by night, nor of the arrow that flies by day,

"Nor of the pestilence that walks in darkness, nor of the destruction that lays waste at noonday.

"A thousand may fall at your side, and ten thousand at your right hand; but it shall not come near you.

"Only with your eyes shall you look, and see the reward of the wicked.

"Because you have made the Lord, who is my refuge, even the Most High, your dwelling place,

"No evil shall befall you, nor shall any plague come near your dwelling;

"For He shall give His angels charge over you, to keep you in all your ways.

"In their hands they shall bear you up, lest you dash your foot against a stone.

"You shall tread upon the lion and the cobra, the young lion and the serpent you shall trample underfoot.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The seventh plague will be the most destructive and terrifying of them all. Firstly, there will be the great and terrible earthquake the violence of which has never been previously experienced in all of earth's history. Mountain chains will sink from sight, inhabited islands will disappear, and the lands of earth will heave, swell, and roll like the waves of an angry sea.

These awesome convulsions of nature will be as active below the mighty oceans as they will be on land. The ocean floor will be opening and closing, alternatively gulping in and spewing out enormous volumes of water. The sea will be boiling. Gigantic tidal waves many, many times greater and more destructive than the wave pictured here, will slam onto the shores carrying all before them as they penetrate great distances inland.

Nothing the most imaginative mind among men can picture will adequately portray the sheer horror of the seventh plague.

"Because he has set his love upon Me, therefore I will deliver him; I will set him on high, because he has known My name.

"He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him and honor him.

"With long life I will satisfy him, and show him My salvation." Verses 1-16.

Today is the day when every believer should memorize that *Psalm,* so that when the Lord delivers His people from the destruction which shall waste at noonday, and we see a thousand fall at our side and ten thousand fall at our right hand, without the plague coming near to us, then these words will be a very precious stay to our faith, and will call forth a strong song of praise and thankfulness to God.

So will come the seventh and last plague and into which both the righteous and the wicked will enter. The former will know that they are eternally saved, while the other will know that they are eternally and irretrievably lost. Knowing that they have lost all hope of eternal life, they will then witness the full loss of all earthly things for which they have sacrificed all that was worthwhile and eternal. Millions will perish with their possessions, but there will be some who will survive that holocaust to witness the Saviour return in the clouds of heaven and to flee in terror from His presence.

Chapter 37

The Special Resurrection

Thus far we have studied the seventh plague in its role of the great and fearful destroyer of the beast, his image, and the multitudes who have been seduced by that master deception. We have seen how the earthquake and the hail, together with the resulting storm, tempest, and tidal waves, will obliterate so much of the world's great and beautiful structures, and will annihilate a vast proportion of the inhabitants of the earth. When it is finished, the earth will have been reduced to an uninhabitable wreck.

But the earthquake does more than this. It opens the prison walls, and those who have been incarcerated for their refusal to bow to the beast and his image are set free, never more to be bound or fettered. They emerge triumphant and rejoicing.

But these are not the only prison walls which are to be opened by the earthquake. "Graves are opened, and 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' *Daniel* 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept his law. 'They also which pierced Him,' *(Revelation* 1:7), those that mocked and derided Christ's dying agonies, and the most violent opposers of His truth and His people, are raised to behold Him in His glory, and to see the honor placed upon the loyal and the obedient." *Great Controversy,* 637.

This event will be a fulfillment of a prophecy made long before this time. The first reference to it is in Dan*iel* 12:1, 2.

"At that time Michael shall stand up, the great Prince who stands watch over the sons of your people; and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation, even to that time. And at that time your people shall be delivered, every one who is found written in the book.

"And many of those who sleep in the dust of the earth shall

awake, some to everlasting life, some to shame and everlasting contempt."

It is to be noted that here is a resurrection in which both righteous and wicked will share. Some will rise to everlasting life, but others to shame and everlasting contempt. We know from *1 Thessalonians* 4:13-18, that when Jesus comes in the clouds of heaven, then all those who will yet be sleeping in their graves will come forth in the resurrection of the just. Whereas *Revelation* 20, tells us that the rest of the wicked dead remain in their graves until the end of the one thousand years.

But those who share in this resurrection, as the statement above tells us, do so a little time before the actual appearing of the Lord in the clouds of heaven, as a distinct and separate resurrection from the one in which the majority of the righteous dead participate. The righteous who participate in this resurrection—which is generally termed the special resurrection—are those who have died in the faith of the third angel's message. That is, it involves those who have died since 1844 with a saving knowledge of the three angels' messages of *Revelation* 14:6-12. Not one of the righteous who died before 1844 will have a part in this resurrection. There is a special reason for this, which we will discuss very shortly.

It is important that we do not rest satisfied with a superficial view of what it means to be in the faith of the third angel's message. All too many think that this specification is met by simply believing in a list of doctrines such as the Sabbath, the sanctuary, the second advent of Christ, and so forth, together with the discontinuance of worldly pleasures and ambitions.

To go thus far is to be a Laodicean. It is to be wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked, while believing that you are spiritually rich and in need of nothing.

The third angel follows the first and has all the light of the first two. The first comes having the everlasting gospel which is the power of God to literally save from sin by rooting out the old spiritual nature, and replacing it with the new, divine nature.

Without this inner transformation, a person does not live in the faith of the third angel, no matter what doctrines he subscribes to, or how many evil practices he might abolish from his life. For a more detailed description of this experience and how to obtain it, study *From Bondage to Freedom,* by F. T. Wright.

Along with the righteous who are raised at this special time prior to the actual appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven, are a certain number of the wicked who have died in the past. They are raised to witness His appearing in glory, and are the ones who are raised to shame and everlasting contempt. Looking forward with prophetic

eye, Jesus, on the night of His betrayal and condemnation, declared to His persecutors that the time would come when they would witness His coming, and see a very different situation from the one prevailing on the night of His arrest and condemnation.

The high priest, anxious to have Jesus condemn Himself, said to Him, " 'I adjure You by the living God that You tell us if You are the Christ, the Son of God.'

"Jesus said to him, 'It is as you said. Nevertheless, I say to you, hereafter you will see the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of the Power, and coming on the clouds of heaven.' " *Matthew* 26:63, 64.

Caiaphas has long since passed to his grave, while the appearing of Christ in the clouds of heaven is still a future event. Therefore, for him to be a witness to that wonderful spectacle—although it will be far from wonderful in his eyes—he will have to be specially raised to life again for that purpose. And he will be, along with many others of those who have been in the forefront of the terrible work of warring against the Son of God.

Thus it will be, that when Jesus comes again, those who had most effectively and diligently worked to destroy Him will be witnesses to the power and the glory which will then attend him.

"Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, and they also who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen." *Revelation* 1:7.

To them who had warred against Him without remorse, it will be the most terrible experience possible, and then they will seek to hide from the face of Jesus. The situation will be reversed then, and they will feel the condemnation for their evil deeds. For them there will be no hiding place, and they will be destroyed to remain unburied in death until the thousand years shall be ended.

"There are those who mocked Christ in His humiliation. With thrilling power come to their minds the Sufferer's words, when, adjured by the high priest, He solemnly declared: 'Hereafter shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven.' *Matthew* 26:64. Now they behold Him in His glory, and they are yet to see Him sitting on the right hand of power.

"Those who derided His claim to be the Son of God are speechless now. There is the haughty Herod who *jeered* at His royal title and bade the mocking soldiers crown Him king. There are the very men who with impious hands place upon His form the purple robe, upon His sacred brow the thorny crown, and in His unresisting hand the mimic scepter, and bowed before Him in blasphemous mockery. The men who smote and spit upon the Prince of life now turn from His piercing gaze and seek to flee from the overpowering glory of His presence. Those who drove the nails through His hands and feet, the



Under the terms of living in mortality on this sin-cursed planet, everyone is born to die sooner or later, and all men know this. What is less well known is the fact that all are destined in the plan and purpose of God to be resurrected again, some for a short period; others unto eternal life.

soldier who pierced His side, behold these marks with terror and remorse.

"With awful distinctness do priests and rulers recall the events of Calvary. With shuddering horror they remember how, wagging their heads in satanic exultation, they exclaimed: 'He saved others; Himself He cannot save. If He be the King of Israel, let Him now come

down from the cross, and we will believe Him. He trusted in God; let Him deliver Him now, if He will have Him.' *Matthew* 27:42, 43.

"Vividly they recall the Saviour's parable of the husbandmen who refused to render to their lord the fruit of the vineyard, who abused his servants and slew his son. They remember, too, the sentence which they themselves pronounced: The lord of the vineyard 'will miserably destroy those wicked men.' In the sin and punishment of those unfaithful men the priests and elders see their own course and their own just doom. And now there rises a cry of mortal agony. Louder than the shout, 'Crucify Him, crucify Him,' which rang through the streets of Jerusalem, swells the awful, despairing wail, 'He is the Son of God! He is the true Messiah!' They seek to flee from the presence of the King of kings. In the deep caverns of the earth, rent asunder by the warring of the elements, they vainly attempt to hide.

"In the lives of all who reject truth there are moments when conscience awakens, when memory presents the torturing recollection of a life of hypocrisy and the soul is harassed with vain regrets. But what are these compared with the remorse of that day when 'fear cometh as desolation,' when 'destruction cometh as a whirlwind'! *Proverbs* 1:27. Those who would have destroyed Christ and His faithful people now witness the glory which rests upon them. In the midst of their terror they hear the voices of the saints in joyful strains exclaiming: 'Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.' Isaiah 25:9." *Great Controversy,* 643, 644.

The purpose of the resurrection of this class of wicked people is perfectly obvious, but it may well be asked why it is that there is a special resurrection of a section of the righteous, that is, those who have died in the faith of the third angel's message, before the remainder?

Something of the answer to this question may be found in the difference between the shout of victory uttered by those who have been raised in the special resurrection prior to the second advent, and the shout of victory uttered by those who are raised when Christ actually appears. Let us compare them.

The shout of victory given by those who come up in the special resurrection is not given at the very moment when they come forth from the tomb. It follows after a little time during which things continue to develop from the seventh plague of the earthquake and hail.

Following through the description as given in *The Great Controversy,* 637-640, it is found that there is a terrible storm following the great earthquake. The heavens are wrapped in dark, angry clouds lashed by fierce lightnings and shaken by the roll of the deep toned thunder.

"Above the terrific roar of the thunder, voices, mysterious and

awful, declare the doom of the wicked. The words spoken are not comprehended by all; but they are distinctly understood by the false teachers. Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God's commandment-keeping people, are now overwhelmed with consternation and shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements. Demons acknowledge the deity of Christ and tremble before his power, while men are supplicating for mercy and groveling in abject terror." *Great Controversy,* 638.

To all this, the newly resurrected ones are witnesses. It is difficult to imagine the impression this must make upon their minds. They went to their graves, and the last conscious impressions on their minds were those of the surroundings as they were at the time of their deaths, as far back as the middle of the last century. It was a relatively peaceful, well-ordered world from which they departed. Then, suddenly they are awakened into this scene of indescribable destruction and chaos. It will certainly take them a little time to adjust to it all, to grasp just what is going on, and to figure out where they are. At first they might think it all to be a dream.

Then as they watch, the heavens begin to change. At first there is a rift in the clouds, through which there beams a star of great brilliance. "It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law. Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.' *Psalms* 46:1-3." *Great Controversy,* 638, 639.

In response to this song of praise and victory, the rift in the clouds widens, and the stars shine through. "Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together." *Great Controversy,* 639. These are the tables of the law, and as all watch spellbound, the hand opens the tables and there the law is before all to read.

"The words are so plain that all can read them. Memory is aroused, the darkness of superstition and heresy is swept from every

mind, and God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 639.

This now brings the great final moment of truth to the minds of all men upon the earth who have despised and trampled upon the law of God, and in doing so, thought that they were doing the service of God. Now it is seen by each and everyone with vivid clarity who are in truth the children of God.

"It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements. The Lord gave them His law; they might have compared their characters with it and learned their defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; but in order to secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. They have endeavored to compel God's people to profane His Sabbath. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse. They chose whom they would serve and worship. 'Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.'

"The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious Sabbath and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise. Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness. Only in eternity can we rightly estimate the loss of a single soul. Fearful will be the doom of him to whom God shall say: Depart, thou wicked servant." *Great Controversy,* 639, 640.

Thus the victory over the beast and his image will be absolutely complete. There is not one of them now who will still fight for the cause which they see is totally and completely lost and finished. Those righteous who have been raised in the special resurrection will have had an opportunity by this time to grasp the significance of the scenes before them. They will see that the end of the beast and his image has come, and they are prepared to join in with the living righteous in the great shout of victory over the beast and his image. This comes immediately after the announcement of the day and the hour of the return of Jesus.

This announcement immediately follows the events described

just above. At the same time as this announcement is made, God delivers the everlasting covenant to His people.

"And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory." *Great Controversy,* 640.

The Great Controversy does not tell us just what that shout of victory is, but in *Early Writings,* 286, it is made clear. There it reads of the same shout, at the same point of time: "And when the never-ending blessing was pronounced on those who had honored God in keeping His Sabbath holy, there was a mighty shout of victory over the beast and over his image.''

But this is not the shout of victory which comes from the lips of those who are raised in the general resurrection. Theirs is a different cry for very good reasons. "The earth mightily shook as the voice of the Son of God called forth the sleeping saints. They responded to the call and came forth clothed with glorious immortality, crying, 'Victory, victory, over death and the grave! O death, where is thy sting: O grave, where is thy victory:' " *Early Writings,* 287.

Why is there this difference? Why does one group of resurrected saints shout the victory over the beast and his image, and the other group shout the victory over death and the grave?

The light of the third angel's message, which reveals the rise of the beast and his image, was not understood prior to the preaching of the great second advent message in the latter half of the last century. Those who received that message went forth to fight that last battle with the beast and his image, and their life-long hope was to witness that victory. Men like Elder James White, for instance, devoted their entire life's energies and resources to that battle, but they died without seeing the victory won. So, in His great love and mercy, the Lord will raise them to life in time to see the victory achieved. As they rise from their dusty beds, the very thing for which they had hoped and worked will be seen before them as a consummated reality.

Of this great and final battle the earlier, protestant reformers were ignorant. Their great enemy was death. It is true that they battled against the Papacy in the Dark Ages, but this was different from the battle to be waged in these last days of the earth's history. Therefore, if they were to be raised in time to see the defeat of the beast and his image, it would all be a mystery to them, which they would neither understand nor appreciate. Therefore they remain in their graves until such time as the great victory is gained over death and the grave. They went to their graves looking for the day when death and the grave would have no more power over them, and they come forth in their immortal state to shout the mighty shout of victory over the last enemy—death.

Of course, the living saints and those who come forth in the special resurrection join in the shout of victory over the tomb along with the saints who are raised at the actual appearing of Christ.

There is a further reason why they reserve their shout of victory over death and the grave until this time. It is because immortality, which is the full victory over death and the grave, is not conferred till this time. When they came up in the special resurrection, it is not said that they were then immortalized, but only glorified. At the general resurrection, those who had previously been glorified will then be made immortal or, in other words, given the complete and final victory over death and the tomb.

"The living righteous are changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet the Lord in the air." *Great Controversy,* 645.

That glad day for the righteous, when all shall be reversed from what it is now so far as the apparent triumph of evil is concerned, is not too far away. How well worthwhile it is for us to strive to have our part and place in that great and glorious company who will be able to shout victory over the beast and his image and then victory over death and the grave.

Chapter 38

Last Hours of the Wicked

The study of the special resurrection, which is to *precede* the general resurrection at the actual second advent of Christ, shows that a little time elapses between this resurrection and the actual appearing of Jesus, during which time there is a succession of dramatic and interesting events. It will be the purpose of this chapter to trace those events through to the actual appearance of Jesus in the clouds of heaven.

The special resurrection takes place at the very beginning of the seventh plague; the very first event of which is the sudden onset of the fearful earthquake, followed and accompanied by the terrible downpouring of the destructive hail. One would imagine that this earthquake will gather force and momentum after the first shock. That which suggests this fact is that there will be many saints of God who will be in prison cells at this time, and whose release will be obtained by the rending of the walls of the prison by the force of the first earthquake shock. The fact of this is expressed in the following words:

"That voice shakes the heavens and the earth. There is a mighty earthquake, 'such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.' . . . prison walls are rent asunder, and God's people, who have been held in bondage for their faith, are set free." *Great Controversy,* 636, 637.

The full force of this earthquake is such as to cause the "whole earth" to heave and to swell "like the waves of the sea"; mountain chains to sink; inhabited islands to disappear; the proud cities of the earth to be laid low; and the lordly palaces of men to crumble to ruin before their eyes. *Great Controversy,* 637.

Certainly an earthquake of such force as to effect such ruin as listed in the paragraph quoted above, would collapse the entire prison on the heads of the saints before they had any opportunity to escape, if that earthquake were to strike with its full destructive force at its first onset. Rather, the first shock will burst great openings in

the walls and spring the doors from their hinges, and the saints of God will at once make their escape. Then the succeeding shocks will tear the whole world apart and leave no building to be anything but a heap of dusty rubble in which no person could survive.

At the very same time as the saints are released from their prisons, the righteous who have died in the faith of the third angel's message will come forth from the prison house of death, likewise rent open by the power of the earthquake. They then take their stand upon the earth with the living righteous—the one hundred and forty-four thousand. At the same time, as we have already seen from our study, those who, because of their special role in their warfare against the people of God, are called up to see Him come in the clouds of heaven, also stand upon the earth to witness the final overthrow of Babylon.

At this point of time all nature is in a state of utter chaos and ruin. While the earth itself is heaving and rolling like the billows of an angry ocean, the land is lashed by the savagery of the hail storm, and the sky above is filled with the rolling and jostling of black and angry clouds. During this time the righteous enjoy special protection or they would likewise be destroyed by the elements. It is the story of Noah all over again. Just as his boat rode safely on a sea so storm tossed and savage as to have swiftly and surely destroyed it but for the protection of the God of heaven, so it will be again.

Then the people of God will know by experience the truth of the promise of *Psalm* 91.

This is a most fearful time for the wicked who are terrified by the spectacle around them. The blazing lightning which seems to set the world on fire and the dreadful crashing and booming of the thunder is not the worst of it, but is only the backdrop of sound for the fearful pronouncement of their doom.

"Above the terrific roar of the thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked. The words spoken are not comprehended by all; but they are distinctly understood by the false teachers. Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God's commandment-keeping people, are now overwhelmed with consternation and shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements. Demons acknowledge the deity of Christ and tremble before His power, while men are supplicating for mercy and groveling in abject terror." *Great Controversy,* 638.

Fearful and terrible as this moment is for them, there is worse yet to come. It will be bad enough for them to hear their own doom, but the Lord also, at this time, will again declare that the faithful are His

own peculiar people and that for them there is the reward of the righteous.

"Through a rift in the clouds there beams a star whose brilliancy is increased fourfold in contrast with the darkness. It speaks hope and joy to the faithful, but severity and wrath to the transgressors of God's law. Those who have sacrificed all for Christ are now secure, hidden as in the secret of the Lord's pavilion. They have been tested, and before the world and the despisers of truth they have evinced their fidelity to Him who died for them. A marvelous change has come over those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death. They have been suddenly delivered from the dark and terrible tyranny of men transformed to demons. Their faces, so lately pale, anxious, and haggard, are now aglow with wonder, faith, and love. Their voices rise in triumphant song: 'God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore will not we fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea; though the waters thereof roar and be troubled, though the mountains shake with the swelling thereof.' *Psalms* 46:1-3." *Great Controversy,* 638, 639

How galling it will be for the wicked to see the very ones whom they thought to be the cause of their troubles and whom they absolutely sought to do away with, receiving the approbation of God and the open assurances of His blessing and protection.

But worse is still to come, for there is nothing more terrible to the transgressor of the law than to have that law presented before him in its clarity and power. Before those condemning words, he sees himself in the full light of what he is, and indescribable terror strikes his heart.

"While these words of holy trust ascend to God, the clouds sweep back, and the starry heavens are seen, unspeakably glorious in contrast with the black and angry firmament on either side. The glory of the celestial city streams from the gates ajar. Then there appears against the sky a hand holding two tables of stone folded together. Says the prophet: 'The heavens shall declare His righteousness: for God is judge Himself.' *Psalm* 50:6. That holy law, God's righteousness, that amid thunder and flame was proclaimed from Sinai as the guide of life, is now revealed to men as the rule of judgment. The hand opens the tables, and there are seen the precepts of the Decalogue, traced as with a pen of fire. The words are so plain that all can read them. Memory is aroused, the darkness of superstition and heresy is swept from every mind, and God's ten words, brief, comprehensive, and authoritative, are presented to the view of all the inhabitants of the earth." *Great Controversy,* 639.

This will be a most significant moment in the history of the great

conflict. The last great battle will have been fought over the principles of the law of God itself. This is what the righteous will have stood for, even to the loss of all things, including life itself, and this is that which the wicked have striven under the leadership of Satan to obliterate from existence. Now it will be seen that the principles of God's law are absolutely eternal and everlasting, and that those who war against that law, do so to their own most certain self-destruction.

The sequence of revelation to the wicked during this period is both interesting and fearful. First of all, they will witness the destruction of all the material things which they hold most dear and for which they have not only despised and rejected the law of God, but have sought to destroy it in the belief that this would serve to protect them from loss. But the loss of their treasure came as a sure and certain result of their putting out of their lives and of seeking to put out of existence the law of God and the people who loved and supported that law.

Next, they see the very people who have stood for that law and faithfully kept it, being not only preserved in the midst of the total destruction around them, but actually blessed and glorified by God Himself. This cannot help but serve to convey the message to them that the harvest which they are reaping is the inevitable consequence of the course they have pursued; just as surely as the course the righteous will have pursued will have brought to them protection and blessing.

The final capstone to their realization of complete and utter loss will be the presentation of the law before their very eyes. They had sought to explain it away; to change it; to destroy it; and to hide from it. They thought they had succeeded, or at the very least, that they could sin without ever coming face to face with it again.

Now it appears, not merely down here upon this earth where they could have access to it and attack it, but up there in the heavens in the hands of God Himself. There it appears in all its shining splendor, unmarked and undamaged by the attacks of the centuries, as permanent, as real, and as true as it ever was. There can be no question now of the eternal indestructibility of that law. There can now be no possibility of escape from the sure penalty of its transgression. It is there before their eyes in too real and solid a form to ever pass away.

"It is impossible to describe the horror and despair of those who have trampled upon God's holy requirements. The Lord gave them His law; they might have compared their characters with it and learned their defects while there was yet opportunity for repentance and reform; but in order to secure the favor of the world, they set aside its precepts and taught others to transgress. They have endeav-

Summary of the Events Between the Seventh Plague and the Second Advent of Christ

The voice of God declares, "It is done".
That voice shakes the heavens and the earth;
There follows the great earthquake, tidal wave, and hail;
Prison walls are burst open freeing many saints;
The special resurrection takes place;
Thick clouds cover the sky;
From time to time the sun breaks through;
Fierce lightnings envelop the earth in a sheet of flame;
Voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked;
The words spoken are not comprehended by all;
But they are distinctly understood by the false teachers;
Demons acknowledge the deity of Christ, and tremble before His power;
Men supplicate for mercy and grovel in abject terror;
A brilliant star confirms that the righteous are secure;
A marvellous transformation comes over them;
The clouds sweep back and the glory of the city shines through;
God's holy law is displayed in the sky;
The voice of God announces the day and hour of Christ's coming;
The everlasting covenant delivered to the saints;
Soon there appears in the East the cloud of Christ's return.
Great Controversy, 636-640

ored to compel God's people to profane His Sabbath. Now they are condemned by that law which they have despised. With awful distinctness they see that they are without excuse. They chose whom they would serve and worship. 'Then shall ye return, and discern between the righteous and the wicked, between him that serveth God and him that serveth Him not.' *Malachi* 3:18.

"The enemies of God's law, from the ministers down to the least among them, have a new conception of truth and duty. Too late they see that the Sabbath of the fourth commandment is the seal of the living God. Too late they see the true nature of their spurious sab-

bath and the sandy foundation upon which they have been building. They find that they have been fighting against God. Religious teachers have led souls to perdition while professing to guide them to the gates of Paradise. Not until the day of final accounts will it be known how great is the responsibility of men in holy office and how terrible are the results of their unfaithfulness. Only in eternity can we rightly estimate the loss of a single soul. Fearful will be the doom of him to whom God shall say: 'Depart, thou wicked servant.' " *Great Controversy,* 639, 640.

These events bring the situation to the place where in the fullest way the wicked see that they have been deluded and led astray, and they abandon all support for the devil and his agents. The full purpose of the great controversy will then have been achieved, and the way of the coming of the Saviour and His angels fully prepared. The next event in the drama is the announcement of the actual day and the hour of Jesus' coming. Up until this point of time no one will know that date, much as some would like to, and despite the fact that there are those false prophets who claim that they do. But there is coming the time, just prior to the actual appearing, when the day and the hour of Jesus coming will be announced, to the unspeakable rejoicing of the righteous.

"The voice of God is heard from heaven, declaring the day and hour of Jesus' coming, and delivering the everlasting covenant to His people. Like peals of loudest thunder His words roll through the earth. The Israel of God stand listening, with their eyes fixed upward. Their countenances are lighted up with His glory, and shine as did the face of Moses when he came down from Sinai. The wicked cannot look upon them. And when the blessing is pronounced on those who have honored God by keeping His Sabbath holy, there is a mighty shout of victory." *Great Controversy,* 640.

As the final recognition and admission of total defeat, the wicked now throw themselves at the feet of the saints, whom they had been so determined to destroy, and acknowledge that they are the true ones after all and the ones whom the Lord loved. This will be the fulfillment of a promise made by the Lord to the Philadelphian church in these words:

"Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and know that I have loved you." *Revelation3:9.*

The establishment of the fact that this is the time when this does take place is given in the following statement from *Early* Writings, 15: "Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, 144,000 in

number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai.

"The 144,000 were all sealed and perfectly united. On their foreheads was written, God, New Jerusalem, and a glorious star containing Jesus' new name. At our happy, holy state the wicked were enraged, and would rush violently up to lay hands on us to thrust us into prison, when we would stretch forth the hand in the name of the Lord, and they would fall helpless to the ground. Then it was that the synagogue of Satan knew that God had loved us who could wash one another's feet and salute the brethren with a holy kiss, and they worshiped at our feet.''

This will be a time of terrible anguish for the wicked, and, no doubt, for the righteous too. While the righteous are rejoicing in the victory, that rejoining will not be because they have gotten the victory over other men and women, but only because truth has triumphed over iniquity. While they will be glad that truth has conquered, it will be with sorrow that they see men and women, who might have been with them in the eternal bliss, lose all in the great conflict of life.

It is clear that while the wicked will bow at the feet of the righteous, the minister will also do this, only in a more agonized way even than the wicked generally.

"I saw that the priests who are leading on their flock to death are soon to be arrested in their dreadful career. The plagues of God are coming, but it will not be sufficient for the false shepherds to be tormented with one or two of these plagues. God's hand at that time will be stretched out still in wrath and justice, and will not be brought to Himself again until His purposes are fully accomplished, and the hireling priests are led to worship at the feet of the saints, and to acknowledge that God has loved them because they held fast the truth and kept God's commandments, and until all the unrighteous ones are destroyed from the earth." *Early Writings,* 124.

This, then, will be the end and the beginning. For the wicked it will be the total and final end of their warfare against the God of heaven in the persons of His people. Now all their schemes and theories will have come to their end, and they themselves will be blotted out of existence. For the righteous, it will be the end of sorrow and struggle, of ridicule and contempt, of hardship and the frailty of humanity, and for them, the beginning of the wonderful, eternal life without end in the glory of the kingdom restored.

Then the struggles of this life will appear to be nothing in the

light of the glory which is to be theirs in the fellowship of Christ and the angels. Glad day indeed, when sin and disobedience will come to their proper end, and righteousness alone shall reign in the kingdom of God.

Today, each of us is determining the place in which we shall be found at that time by the positions we are taking at the moment. Either we are preparing to stand with the righteous then or with the wicked. May the Lord help us see the true and the proper path, and have the courage and the faith to walk in it, so when that time shall come we shall be found faithful and true.

Chapter 39

Jesus Comes Again

The announcement of the day and the hour of Jesus' coming is followed quite quickly by the appearing itself: "Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud, about half the size of a man's hand. It is the-cloud which surrounds the Saviour and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness. The *people* of God know this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it as it draws nearer the earth, becoming lighter and more glorious, until it is a great white cloud, its base a glory like consuming fire, and above it the rainbow of the covenant. Jesus rides forth as a mighty conqueror. Not now a 'Man of Sorrows,' to drink the bitter cup of shame and woe, He comes, victor in heaven and earth, to judge the living and the dead. 'Faithful and True,' 'in righteousness He doth judge and make war.' And 'the armies which were in heaven' *(Revelation* 19:11, 14) follow Him. With anthems of celestial melody the holy angels, a vast, unnumbered throng, attend Him on His way. The firmament seems filled with radiant forms—'ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands.' No human pen can portray the scene; no mortal mind is adequate to conceive its splendor. 'His glory covered the heavens, and the earth was full of His praise. And His brightness was as the light.' *Habakkuk* 3:3, 4. As the living cloud comes still nearer, every eye beholds the Prince of life. No crown of thorns now mars that sacred head; but a diadem of glory rests on His holy brow. His countenance outshines the dazzling brightness of the noonday sun. 'And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, *King of kings, and Lord of lords.' Revelation* 19:16." *Great Controversy,* 640, 641.

When Jesus appears the second time, there will be four general classes of people. There will be the living righteous and the living wicked, and there will be the righteous dead and the wicked dead. This can be broken down into further subdivisions so far as the living are concerned. There will be among the living righteous, the two groups consisting of the one hundred and forty-four thousand, who will have never died, and the ones raised in the special resurrection. Likewise, there will be the wicked who will not have died so far, together with those raised in the special resurrection. This would make

six classes altogether, and each class will be subject to the one fate or the other.

The living saints, which we understand to be the one hundred and forty-four thousand, and the risen saints, who will be those who are raised in the special resurrection after having been faithful to the message of the third angel, will witness the final events of the seventh plague and will see, first of all, the sign of the Son of Man in the tiny cloud, followed by the fullness of His coming as He draws nearer to the earth. This will not be seen by those of the righteous who are still at this time in their tombs, for their resurrection does not take place until Jesus has actually arrived immediately above their resting places.

When Jesus first appears in His awful majesty and spotless perfection, the scene fills the hearts of every living person with a nameless dread. This is true of both the righteous and the wicked; although the despair of the wicked is the terror of a completely hopeless case. But even the "righteous cry with trembling: 'Who shall be able to stand?' " *Great Controversy,* 641.

For the wicked, there is no answer to this question except in the darkest of negatives: "Before His presence, 'all faces are turned into paleness;' upon the rejecters of God's mercy falls the terror of eternal despair. The heart melteth, and the knees smite together, . . . and the faces of them all gather blackness.' " *Great Controversy,* 641.

But as the trembling righteous ask the question, God supplies the answer which lights up their faces with the joy of the certainty of deliverance. This answer comes as "the angel's song is hushed and there is a period of awful silence. Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying: 'My grace is sufficient for you.' The faces of the righteous are lighted up, and joy fills every heart. And the angels strike a note higher and sing again as they draw still nearer to the earth." *Great Controversy,* 641.

Why do the righteous who have passed successfully through such a bitter conflict and received such tokens of deliverance, such as the utter defeat of their enemies and the wonder of the resurrection of the sleeping saints from their graves, tremble at the thought that no man could stand in the presence of Jesus and be saved? Is it because they still have sin in their lives?

For some, such facts may warrant such a conclusion, but it could only be an erroneous conclusion, for at the close of His high priestly ministry, prior to this by quite some time, Jesus had declared, "He who is unjust, let him be unjust still: he who is filthy, let him be filthy still: he who is righteous, let him be righteous still: he who is holy, let him be holy still." *Revelation* 22:11.

It is to be observed that the clear wording of this scripture places the emphasis on the actual state of being in which each class will be found at this time; not on any standing of righteousness or perfection which they might hope to have. This is to say, then, that the ones who do stand there upon the earth will truly be a sinless people in actual, literal fact. Therefore it will certainly not be on account of sin in them that they will tremblingly ask this question, for they will be a sinless people and will remain so for eternity.

But, though they are a sinless people, they will still be living in mortal, corruptible flesh and therefore in sinful flesh. The conferring on them of incorruption and immortality does not take place until the general resurrection when this gift is given to all of God's people together. This is equally true of the one hundred and forty-four thousand and those raised in the special resurrection.

Confirmation of this fact is given in the following statements, the first of which describes the condition in which those involved in the special resurrection come forth from the tomb. It is to be noted that no mention is made of their receiving incorruption and immortality at this time, but only that they are glorified. The conferring of immortality and incorruption on them comes at the actual general resurrection of the righteous at the coming of Jesus.

Here is the first statement which describes the resurrection of those who come forth when the earthquake of the seventh plague opens their graves: "Graves were opened, and 'many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth . . . awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.' *Daniel* 12:2. All who have died in the faith of the third angel's message come forth from the tomb glorified, to hear God's covenant of peace with those who have kept His law." *Great Controversy,* 637.

Mark it again, that at this time, even though they have been raised to receive eternal life, this is not conferred upon them the moment they come forth from the tomb. They are only glorified and must wait a little longer for this gift of immortality and incorruption. This comes when the same gift is given to all the others who are still at that time sleeping in the tomb, but who will be raised when Jesus comes in Person to the earth. This is made clear in the following words:

"The living righteous are changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' At the voice of God they were glorified; now they are made immortal and with the risen saints are caught up to meet their Lord in the air. Angels 'gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.' Little children are borne by holy angels to their mothers' arms. Friends long separated by death

are united, nevermore to part, and with songs of gladness ascend together to the City of God." *Great Controversy,* 645.

One may well ask what the difference is between being glorified and being immortalized. It is very obvious from the above statements that there is a very definite difference; one can have the former without having the latter. The answer is given in this statement from *Early Writings,* 15, which refers us back to the experience of Moses when he was so glorified, as the result of being in the presence of God, that his face shone, so that the children of Israel could not look upon him except he put a veil over his face. Yet we know that he was not immortal, for he could die and he did die. The statement reads:

"Soon we heard the voice of God like many waters, which gave us the day and the hour of Jesus' coming. The living saints, one hundred and forty-four thousand in number, knew and understood the voice, while the wicked thought it was thunder and an earthquake. When God spoke the time, He poured upon us the Holy Ghost, and our faces began to light up and shine with the glory of God, as Moses' did when he came down from Mount Sinai."

To be glorified, then, is to be so filled with the Spirit of God that the very outshining of that Spirit through the person is a glory upon which the unrighteous cannot look. It can be likened to the glory which shone around Christ on the Mount of Transfiguration, but it does not mean that the person so glorified has been delivered from sinful, fallen, corruptible, and mortal flesh. It was while he still retained that flesh that Moses was glorified, and it will be while still in that flesh that the one hundred and forty-four thousand, together with those raised in the special resurrection, will be glorified.

All of this serves to give the answer as to why it is that the sinless righteous will tremblingly ask the question as Christ appears. "Who shall be able to stand?" They know that in the unshielded presence of God, sinful, mortal, corruptible flesh cannot live. It will be destroyed, and, knowing that theirs is just that kind of flesh, they expect that it will be destroyed and they with it. Nor will they be misled or disappointed in those expectations, so far as the destruction of that flesh is concerned, for that sinful, corruptible, mortal flesh is to perish forever, but in that self-same instant the Lord will give them a newly created flesh and blood body which will be incorruptible and immortal. So instantaneous will be the passing away of the one and the receiving of the other, that the saints will not lose one instant of consciousness through the operation: "The living righteous are changed 'in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.' " *Great Controversy,* 645.

The wicked are also terribly aware at this time of the fact that sin cannot live in the presence of the pure and the holy God, but while to

the righteous comes the comforting words, "My grace is sufficient for you," no such words of relief are to be found for those who have lived their whole lifetimes in sin and unrighteousness. They are to pass away, with no act of recreation to give them immortality in the place of the corruption which they have ever cherished and cultivated.

Now are fulfilled the words of *Revelation* 6:15-17, as with desperate panic the wicked, from the highest kings and potentates down to the lowliest slave, seek to hide away from that presence. They crawl into holes, under the shattered ruins of the buildings, into cracks and crannies in the mountains, crying to the rocks to crush them, rather than face that terrible brightness.

"And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,

"and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!

" 'For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?' " *Revelation* 6:15-17.

But in that day there will be no hiding place from the face of the Lamb who has come with the power of the Father to execute judgment upon all the ungodly and the unholy. No matter where the wicked will seek to hide, the seventh plague will find them and destroy them, and there will not be one of them left remaining upon the earth. "At the coming of Christ the wicked are blotted from the face of the whole earth—consumed with the spirit of His mouth and destroyed by the brightness of His glory." *Great Controversy,* 657. (For an explanation of how the brightness of His glory destroys the wicked, see the book, *Behold Your God,* the chapter entitled, "The Brightness of His Coming", by F. T. Wright.)

At this point of time it is to be understood that there is not one living wicked person left alive upon the earth. Those who were raised in the special resurrection to see Jesus come are all slain together with those who have remained alive during that awful outpouring of the seven last plagues. There is not one left to bury another; the bodies lay strewn in profusion over the whole earth.

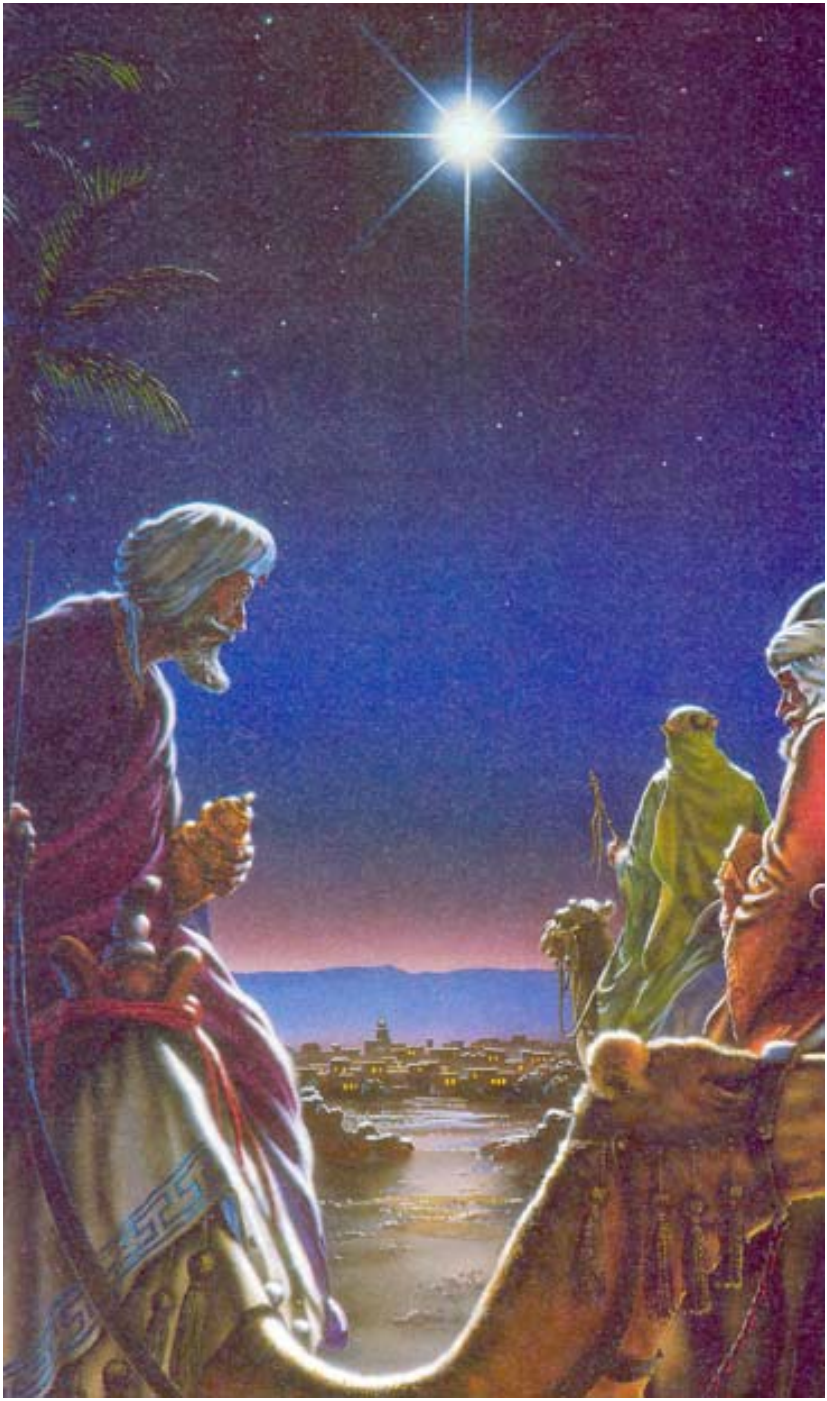
As Jesus descends to the earth; as the seventh plague is destroying the wicked; as the righteous with trembling are asking the question, "Who shall be able to stand?"; as the answer comes, "My grace is sufficient for you"; as the faces of the righteous light up with holy trust and joy; as the angels sing again on a higher note; and as the whole glorious retinue draws nearer to the earth, the great harvest of the righteous dead of all ages are still sleeping in their tombs, all unconscious of what is going on above them.

But the great glad moment has come for their eternal release from the prison house of death, the general resurrection—the great harvest of the ages. This is the hour to which every child of God is looking with hope-filled hearts; praying, hoping, and working toward the end taking place soon, very soon—within the span of our own lifetimes. We would do well to contemplate that scene often so that the picture of it will spur us on to greater and still greater effort to hasten the day.

Let us think often of that time when: "Amid the reeling of the earth, the flash of lightning, and the roar of thunder, the voice of the Son of God calls forth the sleeping saints. He looks upon the graves of the righteous, then, raising His hands to heaven, He cries: 'Awake, awake, awake, ye that sleep in the dust, and arise!' Throughout the length and breadth of the earth the dead shall hear that voice, and they that hear shall live. And the whole earth shall ring with the tread of the exceeding great army of every nation, kindred, tongue, and people. From the prison house of death they come, clothed with immortal glory, crying: 'O death, where is thy sting: O grave, where is thy victory:' *1 Corinthians* 15:55. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory.

"All come forth from their graves the same in stature as when they entered the tomb. Adam, who stands among the risen throng, is of lofty height and majestic form, in stature but little below the Son of God. He presents a marked contrast to the people of later generations; in this one respect is shown the great degeneracy of the race. But all arise with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. In the beginning, man was created in the likeness of God, not only in character, but in form and feature. Sin defaced and almost obliterated the divine image; but Christ came to restore that which had been lost. He will change our vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body. The mortal, corruptible form, devoid of comeliness, once polluted with sin, becomes perfect, beautiful, and immortal. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will 'grow up' *(Malachi* 4:2) to the full stature of the race in its primeval glory. The last lingering traces of the curse of sin will be removed, and Christ's faithful ones will appear in 'the beauty of the Lord our God,' in mind and soul and body reflecting the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood." *Great Controversy,* 645.

How the numbers of the kingdom will grow in that time! First, the only ones alive upon the earth will be the one hundred and forty-four thousand. Then, to them will be added all the faithful who have



died in the faith of the third angel's message, thus greatly swelling the ranks of the faithful and the true. Then, to them will be added the millions of all ages who have been faithful to the Lord in their lifetimes but who had to wait in their graves until this time.

"And all these, having obtained a good testimony through faith, did not receive the promise,

"God having provided something better for us, that they should not be made perfect apart from us." *Hebrews* 11:39, 40.

This scripture makes it plain that the final perfecting of the saints, which will not be experienced in the complete sense until immortality and incorruptibility are conferred upon them, is something which no part of the redeemed will receive in advance of another. The exceptions to this are those already in heaven such as Moses, Enoch, Elijah, and the ones who were raised when Jesus was, and who serve with Him in the heavenly courts at the present time, as revealed in *Matthew* 27:52, 53; *Desire of Ages,* 786; and *Revelation* 4&5.

So it is, that when Jesus comes, the living righteous will not go ahead of the resurrected ones, but will wait till the others have been raised, will receive with them the gift of immortality, and with them will ascend into the cloud to be with Jesus forever. Paul sets this out very clearly in *1 Thessalonians* 4:13-18.

"But I do not want you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning those who have fallen asleep, lest you sorrow as others who have no hope.

"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so God will bring with Him those who sleep in Jesus.

"For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep.

"For the Lord Himself will descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of an archangel, and with the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first.

"Then we who are alive and remain shall be caught up together

OPPOSITE PAGE: The second coining of Christ will be much different from His first appearing which was in such humility and obscurity that it was with great difficulty that the wise men from the east were able to find Him. If they had not had the guidance of the beautiful, glowing star, it is virtually certain they would never have discovered His lowly place. But, when He comes again, it will be with a huge retinue of shining angels, and in both His own glory, and the glory of His heavenly Father. For the saints yearning for deliverance from this sin-cursed earth, it will be the most glorious fulfillment of their most earnest longings.

with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air. And thus we shall always be with the Lord.

"Therefore comfort one another with these words."

Thus the picture is clear. As Christ descends, the living saints upon the earth await the resurrection of all the rest of the righteous. They are called forth from the tomb, and then the whole family of the redeemed are caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, joining with the angels and with Enoch, Moses, Elijah, and the rest of those who were raised when Jesus was, as they all surround their Redeemer and King.

Below them the earth is one vast field of desolation and ruin with not a living person upon its surface. It is to be left this way for the thousand years of Sabbath rest, to fulfill the law of God, which has been so flagrantly broken during all of the previous six thousand years.

Who can understand the joy and the gladness which will then be expressed in the songs of praise which will issue forth from the glorified and immortalized saints in that day? Who can now see how cheap and worthless the things of this earth will be in their view then? Who can understand how thankful they will be then, that they have endured the privation and the troubles and the sacrifices involved in serving the Lord of glory now, when it seems that everything is going the way of the world and the wicked are the ones who always prosper?

But while the imagination at this time can scarcely picture the wonder and the marvel of it, yet the certainty of its coming is there just the same. Come it will. When it comes, it will be the eternal deliverance from sickness, sorrow, death, pain, parting, disappointment, broken hopes, bereavement, sin, unrighteousness, disease, and a thousand other ills. It will be deliverance from all that the human heart longs to be delivered from, but let it ever be remembered, that only those who are being delivered from sin now, will have any hope of being delivered from all that then. Only they who are first delivered from the power of Satan within, while there is still probationary time, can hope then to be forever delivered from Satan's power without.

Chapter 40

The Scapegoat Transaction

Quite a little time has been spent in tracing through the final events just before the actual appearing of Jesus. So much happens during the seventh plague that one might gain the impression that quite a period of time elapses while this is all taking place, but this is not actually so. These events move in quite rapid succession, and only a short time passes by before Christ will actually appear in the clouds of heaven to redeem His faithful ones from the earth.

However, before this glorious retinue of ransomed beings, together with Christ, the angels, and those of the redeemed who have previously been taken up to heaven such as Moses, Elijah, and Enoch, set forth on their journey back to heaven, there is a work for Christ to perform. It will be the fulfilling of the type represented by the confession of the sins upon the scapegoat.

On the great Day of Atonement, which took place every year on the tenth day of the seventh month, after the priest had made an end of making the atonement for the most holy place, the holy place, and the altar of sacrifice, he confessed all the sins of Israel upon the head of the scapegoat and by the hand of a fit man, sent it into perpetual banishment in the wilderness, nevermore to come into the camp of Israel again. The record of this is found in *Leviticus* 16:20-22:

''And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat;

"and Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable [fit; *K.J.V.*] man.

"The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness."

One fact which stands forth with great clarity is that every service in the Old Testament sanctuary was a type of an event to take place in the New Testament era. Therefore the confession of the sins of Is-

rael on the head of the scapegoat after the great day of atonement likewise finds its fulfillment in an event somewhere in the future. The point of time for which we can look in general terms is sometime after the finishing of the ministry of Christ, the High Priest, in the heavenly sanctuary. So it will be, and this statement from *The Great Controversy,* 658, makes it abundantly clear as to just when this will be.

"Now the event takes place foreshadowed in the last solemn service of the Day of Atonement. When the ministration in the holy of holies had been completed, and the sins of Israel had been removed from the sanctuary by virtue of the blood of the sin offering, then the scapegoat was presented alive before the Lord; and in the presence of the congregation the high priest confessed over him 'all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions in all their sins, putting them upon the head of the goat.' *Leviticus* 16:21. In like manner, when the work of atonement in the heavenly sanctuary has been completed, then in the presence of God and heavenly angels and the host of the redeemed the sins of God's people will be placed upon Satan; he will be declared guilty of all the evil which he has caused them to commit. And as the scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, so Satan will be banished to the desolate earth, an uninhabited and dreary wilderness."

The point has already been made and supported by the statement quoted above that the placing of the sins of the righteous upon Satan at the second advent of Jesus is in strict accordance with the typical ceremony of the great Day of Atonement in ancient Israel. It would be well now to take a closer look at the type and its fulfillment in order to understand and to appreciate the accuracy of the type and the lessons to be learned from it. This will be done first of all from the point of view of the timing of the fulfillment of the event.

In connection with the ancient sanctuary, there were two different kinds of activities, which were those which took place in the courtyard of the sanctuary and those which took place within the sanctuary itself. The courtyard represents the earth, while the sanctuary itself represents the temple of God in heaven. The fact of this is testified to by both the writers of *Hebrews* and of *Revelation.*

In *Hebrews* 8 & 9 the subject is the ministry of the sanctuary in heaven, as a fulfillment of the type provided in the Old Testament dispensation. Thus it is, in *Hebrews* 9:1-10, that the structure and services of the earthly sanctuary are mentioned as the shadow and the example of good things to come. Now it is to be noted, while describing that which is the type of the heavenly, that the writer does not mention anything of the courtyard at all, for the very simple rea-

son that there is nothing in the courtyard which is a type of the heavenly, but only things upon the earth.

Verifying this, John was told: "But leave out the court which is outside the temple, and do not measure it, for it has been given to the Gentiles. And they will tread the holy city underfoot for forty-two months." *Revelation* 11:2.

There is but little need to develop this point in this series, as most of those who read these words will already understand these facts and will be prepared to appreciate certain conclusions drawn from them. For those who would like further details on this subject, it has already been dealt with in the book, God's *Way in the Sanctuary,* chapter twenty-four, available from Destiny Press. However, we can spend some time looking at this subject here. First of all, it is to be seen that in the Old Testament times every event which took place in the courtyard was actually visible to the children of Israel who were in that courtyard, but every event which took place within the temple was completely invisible to the people in the courtyard. Only with the eye of faith could they follow the movements of the priest within the sanctuary. Likewise, when Zacharias, the father of John the Baptist, was long in making his appearance because of the angel visitor's detaining him, the people grew anxious for fear that he had been struck down within, where they were not able to see him or even go in to him.

Just as surely as this was so in connection with the earthly sanctuary, so it is true in regard to the heavenly sanctuary. Every event in the typical service, which took place in the courtyard and was witnessed by the people, will likewise in the antitype take place upon the earth and be witnessed by the people of God.

Likewise, every event which in the type took place within the tabernacle hidden from the sight of the people, will, in the antitype, take place within the heavenly sanctuary hidden from human eyes, and can only be followed by faith.

An example of this is the sacrifice of the lamb which took place in the courtyard where all could see it, while its great counterpart, the death of Christ, took place upon this earth where all who were present could see it.

The confession of the sins upon the head of the scapegoat took place in the courtyard while Israel looked on. Therefore the antitype of this must take place upon this earth with the righteous people of God looking on, as witnesses to the event. They will not need the eye of faith to see this, but will see it with their physical sight. The fact of this makes it clear that this event cannot take place until Christ has actually returned to this earth again after He has completed His ministry on the great Day of Atonement.

In the ancient service the priest went into the most holy place of the sanctuary, and, after completing his ministration there, came out through the first apartment, right to the courtyard, the symbol of this earth, and then, and then only, with all the people looking on, confessed the sins upon the head of the scapegoat and sent it away into perpetual banishment.

Likewise, Jesus will complete His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary, come out through the first apartment, after having made the atonement for it as well, and then will come right to this earth of which the courtyard is the symbol, and there in the presence of all the redeemed, will lay upon the head of the devil the sins which he has caused the people of God to commit, and will send him away into the wilderness of a ruined earth for one thousand years, beyond which Satan's destruction will be so complete as to render his banishment from God's kingdom perpetual. Thus the antitype will exactly fulfill the type as given back there in the past, so that we can know the exact timing of the event.

That Satan is the scapegoat has always been the position of the third angel's message, and this position is well supported in the Bible and in the Spirit of Prophecy.

Here is a typical statement in which Satan is named as the scapegoat:

"It was seen, also, that while the sin offering pointed to Christ as a sacrifice, and the high priest represented Christ as a mediator, the scapegoat typified Satan, the author of sin, upon whom the sins of the truly penitent will finally be placed. When the high priest, by virtue of the blood of the sin-offering, removed the sins from the sanctuary, he placed them upon the scapegoat. When Christ, by virtue of His own blood, removes the sins of His people from the heavenly sanctuary at the close of His ministration, He will place them upon Satan, who, in the execution of the judgment, must bear the final penalty. The scapegoat was sent away into a land not inhabited, never to come again into the congregation of Israel. So will Satan be forever banished from the presence of God and His people, and he will be blotted from existence in the final destruction of sin and sinners." *Great Controversy,* 422.

However, strong objection is maintained against this position by the Protestant churches who believe and teach that Jesus Christ is the scapegoat.

They base their argument on the fact that, in the type the scapegoat bore the sins of Israel into the wilderness, and because he is a *bearer* of sin, they maintain that to make Satan the scapegoat is to make him the sin-bearer, a role which they say only Christ can fulfill.

At once the thoughtful student will detect serious difficulties which must arise if the position is taken that Christ is the scapegoat.

In the type, once the final atonement had been made, the sins of the believers were laid upon the scapegoat who was then banished forever from the camp of Israel, nevermore to return; which would likewise have to be true of the Saviour if He is the antitype of this animal. He would have to be forcibly banished from the presence of God and His people forever.

This would be to offer the redeemed a heaven without Christ and that would never be heaven at all. The fact is, that it is not true that Christ is to be banished forever from the camp of Israel, but quite the contrary, He will be King of Israel forevermore throughout the ceaseless ages of an eternity without end. That is what every child of God would want Him to be, and it is what every child of God knows He will be.

This still leaves the question of sin-bearing. The charge that Adventists make Satan to be our sin-bearer is based upon a misunderstanding of the justice of God in laying these sins upon the devil at this time. In no sense of the word does this make Satan to be our sin-bearer. Christ is our sin-bearer, and by His marvelous sacrifice, He purchased those sins from us on the tree and transferred them to the sanctuary.

Thus we are freed from the condemnation of the law and can inherit eternal life as a result, but every sin which has thus been purchased from us was caused by the devil who tempted and deceived us into the committal of those things. Those sins which the Saviour has taken from us must be finally disposed of. Christ does not retain them forever in His possession, for to do so would be to immortalize sin.

Likewise, the very purpose of the final atonement is to cleanse the sanctuary of those sins as they cannot stay there. They must be sent away somewhere, and the only just thing to do is to give them back to Satan who brought them into existence in the first case. So, they are laid upon him, and he suffers the final punishment for all the sins which he has caused the righteous to commit.

The wicked, of course, do not obtain this deliverance, but must suffer for the sins which the devil has caused them to commit. Knowing as he does that he must in the end suffer the punishment of every sin of which the finally saved will have been delivered, Satan labors very hard to prevent our salvation, for he has a very personal interest in seeing that our sins do not finally wind up on him so that he will be forced to suffer the dreadful penalty of them in the all consuming flames at the very end.

Who is to be the fit man who binds the devil and leads him away

into his final captivity? As surely as there was a fit man in the type in the Old Testament, so surely is there to be a fit man in the antitype in the final events.

The record of the fulfillment of the antitype is recorded in *Revelation* 20:1-3: "Then I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key to the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

"He laid hold of the dragon, that serpent of old, who is the Devil and Satan, and bound him for a thousand years;

"and he cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal on him, so that he should deceive the nations no more till the thousand years were finished. But after these things he must be released for a little while."

This does indeed bring to view some interesting facts in the case. In the Old Testament it was one of the children of Israel, a person taken from among men, who led the scapegoat away captive, yet here in *Revelation* 20, it is an angel coming down from heaven who does this. This would certainly seem to produce a situation where the type was not truly fulfilled.

Yet the fact is, that the putting of these two pictures together tells us in the clearest way just who the fit man actually is. There is an Angel who has been taken from among men, and His name is Jesus, the Son of God and man. He is the only One who could fulfill the type given in the Old Testament and at the same time answer to the description given in *Revelation* 20, for He is the only Being in existence who is fit enough, a man, and an angel.

He who was chosen to be the fit man had to be a man of such excellent physical strength and experienced alertness, that he had greater power than the goat and could maintain command and victory over the goat, so that the goat had no choice but to go into the wilderness.

Inasmuch as the goat represented Satan, it is proper to ask, Who alone has the power to lead Satan away? We know that the devil is a mighty foe, far greater in power and might than any human being or company of human beings. We only have the victory over him because Christ defeated him when upon this earth and that victory Christ gives to us as a gift.

"But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." *1 Corinthians* 15:57.

"Beyond the cross of Calvary, with its agony and shame, Jesus looked forward to the great final day, when the prince of the power of the air will meet his destruction in the earth so long marred by his rebellion. Jesus beheld the work of evil forever ended, and the peace of God filling heaven and earth.

"Henceforward Christ's followers were to look upon Satan as a

conquered foe. Upon the cross, Jesus was to gain the victory for them; that victory He desired them to accept as their own. 'Behold,' He said, 'I give unto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and over all the power of the enemy; and nothing shall by any means hurt you.' " *Desire of Ages,* 490.

Jesus alone, then, could qualify as the fit man. It is He who, as the Priest, lays the sins upon the scapegoat, the devil, and it is He, as the fit man, who leads the devil away and chains him for one thousand years.

It may be objected, that in the sanctuary service the high priest is the type of Christ, so if we desire to understand the work of Christ, then we study the work of the high priest, and the high priest is not the fit man. The fact is, this is but a part of the truth. The truth is, if we desire to study a certain part of the work of Christ, then we study the work of the high priest, but if we desire to understand other parts of the work of Christ, then we study other types in the sanctuary. For instance, if we desire to study the great sacrifice of Christ in giving His very life to save the sinner, then we study the submissive sacrifice of the lamb at the door of the sanctuary. In other words, not one, but many types are employed to teach us the many faceted work of Christ.

When the work of the high priest ends, with the confession of the sins upon the head of the scapegoat, then the work of Christ in another role begins—that of leading the devil away into his banishment. It is not as the High Priest that Christ does this, but as the fit man. Therefore, just as certainly as the lamb symbolized one role of Christ, and the high priest another, so the fit man is the symbol of yet another of His great and marvelous works for our salvation.

Thus it will be, as the last act before the glorious retinue returns with Christ to heaven, Jesus, as the great fit man of all time—this Mighty Angel who has come down from heaven and yet was taken from among men—will place all the sins of the righteous upon the head of the scapegoat, and will bind him in banishment for the whole of the millennium at the termination of which he will be loosed but a little season to receive his final reward.

One statement which may come to some as a problem is found in *Early Writings,* 280, 281: "Jesus tarried a moment in the outer apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, and the sins which had been confessed while He was in the most holy place were placed upon Satan, the originator of sin, who must suffer their punishment.

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

If we were to take this statement on its own without reference to the type in the Old Testament and the statement in *The Great Controversy,* 658, then we would perhaps be justified in believing that the sins of the righteous are laid upon Satan before Jesus actually leaves the sanctuary and while, in fact, He is in the first apartment still. On the other hand, to the minds of some it may appear that here we have once again an apparent contradiction between what is written in one place and what is written in another.

However, reference to the way in which both the Bible and Spirit of Prophecy are written clears up any such difficulty. It is the way of the Word of God to pursue a subject through to its end and then go back a little to pick up an alternative or accompanying course of action.

An excellent example of this is in *Matthew* 22:1-10. *Here,* the story of the calls to the bidden ones and their rejection of those calls is prophesied. Upon the second rejection, the prophecy stays with the subject of the bidden ones, right through until their destruction and then returns to tell of the giving of the call to an alternative group, which event actually takes place before the destruction of the bidden ones, even though it is related after. If this is not understood, then one is apt to think that the call to the highways comes after the destruction, which it does not. See *Christ's Object Lessons,* 308-309, for full verification of this in respect to the fulfillment in regard to the Jewish nation.

Likewise, in this paragraph in *Early Writings,* the subject of the disposal of the sins is dealt with through to the point where they are laid upon the scapegoat, and then it returns to tell of the laying off of the priestly robes and the departure from the sanctuary for this earth. It must not be understood that the sins are laid upon Satan in the first apartment of the sanctuary for two reasons. In the first case, that is not where he is to be found, and in the second, it would be at variance to the type in the Old Testament.

This statement says very little, and it is in what it does not say rather than in what it does say that one could be mistaken regarding what will happen. What it does tell you is that Jesus tarries a moment in the first apartment. He gathers up the sins which He had confessed in behalf of His people while He was in the most holy place. These sins were placed upon Satan, who must suffer their punishment.

Now it did not say just when and where they were to be placed upon Satan, and because it does not say this, the reader is apt to think that it is done in the first apartment while Christ is still there. But the statement does not actually say so, and therefore we must not assume that this is what is meant. We must go elsewhere to find

the where and the when, and this is made very clear both in the type and in the statements in *The Great Controversy,* and in *Revelation* 20:1-3.

What a blessed and wonderful day it will be then, as we wing our way through the vast domains of space, with the knowledge that our sins are forever separated from us, as they are fastened upon Satan who has no power to reach us any more to return them to us. May the Lord of Heaven give us the grace and the faith to be true till that time of wondrous rejoicing.

For further study on this subject, see *Early Writings,* 178, 280, 281, 290, 294, 295; *Great Controversy,* 485, 486, 658, 660, 673; *Prophets and Kings,* 591; and Patriarchs and *Prophets,* 358.

Chapter 41

The Millennium

With the scapegoat securely fastened in his bonds, and the saints on their way to their heavenly home, the millennium begins. While the condition of total desolation which will exist upon this earth and the events which take place during this period are very plainly described in the inspired writings, yet today there are in the world the presentation of certain prophetic positions, which speak of the world being inhabited and flourishing during this time. Furthermore, it is a theory which proposes that a second chance for salvation will be given to mankind.

Now, it is not the purpose of this study to examine in detail the actual theories themselves, but rather to present the actual truth on the subject, so that when the error is presented to the mind, then it will be possible to discern very quickly the unscriptural nature of these errors. That this is important is evident from the fact that these theories are becoming more and more common, and will be the very theories which the armies of the Lord will have to combat in the last days.

The truth on this matter, as presented in the clearest possible terms in the Scriptures, is that during the one thousand years after the second coming of Christ, this earth will be a totally uninhabited and ruined wilderness, and not a thriving, peace-filled world of happy inhabitants, with Jesus ruling as King of kings from Jerusalem.

In the first case, when Jesus descends from heaven, every wicked person who has managed to survive the terrible destruction of the seven last plagues will seek to hide from Him in the rocks and mountains which quaking earth will fall on them and destroy them so that not one of them will be left by the time Christ actually gets here. The picture of the total nature of the annihilation of the wicked is set forth in *Revelation* 19. Inverses 11-16 there is given the description of the setting forth of Christ and His armies as they return to this earth just prior to the opening of the thousand year period:

"Now I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse. And He who sat on him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He judges and makes war.

"His eyes were like a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns. He had a name written that no one knew except Himself.

"He was clothed with a robe dipped in blood, and His name is called The Word of God.

"And the armies in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, followed Him on white horses.

"Now out of His mouth goes a sharp sword, that with it He should strike the nations. And He Himself will rule them with a rod of iron. He Himself treads the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

"And He has on His robe and on His thigh a name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS." *Revelation* 19:11-16.

As John witnesses the descent of the King of kings in all his glory, he sees an angel who calls the carrion birds to their last great feast—the bodies of all those who are destroyed in the final war between Christ on the one hand and Satan and his followers on the other. This is described in the remaining verses of the chapter. As these are studied, it is to be seen that the destruction of all living human beings is so complete as to omit no one. There will be included kings, captains, mighty men, horses and horsemen, and all men, free and bond, small and great.

"Then I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the birds that fly in the midst of heaven, 'Come and gather together for the supper of the great God,

" 'that you may eat the flesh of kings, the flesh of captains, the flesh of mighty men, the flesh of horses and of those who sit on them, and the flesh of all people, free and slave, both small and great.'

"And I saw the beast, the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him who sat on the horse and against His army.

"Then the beast was captured, and with him the false prophet who worked signs in his presence, by which he deceived those who received the mark of the beast and those who worshiped his image. These two were cast alive into the lake of fire burning with brimstone.

"And the rest were killed with the sword which proceeded from the mouth of Him who sat on the horse. And all the birds were filled with their flesh." *Revelation* 19:17-21.

As if to make certain that there is no misunderstanding of the message of the verse, the truth of it is repeated in these last two verses. There, the total destruction of the beast and the false prophet is prophesied. This will be a very great destruction of mankind, but not total in itself. After they have been destroyed, there will still be a

remnant of the wicked left, but they will all perish with the sword which proceeds out of the mouth of Christ as He comes from heaven. That sword is the power of His word, the brightness of His coming. (For an explanation of how the sword from Christ's mouth kills the remnant of the wicked, see the chapter, "The Brightness of His Coming", in the book *Behold Your God,* by F. T. Wright.)

Thus, as the people of God ascend on their flight through space, they will leave behind them a depopulated earth to which the devil will be bound for the following thousand years with no one to tempt and nothing upon whom to vent his destructive passions.

Not only is this truth so well and clearly expressed in the New Testament, but it is also to be found just as clearly stated in the Old Testament. To the prophet Jeremiah, as he contemplated the future of Israel, was given a view of the way things were to be when the final judgments of God descended upon the earth. This prophecy is recorded in *Jeremiah* 4:23-27:

"I beheld the earth, and indeed it was without form, and void; and the heavens, they had no light.

"I beheld the mountains, and indeed they trembled, and all the hills moved back and forth.

"I beheld, and indeed there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens had fled.

"I beheld, and indeed the fruitful land was a wilderness, and all its cities were broken down at the presence of the Lord, by His fierce anger.

"For thus says the Lord: The whole land shall be desolate; Yet I will not make a full end.' "

As the first of these verses is read, it serves to remind us of the picture given in the first verses of Genesis of the condition of the world before God shaped it into a productive and beautiful home for the human family. Therefore it may be supposed that Jeremiah is casting his eyes backward instead of forward, that he was being given a view of the earth as it was during the first hours of creation's week.

But a careful reading of the verses shows that this is not so. In the first case, when the earth was without form and void in the beginning, it was covered with water, whereas in the situation described by the prophet, there is dry land in the shape of mountains, hills, and plains all laid out before him.

Furthermore, this cannot be the condition of things at the beginning of creation's week, for there were then no once fruitful places which had become a wilderness, nor were there populous cities which had been broken down.

Furthermore, there was no presence of God's fierce anger in the first creation.

Therefore, the vision given to Jeremiah was not a revelation of the creation of the earth, but of its utter desolation at some future point of time.

Between that portrayal of truth to the prophet and the present moment, there has been no complete fulfillment of this prophecy, no time when populous cities were so broken down to the point where from them all bird life had vanished and all light had been extinguished.

This can only mean that the fulfillment of this prophecy is yet future, and there is no difficulty in determining just when it will be. It can only be when the earth shall reel before the presence of the King of kings, when He returns in the glory of His Father to take the redeemed out of this world of sin into the eternity of peace.

Then, as this prophecy declares, there will be "no man". While at first the birds of the heavens shall feast themselves on the unburied bodies of the dead, the time will soon come when, with their food supply exhausted, even they will disappear in death, until not one living thing is left upon the earth.

There is a very good reason why this period should and will be one thousand years in length. It is the law of the Sabbath that it should be so. In ancient times the Lord declared that the seventh day of the week was His own possession, which the true people of God have always respected as being the property of God. This day was to be to them a day of rest from their labors, along with their families and all their animals. But the land was also to have its Sabbath rest, which was to be the seventh full year. For six years they were to work the land, and the seventh year it was to be left in complete rest, as it is written:

"And the Lord spoke to Moses on Mount Sinai, saying,

" 'Speak to the children of Israel, and say to them: "When you come into the land which I give you, then the land shall keep a sabbath to the Lord.

" ' "Six years you shall sow your field, and six years you shall prune your vineyard, and gather its fruit;

" ' "but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of solemn rest for the land, a sabbath to the Lord. You shall neither sow your field nor prune your vineyard.

" ' "What grows of its own accord of your harvest you shall not reap, nor gather the grapes of your untended vine, for it is a year of rest for the land.

" ' "And the sabbath produce of the land shall be food for you: for you, your male and female servants, your hired man, and the stranger who dwells with you,

" ' "for your livestock and the beasts that are in your land—all its produce shall be for food." ' " *Leviticus* 25:1-7.

But the facts are that during the whole of the six thousand years of human history, that law has never been truly and fully kept the whole world over, so the land has never had its rest. But it shall have it when the righteous have been taken home to the far away land of heaven, and the wicked lie unburied and unmourned upon the earth, and there will be no sowing of seed or gathering of harvest for all of one thousand years.

This means that, if there will be one thousand years of rest for the whole earth, there must be no less than six thousand years of unrest. This is true! From the moment Adam fell until Christ's appearing in the clouds of heaven shall be exactly six thousand years. This fact is actually stated in the Spirit of prophecy. Here are some examples:

"For six thousand years, Satan's work of rebellion has 'made the earth to tremble.' He has 'made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof.' And 'he opened not the house of his prisoners.' For *six thousand years* his prison house has received God's people, and he would have held them captive forever, but Christ has broken his bonds, and set the prisoners free." *Great Controversy,* 659.

This statement is made in the context of the second advent and is really saying that, up till that time, six thousand years of death had reigned under Satan's command, but now, at the end of that period of time his power to keep them imprisoned was over.

‘‘ 'A noise shall come even to the ends of the earth; for the Lord hath a controversy with the nations, He will plead with all flesh; He will give them that are wicked to the sword.' Jeremiah 25:31. For *six thousand years* the great controversy has been in progress; the Son of God and His heavenly messengers have been in conflict with the power of the evil one, to warn, enlighten, and save the children of men. Now all have made their decisions; the wicked have fully united with Satan in his warfare against God. The time has come for God to vindicate the authority of His downtrodden law. Now the controversy is not alone with Satan, but with men. The Lord hath a controversy with the nations;' 'He will give them that are wicked to the sword.' " *Great Controversy,* 656.

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six *thousand years* he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever *delivered* from his presence and temptations. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.' *Isaiah* 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal uni-

verse. The voice of a great multitude,' 'as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings,' is heard, saying: 'Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' *Revelation* 19:6." *Great Controversy,* 673.

With this information, one might conclude it a simple matter to determine the year of Christ's return, if not the month, week, day, or hour. It is generally believed that Christ came to earth four thousand years after creation, leaving just two thousand to expire of the six thousand. Therefore, according to this reasoning, Christ will come in the year 2000.

To come to this conclusion, however, is to be guilty of time setting, and, of that I shall never be guilty. I am fully aware of the numerous statements sternly warning against predicting the time of any future event including the second advent, and to those warnings I render complete obedience.

Some may feel somewhat frustrated at being forbidden from predicting the time for Christ's advent when it seems so obvious that He will come by a certain time. Such would ask why this should be. The fact is that the information supplied in the paragraphs above is not sufficient to determine just when the six thousand years will expire. One unknown factor is the constancy or otherwise of the length of days and years.

We are warned by Peter that "… scoffers will come in the last days, walking according to their own lusts,

"and saying, 'Where is the promise of His coming? For since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation.'

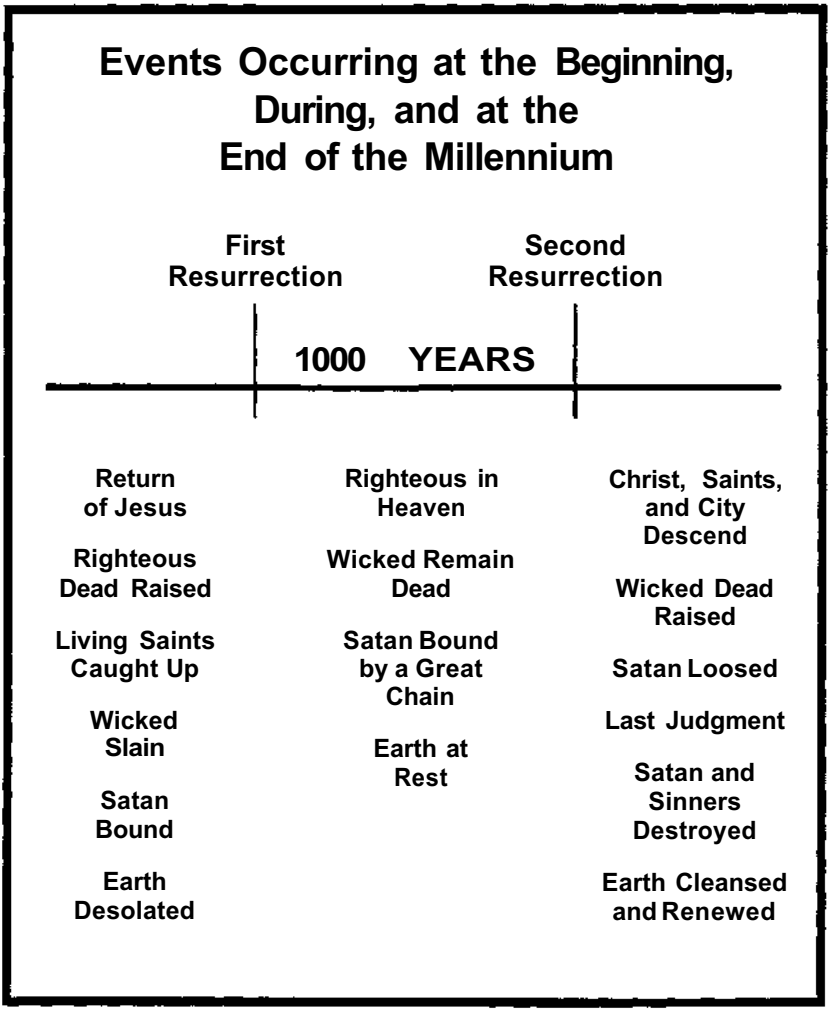
"For this they wilfully forget: that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of water and in the water,

"by which the world that then existed perished, being flooded withwater.

"But the heavens and the earth which now exist are kept in store by the same word, reserved for fire until the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men." *2 Peter* 3:3-7

So there was the world before the flood, and the very different world after the flood. That difference must have included the length of days and years, for three hundred and sixty-five and one quarter days to the year, is an untidy number. I would expect that three hundred and sixty days would be more like what one would expect. That would make each year twelve by thirty day months long.

The question is: "Which year length did God use in His calculation of the six thousand years, or did He use one length up till the time of the flood and a different one thereafter?" The answers to these questions are unknown to us. Therefore, it is impossible for us



to know when the six thousand years will end. But this much is certain. When that time shall expire, Christ will assuredly appear.

While the earth is thus resting from all the turmoil and struggle of the history of mankind, the righteous will *be* in heaven investigating the cases of the wicked, so that their punishments can be accurately meted out at the final judgment, at the end of the millennium.

"During the thousand years between the first and the second resurrection the judgment of the wicked takes place. The apostle Paul points to this judgment as an event that follows the second advent. 'Judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest

the counsels of the hearts.' *1 Corinthians* 4:5. Daniel declares that when the Ancient of Days came, 'judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.' *Daniel* 7:22. At this time the righteous reign as kings and priests unto God, John in the *Revelation* says: '1 saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them.' They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.' *Revelation* 20:4, 6. It is at this time that, as foretold by Paul, 'the saints shall judge the world.' *1 Corinthians* 6:2. In union with Christ they judge the wicked, comparing their acts with the statute book, the Bible, and deciding every case according to the deeds done in the body. Then the portion which the wicked must suffer is meted out, according to their works; and it is recorded against their names in the book of death.

"Satan also and evil angels are judged by Christ and His people. Says Paul: 'Know ye not that we shall judge angels?' Verse 3. And Jude declares that 'the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, He hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day.' *Jude* 6." *Great Controversy,* 660, 661.

It may be asked, Why are the righteous given this task over this period of time? And the answer lies, at least in part, in that thereby they will see the absolute impartiality and justice of God in His selection of those who are to have a part in eternal life and those fated to eternal death. It will be difficult if not impossible to find a person in heaven without a loved one, friend, or acquaintance who will be excluded from the kingdom, while they are inside. This will be a natural sorrow to them, but when they are able to investigate for themselves the complete life-history of each of these people, they will be more than satisfied that each had made his own choice, and that heaven could never admit them except at the fearful peril of a continuation of the dark and terrible anguish of sin.

There could hardly be a punishment more richly deserved than the agony suffered by Satan, as he is given the whole of one thousand years devoid of the least possibility of activity. Heretofore, the fearful terrors of a guilty conscience have been mollified by his tremendous activity, which has given him no time to let his thoughts torture him. But during this time soon to come, he is able to remember the beauty and the wonder of the home he lost because of his rebellion, the misery and destruction he has brought upon the fair earth and its populations, and the utter desolation which now surrounds him, as the end result of his malicious handiwork. For him and for his angels, this is to be the most miserable time ever spent by anyone, anytime, anywhere, and he will have one thousand years of it.

Most terrible of all will be the realization that it has all been for

nothing, for he will then see that he has failed in all the objectives he set out to achieve. Yet he is still unrepentant, still defiant, still determined to fight against God, for when the thousand years come to their end, he rushes out to work on the billions of subjects which have been raised from their graves, to deceive them into supposing that they can yet defeat God and win the eternal kingdom for themselves. No doubt he is encouraged to see that at this time he can command, not just the divided ranks of a single generation, but the united ranks of the generations of the lost of all ages. Among them will be the most skillful soldiers and commanders of every age, together with the most skilled and ingenious scientists of all human history. They are all there, the brave and the strong, the strategist and the tactician, the inventor and the builder, all bound by one common desire to possess the beautiful city which stands in all its glory on the great plain before them. Yet even here Satan is successful in this work of leadership, only as he is able to *deceive* them into thinking that he is the true Christ and that he has the power to rescue them from the "most cruel and terrible tyranny." How well these truths are expressed in the following statement:

"Now Satan prepares for a last mighty struggle for the supremacy. While deprived of his power and cut off from his work of deception, the prince of evil was miserable and dejected; but as the wicked dead are raised and he sees the vast multitudes upon his side, his hopes revive, and he determines not to yield the great controversy. He will marshall all the armies of the lost under his banner and through them endeavor to execute his plans. The wicked are Satan's captives. In rejecting Christ they have accepted the rule of the rebel leader. They are ready to receive his suggestions and to do his bidding. Yet, true to his early cunning, he does not acknowledge himself to be Satan. He claims to be the prince who is the rightful owner of the world and whose inheritance has been unlawfully wrested from him. He represents himself to his deluded subjects as a redeemer, assuring them that his power has brought them forth from their graves and that he is about to rescue them from the most cruel tyranny. The presence of Christ having been removed, Satan works wonders to support his claims. He makes the weak strong and inspires all with his own spirit and energy. He proposes to lead them against the camp of the saints and to take possession of the City of God. With fiendish exultation he points to the unnumbered millions who have been raised from the dead and declares that as their leader he is well able to overthrow the city and regain his throne and his kingdom.

"In that vast throng are multitudes of the long-lived race that existed before the flood; men of lofty stature and giant intellect, who, yielding to the control of fallen angels, devoted all their skill and

knowledge to the exaltation of themselves; men whose wonderful works of art led the world to idolize their genius, but whose cruelty and evil inventions, defiling the earth and defacing the image of God, caused Him to blot them from the face of His creation. There are kings and generals who conquered nations, valiant men who never lost a battle, proud, ambitious warriors whose approach made kingdoms tremble. In death these experienced no change. As they come up from the grave, they resume the current of their thoughts just where it ceased. They are actuated by the same desire to conquer that ruled them when they fell.

"Satan consults with his angels, and then with these kings and conquerors and mighty men. They look upon the strength and numbers on their side, and declare that the army within the city is small in comparison with theirs, and that it can be overcome. They lay their plans to take possession of the riches and glory of the New Jerusalem. All immediately begin to prepare for battle. Skillful artisans construct implements of war. Military leaders, famed for their success, marshall the throngs of warlike men into companies and divisions." *Great Controversy,* 663, 664.

It is very obvious that the devil does not lead his subjects into a hasty and disorganized raid upon the city. He knows very well against whom he is fighting, that he will never have a second opportunity, and that, therefore, he must make the most thorough and detailed preparation possible. It must not be supposed that with the scientists present who were alive upon this earth in the closing days of its history, when the very latest technology was available for destructive warfare, that the devil will be content to arm his hordes with stones and sticks. Nothing less than the best will do. To what extent it will be possible for them to arm themselves with sophisticated weapons, in view of the desolated condition of the earth, it is not possible for us to know now, but we can be sure that it will be the best possible, and it will be quite a little time involved in the preparation and marshalling of this military might.

How long that period of time will be, we cannot now tell. All we can know is that it will be a period of time at the end of which Satan, his angels, and the military geniuses and leaders of mankind will be satisfied that the best possible preparations have been made under the conditions available. Then, at last, the order to advance will be given, and the ordered, organized ranks of the mightiest army ever mustered on the earth will move into position for the attack.

Thus the stage will be set for the last act in the drama of the ages, when every knee, including that of the arch rebel himself, will bow to acknowledge the justice and righteousness of God.

Chapter 42

The Great Judgment Day

It may *well be* asked, Why does the Lord raise all the wicked again at the end of the thousand years, and even permit them to mount a carefully planned and thoroughly organized attack on the holy city? God does nothing without a purpose, by which we are assured that as certainly as He does raise them, then just so certainly is there a purpose in His doing so. More than that, it is strictly necessary that they be raised up for a final settlement of all accounts. That purpose and that necessity, so far as they are revealed in the Word of God, are for us to understand.

The detailed description of that final judgment scene around the city of God reveals that every knee will in the end bow in worship before God and acknowledge that He is the righteous One after all, and that the devil did not have any just cause to rebel against Him. Thus will be obtained the full and final vindication of God and His ways of doing things. But, while God does have a very definite purpose in doing all this, it is not to be supposed that God is seeking a vindication of Himself for the sake of His own pride or such like. To think of God in these terms is to bring Him down to the mean level of sinful man, whereas God operates on a far higher level than this. His purposes are not self-oriented, but are carried forward with the security of His subjects in view. It's for them, and not for Himself that He lives and works.

In the very beginning when the evil one rebelled, it was a direct challenge against the law of God and the Word of God which proclaimed that there was security and safety only in obedience to that law. Now God understands that eternal life and the possibilities for unlimited advancement and happiness in that life are possible only as the law is respected and obeyed, but as the devil challenged the Word of God which declared this, the inhabitants of heaven and the universe were not able to see the full truth of it. To them, the way in which the devil presented his case cast a very serious doubt upon the Word of God, which doubt, while ever it continued to exist, main-

tained a serious condition of danger to the well being of the entire universe. Therefore, if the security and happiness of God's children was to be guaranteed, then that doubt must be absolutely removed. This will be accomplished when both the devil and every one of his subjects voluntarily acknowledges the righteousness of God and the truth of His ways.

Closely related to this purpose, and assistant in the accomplishment of it, is the fairness and justice of God in giving every one of the lost the opportunity to appeal their case before God personally. The vast majority of mankind will have gone down to their graves with a very hateful attitude toward God, blaming Him for all of their woes and troubles. In this life they did not come to see the real truth on the matter, and, except for those who live in the very closing events of the time before Christ comes the second time, will not even have had the opportunity of seeing all these things clearly. Justice demands that that opportunity be given to them, and it will be.

Very important, too, is that it must be demonstrated that the wicked are indeed incorrigible, that their salvation is an impossibility, and that they never will change, no matter what further opportunities could be given to them. It must be shown that all that could ever be done, has been done in this time of probation; during which time the Lord held nothing back which could possibly have brought each and every person to repentance and consequent harmony with God.

Satan, more than any other, by his actions and activities after the millennium, will prove the truth of this. The onlooking universe will remember the loving entreaties by which the Father sought to save him from his fate before he was first cast out of heaven. They will remember his defeat at the cross of Calvary when he, armed with all the weapons of cruelty and force, was defeated by a Saviour, armed only with the love of righteousness. Again they will have seen Satan defeated by those same weapons as the one hundred and forty four thousand triumph in the last days. Then they will have seen Satan with a thousand years in which to think things over, yet at the end of all that he will arise with fresh determination to fight on, as obdurate, and unrepentant, and as wicked as ever. It will be seen that he has not changed in character in the least, that he is the great liar still, and that by the deceptive power of lies he will induce the billions to unite with him in his last great attack against the city of God.

So, unchanged and unchangeable, they make their final, thorough preparations, and then, "at last the order to advance is given, and the countless host moves on—an army such as was never summoned by earthly conquerors, such as the combined forces of all ages since war began on earth could never equal. Satan, the mightiest of warriors, leads the van, and his angels unite their forces for

this final struggle. Kings and warriors are in his train, and the multitudes follow in vast companies, each under its appointed leader. With military precision the serried ranks advance over the earth's broken and uneven surface to the City of God. By command of Jesus, the gates of the New Jerusalem are closed, and the armies of Satan surround the city and make ready for the onset." *Great Controversy,* 664.

The proposed attack is never launched against the city, for as the wicked advance, the Son of God in all His terrible majesty appears above the city on a great white throne. In describing this, John says:

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away. And there was found no place for them." *Revelation* 20:11.

This is an unexpected turn of events, so far as the wicked are concerned, and they are held in their tracks, each eye riveted on the scene before them. Not only is Christ there, but around Him are all the souls whom He has redeemed. Now comes the revelation to the minds of every one of the wicked, as was never possible for them before, of the whole plan of redemption and of the part which each individual has played in the contest of the ages. Each is conscious of every sin which he or she has ever committed. Each is able to see just where and when the divine invitation came to him to forsake those sins and turn to God. Upon each of them descends a terrible sense of condemnation as each recognizes how fully he is to blame for his own lost condition.

Now they will have the opportunity of advancing their own arguments for the defense, but in the light of the evidence presented before them, they know that there is nothing hidden from God, that there is no point in trying to deny the facts of the case or to turn the truth into a lie. They know that they have absolutely no case to plead and that their situation is utterly and completely hopeless.

"The whole wicked world stand arraigned at the bar of God on the charge of high treason against the government of heaven. They have none to plead their cause; they are without excuse; and the sentence of eternal death is pronounced against them." *Great Controversy,* 668.

Not only are they unable to question the justice and impartiality of God in respect to their own eternal fate, for "all see that their exclusion from heaven is just," *Great Controversy,* 668, but they see too that the Lord has not been partial in His selection of those who will not be excluded from heaven and its eternal life.

Imagine the question mark in the mind of Pilate, Caiaphas, Annas, or any other of the lost who were present when Peter denied his Master with curses and swearing, as they see Peter stand close to Je-

sus in all His glory. They would question the justice of God in condemning them to eternal destruction, while Peter, who had done something equally as terrible as they, is given very different and opposite treatment.

But the Lord will not let them go to their eternal deaths without answering that question and clearing forever any doubts or suspicions in respect to the ways of righteousness. Not only will the books of sin and death be opened then, with the full and complete records they contain of all the sinful activities of the condemned, but the book of life will also be opened with the full and complete record of all the activities of the saved open to the wondering gaze of the lost. Therein they will read the full course followed out by Peter, and will see how that he repented and put away his sin as they might have done, but did not, so that they could have been where Peter will be, but will not be because of the course which they themselves will have fully chosen to follow.

That the book of life will be opened at this time is made very clear from *Revelation* 20:12. "And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the book of life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books."

The completeness and the clarity of the evidence not one lost person can deny, and, as the marvelous song of praise ascends from the lips of the righteous, the wicked are moved to confess the perfection and justice of the divine character.

"They witness the outburst of wonder, rapture, and adoration from the saved; and as the wave of melody sweeps over the multitudes without the city, all with one voice exclaim, 'Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of saints' *(Revelation* 15:3); and falling prostrate, they worship the Prince of Life." *Great Controversy,* 668, 669.

At this time the devil does too. At the same time that the wicked are having the full record of their lives and the history of the work of salvation pass before their eyes, Satan relives the whole of his past career.

"Memory recalls the home of his innocence and purity, the peace and content that were his until he indulged in murmuring against God, and envy of Christ. His accusations, his rebellion, his deceptions to gain the sympathy and support of the angels, his stubborn persistence in making no effort for self-recovery when God would have granted him forgiveness—all come vividly before him. He reviews his work among men and its results—the enmity of man toward his fellow man, the terrible destruction of life, the rise and fall of kingdoms, the overturning of thrones, the long succession of tumults,

conflicts, and revolutions. He recalls his constant efforts to oppose the work of Christ and to sink man lower and lower. He sees that this hellish plots have been powerless to destroy those who have put their trust in Jesus. As Satan looks upon his kingdom, the fruit of his toil, he sees only failure and ruin. He has led the multitudes to believe that the city of God would be an easy prey; but he knows that this is false. Again and again, in the progress of the great controversy, he has been defeated and compelled to yield. He knows too well the power and majesty of the Eternal." *Great Controversy,* 669.

It is at this point that the devil finds himself fully and completely alone with none to plead his cause or to fight his battles. His mask of deception is swept away.

"In his last great effort to dethrone Christ, destroy His people, and take possession of the City of God, the archdeceiver has been fully unmasked. Those who have united with him see the total failure of his cause. Christ's followers and the loyal angels behold the full extent of his machinations against the government of God. He is the object of universal abhorrence." *Great Controversy,* 670.

Now for the first time in thousands of years the accusations of Satan against God and His government are silenced.

"And now Satan bows down, and confesses the justice of his sentence.

'Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only are holy: for all nations shall come and worship Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest.' " *Great Controversy,* 670.

At this point the purpose of the controversy and the permitting of it to develop to the point where it came to full maturity, will have been finally *realized.*

"Every question of truth and error in the long-standing controversy has now been made plain. The results of rebellion, the fruits of setting aside the divine statutes, have been laid open to the view of all created intelligences. The working out of Satan's rule in contrast with the government of God has been presented to the whole universe. Satan's own works have condemned him. God's wisdom, His justice, and His goodness stand fully vindicated. It is seen that all His dealings in the great controversy have been conducted with respect to the eternal good of His people and the good of all the worlds He has created." *Great Controversy,* 670, 671.

Even though the devil, all his subjects, and all the sinless dwellers of heaven and earth clearly see and acknowledge the justice and goodness of God in all His dealings with sin, the final capstone of proof is yet to be furnished. It is the proof that when the Lord closed probation on the wicked and declared that there was no further hope of salvation for them, that in this, He spoke the truth. It will be clear

proof of the end result of the outworking of sin in the life which brings a person to the place where the spirit of hatred and revenge is so deep seated as to be irremovable.

If there was the least possibility of hope for the wicked at this final point of time, then their confession and acknowledgement of God's righteousness and of their own sinfulness should lead them to a spirit of submission and resignation to the will of God, but there is nothing of that spirit in them or their fiendish leader.

"Notwithstanding that Satan has been constrained to acknowledge God's justice and to bow to the supremacy of Christ, his character remains unchanged. The spirit of rebellion, like a mighty torrent, again bursts forth. Filled with frenzy, he determines not to yield the great controversy. The time has come for a last desperate struggle against the King of heaven. He rushes into the midst of his subjects and endeavors to inspire them with his own fury and arouse them to instant battle." *Great Controversy,* 671, 672.

In other words, the delayed attack on the city is now ordered by Satan to be put into full and immediate effect, thus demonstrating to the astonished gaze of the wicked and the righteous the full perversity of the devil. Never before will it have been so fully and convincingly shown that the devil is absolutely beyond hope of redemption and that it is quite impossible for the Lord to save him; much as He would desire to do so. He will go down to his last moments of consciousness fighting still. What a grim reminder this is to us even today of the awful perversity of sin. Today we might declare that we would never behave in such a rebellious way, but let sin be entertained and cherished and this is the point to which it will inevitably bring us.

But Satan finds that the order to advance against the city is not obeyed. There is not one person who can see the least possibility of success in this direction. Furthermore, they are fully awake now to the real nature of their leader, whom they see as the cause of all their troubles and difficulties.

Satan will deliver his commands then, "but of all the countless millions whom he has allured into rebellion, there are none now to acknowledge his supremacy. His power is at an end. The wicked are filled with the same hatred of God that inspires Satan; but they see that their case is hopeless, that they cannot prevail against Jehovah. Their rage is kindled against Satan and those who have been his agents in deception, and with the fury of demons they turn upon them." Great Controuersy, 672.

Sin brings a steady decline in power, and it would seem that at this time the devil will have lost the power of invisibility and of flight, so the people of earth can both see and reach him, and he will feel

the savage rage of those whom he has led to destruction as no mind could imagine nor pen portray.

Nor will the wicked be content to use their bare hands upon Satan and his agents who have led them to destruction. The very weapons, so carefully prepared for the attack upon the city, will be used to satisfy their lust for vengeance against their enemies. Such weapons very well could be such as have not yet even been invented—cosmic and nuclear weapons, of a nature which we have not as yet seen, capable of triggering an atomic chain reaction which will set the world on fire.

Those who truly understand that the Lord does not destroy the sinner, but that sin and sinners destroy themselves as the inevitable result of the outworking of sin itself, do not view the fires of this time as being directly sent by God, but rather as the bursting forth of a fire which the sinner himself will set in force. Then how fully and finally the righteousness of God will be vindicated.

Suffice it to say here, as the wicked turn upon their leaders, there will be the bursting forth of no ordinary fire which will utterly consume both the sin and the sinner, together with the great leader of sin from the dawn of its inception. The holy city will ride upon the flames as did Noah's ark upon the angry billows, until the fire, having consumed its victims and purified the earth, dies down and is extinguished.

" The wicked receive their recompense in the earth.' *Proverbs* 11:31. They 'shall be stubble: and the day that cometh shall bum them up, saith the Lord of host.' *Malachi* 4:1. Some are destroyed as in a moment, while others suffer many days. All are punished 'according to their deeds.' The sins of the righteous having been transferred to Satan, he is made to suffer not only for his own rebellion, but for all the sins which he has caused God's people to commit. His punishment is to be far greater than that of those whom he had deceived. After all have perished who fell by his deceptions, he is still to live and suffer on. In the cleansing flames the wicked are at last destroyed, root and branch—Satan the root, his followers the branches. The full penalty of the law has been visited; the demands of justice have been met; and heaven and earth, beholding, declare the righteousness of Jehovah.

"Satan's work of ruin is forever ended. For six thousand years he has wrought his will, filling the earth with woe and causing grief throughout the universe. The whole creation has groaned and travailed together in pain. Now God's creatures are forever delivered from his presence and temptations. The whole earth is at rest, and is quiet: they [the righteous] break forth into singing.' *Isaiah* 14:7. And a shout of praise and triumph ascends from the whole loyal uni-

verse. 'The voice of a great multitude,' 'as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings,' is heard, saying: 'Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.' *Revelation* 19:6." *Great Controversy,* 673.

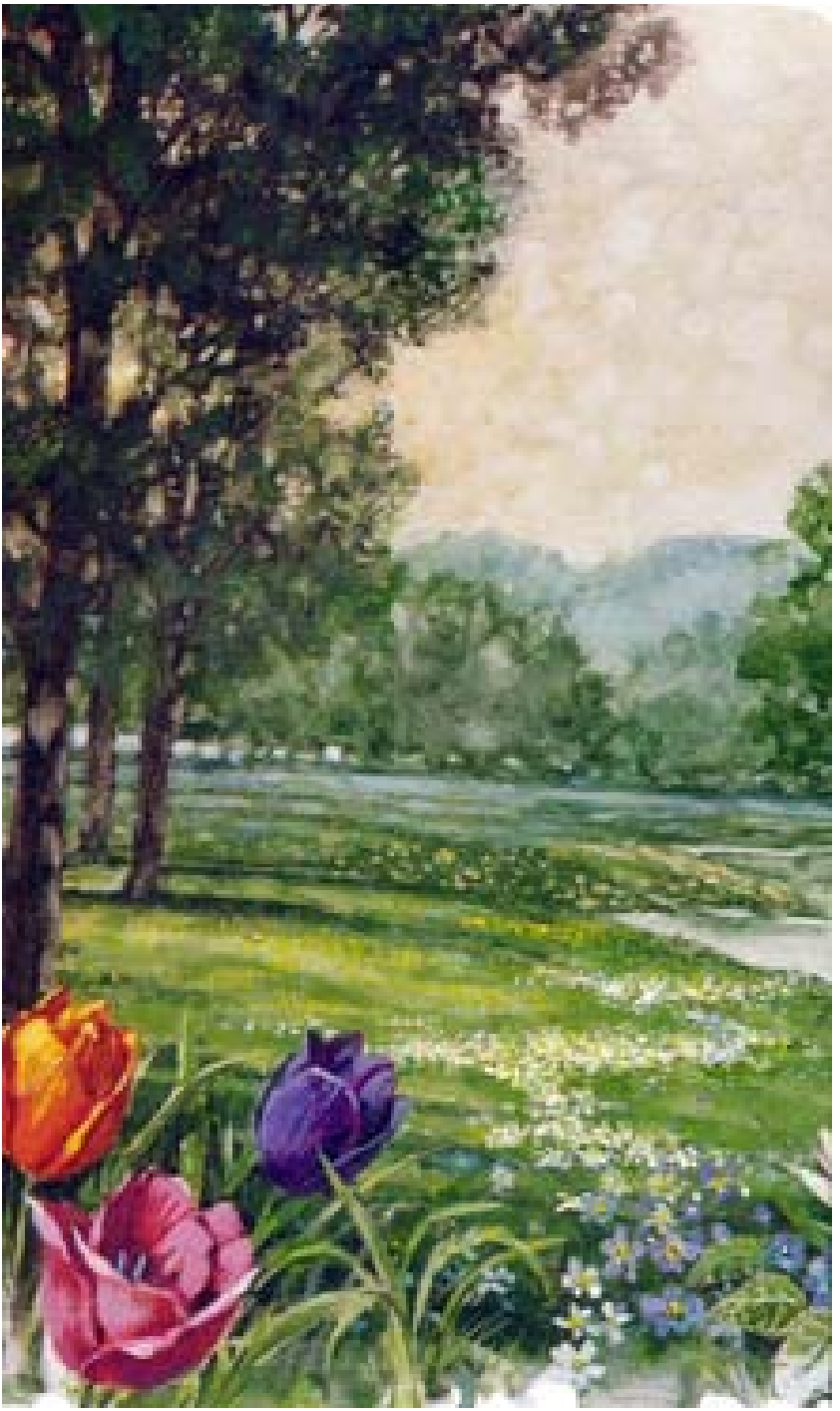
Then out of the dust shall arise, under the power of God's creatorship, a new heavens and a new earth, every inhabitant of which, having been witness to what sin can do, will be forever secure against any possibility of any doubt ever arising in their minds as to the ways and the works of God. Sin shall never again appear to mar the fair handiwork of God, and all the redeemed will rejoice forevermore in the peace and the prosperity and the accomplishments of heaven.

Those who learn today to live by the principles of truth, will be there to live by them then. May every one of our readers be of such.

" 'I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away.' *Revelation* 21:1. The fire that consumes the wicked purifies the earth. Every trace of the curse is swept away. No eternally burning hell will keep before the ransomed the fearful consequences of sin.

"One reminder alone remains: Our Redeemer will ever bear the marks of His crucifixion. Upon His wounded head, upon His side, His hands and feet, are the only traces of the cruel work that sin has wrought. Says the prophet, beholding Christ in His glory: 'He had bright beams coming out of His side: and there was the hiding of His power.' *Habakkuk* 3:4, margin. That pierced side whence flowed the crimson stream that reconciled man to God—there is the Saviour's glory, there 'the hiding of His power.' 'Mighty to save,' through the sacrifice of redemption, He was therefore strong to execute justice upon them that despised God's mercy. And the tokens of His humiliation are His highest honor; through the eternal ages the wounds of Calvary will show forth His praise and declare His power.

" 'O Tower of the flock, the stronghold of the daughter of Zion, unto Thee shall it come, even the first dominion.' *Micah* 4:8. The time has come to which holy men have looked with longing since the flaming sword barred the first pair from Eden, the time for 'the redemption of the purchased possession.' *Ephesians* 1:14. The earth originally given to man as his kingdom, betrayed by him into the hands of Satan, and so long held by the mighty foe, has been brought back by the great plan of redemption. All that was lost by sin has been restored. 'Thus saith the Lord . . . that formed the earth and made it; He hath established it, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited.' *Isaiah* 45:18. God's original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal abode of the redeemed. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.' *Psalm* 37:29.



"A fear of making the future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to look upon it as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in the Father's house. Those who accept the teachings of God's word will not be wholly ignorant concerning the heavenly abode. And yet, 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him.' *1 Corinthians* 2:9. Human language is inadequate to describe the reward of the righteous. It will be known only to those who behold it. No finite mind can comprehend the glory of the Paradise of God.

"In the Bible the inheritance of the saved is called 'a country.' *Hebrews* 11:14-16. There the heavenly Shepherd leads His flock to fountains of living waters. The tree of life yields its fruit every month, and the leaves of the tree are for the service of the nations. There are ever-flowing streams, clear as crystal, and beside them waving trees cast their shadows upon the paths prepared for the ransomed of the Lord. There the wide-spreading plains swell into hills of beauty, and the mountains of God rear their lofty summits. On those peaceful plains, beside those living streams, God's people, so long pilgrims and wanderers, shall find a home.

" 'My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.' 'Violence shall no more be heard in thy land, wasting nor destruction within thy borders; but thou shalt call thy walls Salvation, and thy gates Praise.' They shall build houses, and inhabit them; and they shall plant vineyards, and eat the fruit of them. They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: . . . Mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.'Isaiah 32:18; 60:18; 65:21, 22.

"There, 'the wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose.' 'Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir tree, and instead of the brier shall come up the myrtle tree.' 'The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; . . . and a little child shall

OPPOSITE PAGE: The eternal home of the saved will be a world of incredible beauty charged with eternal life, incredible vitality, perfect health, divine love, and limitless opportunities. It will be the place where the inexhaustible treasures of truth will be opened to the redeemed, before whom there will ever be new wonders to admire, new heights to ascend, and new glories to behold. Neither shall there be any more pain, sickness, or death, for all that has passed away. Nothing could be more wonderful than to be apportioned a mansion there, nor more terrible than to be excluded from its eternal joys.

lead them.' 'They shall not hurt nor destroy in all My holy mountain,' saith the Lord. Isaiah 35:1; 55:13; 11:6,9.

"Pain cannot exist in the atmosphere of heaven. There will be no more tears, no funeral trains, no badges of mourning. There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying: . . . for the former things are passed away.' The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.' *Revelation* 21:4; Isaiah 33:24.

"There is the New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth, 'a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.' 'Her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal.' The nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honor into it.' Saith the Lord: 'I will rejoice in Jerusalem, and joy in My people.' The tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.' *Isaiah* 62:3; *Revelation* 21:11, 24; *Isaiah* 65:19; *Revelation* 21:3.

"In the City of God 'there shall be no night.' None will need or desire repose. There will be no weariness in doing the will of God and offering praise to His name. We shall ever feel the freshness of the morning and shall ever be far from its close. 'And they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light.' *Revelation* 22:5. The light of the sun will be superseded by a radiance which is not painfully dazzling, yet which immeasurably surpasses the brightness of our noontide. The glory of God and the Lamb floods the Holy City with unfading light. The redeemed walk in the sunless glory of perpetual day.

" 'I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.' *Revelation* 21:22. The people of God are privileged to hold open communion with the Father and the Son. 'Now we see through a glass, darkly.' *1 Corinthians* 13:12. We behold the image of God reflected, as in a mirror, in the works of nature and in His dealings with men; but then we shall see Him face to face, without a dimming veil between. We shall stand in His presence and behold the glory of His countenance.

"There the redeemed shall know, even as also they are known. The loves and sympathies which God Himself has planted in the soul shall there find truest and sweetest exercise. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with the blessed angels and with the faithful ones of all ages who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together 'the whole family in heaven and earth' (Ephesians 3:15)—these help to constitute the happiness of the redeemed.

"There, immortal minds will contemplate with never-failing delight the wonders of creative power, the mysteries of redeeming love. There will be no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed, every capacity increased. The acquirement of knowledge will not weary the mind or exhaust the energies. There the grandest enterprises may be carried forward, the loftiest aspirations reached, the highest ambitions realized; and still there will arise new heights to surmount, new wonders to admire, new truths to comprehend, fresh objects to call forth the powers of mind and soul and body.

"All the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God's redeemed. Unfettered by mortality, they wing their tireless flight to worlds afar—worlds that thrilled with sorrow at the spectacle of human woe and rang with songs of gladness at the tidings of a ransomed soul. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfalien beings. They share the treasures of knowledge and understanding gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God's handiwork. With undimmed vision they gaze upon the glory of creation—suns and stars and systems, all in their appointed order circling the throne of Deity. Upon all things, from the least to the greatest, the Creator's name is written, and in all are the riches of His power displayed.

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

'And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever.' *Revelation* 5:13.

"The great controversy is ended. Sin and sinners are no more. The entire universe is clean. One pulse of harmony and gladness beats through the vast creation. From Him who created all, flow life and light and gladness, throughout the realms of illimitable space. From the minutest atom to the greatest world, all things, animate and inanimate, in their unshadowed beauty and perfect joy, declare that God is love." *Great Controversy,* 674-678.

Appendix

One's Own Image of the Beast

As far back as I can remember, I have been aware of the principle so plainly stated in both the Bible and the Spirit of Prophecy, that, even if we personally suffer loss by so doing, we are, under no circumstances whatsoever, to resort to the courts of the civil powers of this earth to settle disputes among us, or as the means of recovering that which is ours by right. The Scriptures are so plain on this point that there can be no excuse of any kind for disobeying the divine command.

"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?

"Do you not know that the saints will judge the world? And if the world will be judged by you, are you unworthy to judge the smallest matters?

"Do you not know that we shall judge angels? How much more, things that pertain to this life?

"If then you have judgments concerning things pertaining to this life, do you appoint those who are least esteemed by the church to judge?

"I say this to your shame. Is it so, that there is not a wise man among you, not even one, who will be able to judge between his brethren?

"But brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers!

"Now therefore, it is already an utter failure for you that you go to law against one another. Why do you not rather accept wrong? Why do you not rather let yourselves be cheated?

"No, you yourselves do wrong and cheat, and you do these things to your brethren!" *1 Corinthians* 6:1-8.

For the Spirit of Prophecy illumination on this point, I direct you to *Selected Messages* 3:299-305, and recommend that you all read these pages carefully, and heed the counsel contained in them.

"Christians need not contend for their rights. They stand under

the protection of the banner of Christ. They are to acknowledge the supreme authority of the King of kings and Lord of lords. In matters of difficulty between them and their brethren, they are not to appeal to Caesar or to Pilate. An account is kept of all these matters; and in His own good time, Christ will avenge His own elect. God will deal with the one who defrauds his brother and the cause of God. 'Vengeance is mine,' He says; 'I will repay.' " *Review and Herald,* January 3,1899.

With these principles of operation, I have never had any problem, but now I have to confess that I have never truly understood the real implications involved in these instructions. Now that I do understand them much better, the revelation is quite startling. I see now that for me to turn to the civil powers for justice would be for me to operate according to the ways of the beast, and would therefore be my own personal establishment of my image of the beast.

But is that not saying too much? How can this be?

To answer that question we have but to ask another:

What must happen before an image of the beast is formed?

The answer is that the Church appeals to and obtains the power of the civil authorities to enforce the will of the Church on the people. Once that is done, no matter by whom, or when, or where, or on what scale, an image of the beast exists. It may be a miniature version involving only two people, but, as such, it will be the foreshadowing of the global version soon to engulf the entire planet. Whichever it is, the specifications are the same, as it is written in regard to the coming global version:

"When the leading churches of the United States, uniting upon such points of doctrine as are held by them in common, shall influence the state to enforce their decrees and to sustain their institutions, then Protestant America will have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result." *Great Controversy* 445.

Let us now compare the setting up of the image on the national and global scale, with its being set up on the scale of two people.

The united churches seek and gain the services of the civil powers to enforce the will of the churches on the people. When this is done, the image of the beast is formed. That will soon be accomplished on the global scale.

Now for the individual case. A believer in Christ is deprived of his rights by a fellow believer, or any one else for that matter. He seeks and gains the services of the civil powers to force his will on the one who has defrauded him.

What difference is there between these two? And the answer is: There is no difference except in scale.

Therefore, any person who, at the present time is operating according to the ways of the beast and his image, unless he repents before it is too late to do so, is daily more deeply committing himself to becoming a working force in the setting up of the final image of the beast. All such will be merciless persecutors of all those who accept God's protection alone. But in the end God's people will emerge triumphant from the coming struggle.

Therefore it is written:

"Dare any of you, having a matter against another, go to law before the unrighteous, and not before the saints?" *1 Corinthians 6:1.*

Therefore, a Christian is never to fight for his rights, but shall leave all such matters in the Lord's hands.

It is evident that we have not yet *realized* how serious a matter it is for anyone of us to make an image to the beast in any shape or form whatsoever, but we can gain some idea of this from the terrible warning issued by God against those who do. Ponder well the following words:

"The most fearful threatening ever addressed to mortals is contained in the third angel's message. That must be a terrible sin which calls down the wrath of God unmingled with mercy. But men are not left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against the worship of the beast and his image is to be given to the world before the visitation of God's judgments, that all may know why the judgments are inflicted, and may have opportunity to escape." *Signs of the Times, January 25,* 1910.

"The third angel's message increases in importance as we near the close of this earth's history. It is the last offer of mercy to the world, the most solemn message ever given to mortals." *Signs of the Times,* January 25, 1910.

Consider again the solemn warning of the third angel:

"Then a third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, 'If anyone worships the beast and his image, and receives his mark on his forehead or on his hand,

'he himself shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out full strength into the cup of his indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb.

'And the smoke of their torment ascends for ever and ever; and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whoever receives the mark of his name.' " *Revelation* 14:9-11.

What, in practical terms, does it mean to "worship" the beast?

It can be said that the actions of reverencing, adoring, venerating, and exalting are all involved in "worshipping" the beast, and this is true, but we need to understand far better than we do the

deep, underlying significance of these actions. In other words, what is a person saying when he "worships" the union of church and state! Is it possible for one to unwittingly form such an image, while thinking he is truly serving God?

One who worships the beast and his image is saying that the way of kingdom-building and of problem-solving employed by the beast, is also his way of operating, and unless enlightened by the third angel, will be convinced he is truly serving God, even as did the persecuting priests during the Middle Ages. Just as in the formation of the image of the beast, the churches enlist the power and authority of the civil powers "to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church", *The Signs of the Times,* March 22,1910, so individual Christians seek the power of the state to enforce their will on others for the recovery of their rights and to ensure they are justly treated.

What now strikes the heart with the fear of the Lord, is God's revelation of how He relates to the procedure by which the image of the beast comes into being, and by which it works. The Almighty has warned through the trumpet tones of the third angel, that those who are in any way involved in setting up the image of the beast will suffer the full force of God's wrath unmingled with mercy. No more fearful punishment could befall sinful man than that. It is a retribution to be avoided at any cost. Escape, or be a tragic sufferer of the seven last plagues.

The decision as to where we shall stand when the image is formed, firstly on a national scale as America leads out, and then on a global scale as the nations follow her lead, is being made today. Any professed Christian who in any way looks to the power of the state to enforce his will, is revealing that the spirit of the beast is established within him, and, unless he or she sees and accepts the awesome warning sounded by the third angel, the evil spirit within him will lead him on until he fully identifies himself with the beast and his image.

"With rapid steps we are approaching this period. When the Protestant churches shall unite with the secular power to sustain a false religion, for opposing which their ancestors endured the fiercest persecution: *when the state shall use its power to enforce the decrees and sustain the institutions of the church,*— then will Protestant America have formed an image to the Papacy, and there will be a national apostasy which will end only in national ruin." Signs *of the Times,* March 22,1910.

It is a solemn fact that the fulfillment of these predictions on the national and international scale is still in the future, and no pen can adequately portray how terrible will be the conditions which will ex-

ist when the image is set up throughout the entire earth. It will be the initiation of a time of trouble such as truly never was.

One danger faced by us is that our attention may be so fixed on looking out for the future manifestation of the beast and his image, that we will overlook his presence in ourselves now. We pride ourselves that, when the image is set up, there will be no way by which we will bow to it, but, if we already have our personal image set up, we will most certainly be an enforcer of the future global version when it comes. There is nothing more certain than that.

The truth of this was demonstrated in Daniel's day when he and his three friends were among those selected for special training for service in the Babylonian kingdom. How many were selected apart from the faithful four, we are not told, but there could have been quite a company. No doubt most of them at least would have solemnly sworn that they would never bow down to a Babylonian idol should they be required to do so, while at the same time reasoning the expediency of partaking of the king's intemperate eating habits. This they saw as a means of proving to the king that they were not wild-eyed fanatics, so that when the time came for them to be excused from idol-worship, the monarch would gladly grant their request.

What a vain hope was theirs! They failed to understand that those who, without repentance, choose the wrong side now, will utterly fail when the big tests are pressed upon them. When the image was *erected* on the plains of Dura, the only ones who were able to refuse to bow to it were those faithful four who had refused to eat and drink of the king's provisions. So it will be again that only those who have been delivered from having their own personal image today, will be able to withstand the final, international, universal image, and thus be saved from the awful fate of partaking of her plagues.

Consider very carefully the message in the following statement:

"The Bible is its own expositor. Scripture is to be compared with scripture. The student should learn to view the word as a whole, and to see the relation of its parts. He should gain a knowledge of its grand central theme, of God's original purpose for the world, of the rise of the great controversy, and of the work of redemption. He should understand the nature of the two principles that are contending for supremacy, and should learn to trace their working through the records of history and prophecy, to the great consummation. He should see how this controversy enters into every phase of human experience; how in every act of life he himself reveals the one or the other of the two antagonistic motives; and how, whether he will or not, he is even now deciding upon which side of the controversy he will be found." *Education,* 190.

Scripture Index

GENESIS
6:3 179
32:30 382

EXODUS
1:15,16 300
1:22 301
5:2 (ARV) 346
31:18 312

LEVITICUS
16:11-14 163
164
16:15-19 164
16:20-22 431
16:21 432
25:1-7 443
444

DEUTERONOMY
25:17-19 379
33:25 319

JUDGES
1:27-36 272

1 SAMUEL
15 380
30 380

1 KINGS
18:17 253
18:17,18 56
18:39 27
21:8 292
320

1 CHRONICLES
4:43 380

PSALMS
34:7 291
37:29 457
46:1-3 410
416
50:3,4 155
50:6 416
72:4 131
77:13 163
91 415
91:1-16 403
404
91:7-10 323
97:11 2

PROVERBS
1:27 409
4:18 2
3
4:23 201
11:31 456
23:7 201

ISAIAH
11:6,9 459
460
14.7 444
456
14:16, 17 444
24:4, 5 55
290
302
338
25:9 54
409
26:20 331
30:29, 30 332
32:18 459
33:15,16 324
33:24 460
35:1 459
41:2 361
41:17 324
45:1 361
45:13 361
45:18 457
52:1 258
52:14 131
53:3,4 131
53:4,5 155
53:7 131
55:13 459
59:2 86
87
60:18 459
62:3 460
65:19 460
65:21,22 459

JEREMIAH
4:23-27 442
25:12 71
25:31 444
30:5-7 134
363
30:5-8 294
30:6 423
30:7 139
212

EZEKIEL
1:4 170
14:20 382
18:21-24 224
28:12 328
28:14 329

DANIEL
2 4
7
7 4
5
7
7:9,10 82
170
7:13 82
7:22 447
7:25 4
7:27 144
145
8 4
5
7
8:14 4
9 5
7
9:24 75
173
9:24-27 272
274
11 7
12 7
12:1 132
288
293
297
382
12:1,2 405
406
12:2 405
424

HOSEA
4:17 184

JOEL
1:10-12 322
323
1:17-20 323
2:23 138
210
2:28-32 51
175

AMOS
3:7 1
60
8:3 323

MICAH
4:8 457

NAHUM
2:10 423

HABAKKUK
2:2 2
3:3,4 422
3:4 457
3:12 294
3:17,18 324

ZECHARIAH
3:1-5 281
3:4 71
282
3:4, 5 308
10:1 138
210

MALACHI
3:2,3 217
3:18 397
411
418
4:1 456
4:2 427

MATTHEW
5:16 371
13:24-30 145
146
13:38 146
13:39 148
13:47-50 152
18:21-35 222
223
18:35 224
21:33-46 71
21:41 409
22 232
263
22:1-10 73
77
93
438
22:1-14 70
22:3 88
22:4 76
81
22:7 77
78
22:8,9 95
22:8-10 149
22:10 149
24:15 6
24:24 48
24:31 331
424
25:1-13 71
25:6 82
83
133
26:63,64 407
26:64 407
27:42,43 408
409

27:50-53 167
27:52,53 429
32:38 179

MARK
4:28 138
13:14 6

LUKE
9:62 65
10:19 437
21:8-19 319
21:16 279
23:21 409

JOHN
8:32 229
11:50 133
291
14:30 201
17:24 336
398
19:6 409

ACTS
2:1-4 51
2:4 53
2:14-16 52
2:16 175
3:19 144
190
5:28 247
8:1 76

ROMANS
1:16 24
32
5:1,2 385
5:3 385
8:17 362
9:28 272
290

1 CORINTHIANS
2:9 459
4:5 446
447
6:1 464
6.-1-8 462
6:2 447
6:3 447
10:13 196
13:12 460
15:52 413
425
15:55 412
427
15:57 436

2 CORINTHIANS
13:1 69

GALATIANS
6:7 108

EPHESIANS
1:12,13 190
195
1:14 457
3:15 460
5:27 80
6:12 49

PHILIPPIANS
2:15 122

COLOSSIANS
1:27 84

1 THESSALONIANS
2:3 30
4:13-18 406
429
430
5:4-6 1
5:23,24 87

2 THESSALONIANS
1:7,8 155
2:3 20
2:9-11 244

1 TIMOTHY
6:20 66

2 TIMOTHY
3:1-5 37
3:4, 5 234
3:12 252

TITUS
3:5 223

HEBREWS
1:1-3 169
1:3 82
4:1 273
274
4:7 272
274
4:8 274
8 432
8:1 82
8:1,2 166
169
9 432
9:1-10 432
11:14-16 459
11:39,40 429

JAMES
l.-13(RV) 204

1 PETER
1:10-12 7
2:2 196

2 PETER
1:19 1
3:3-7 445

JUDE
6 447

REVELATION
1:1-3 8
1:6 362
1:7 405
407
3:7 179
182
3:9 395
419
3:18 261
3:19 37
3:21 169
170
362
4 82
429
4:2-6 168
4:5 168
5 82
429
5:8-10 171
172
5:13 461
6:11 320
6:15-17 426
7:2 144
190
8:3 168
169
9:4 190
9:5 191
9:14 355
10:6 191
289
10:7 83
11:8 346
355
11:12 433
11:13-17 135
11:19 169
11:24 460
12:9 329
12:10 369
386
13 40
45
13:1-10 12
45
13:4 117
13:7 117
13:8 117
185
326
13:11-14 48
49
13:11-17 17
134
142
143
189
238
13:11-18 9
12
13:13 49
13:13, 14 54
13:15 10
13
13:16 122
235
14 217
14:6 32
34
119
14:6-12 5
60
61
101
406
14:8 63
98
99
100
102
233
243
244
14:9 119
14:9,10 236
297
329
14:9-11 464
14:14 294
15:3 453
16 45
16:1-21 316
16:2-6 321
16:5-7 317
318
16:9-11 318
16:10 333
16:10,11 325
16:12 344
355
16:12-16 42
16:14 6
43
16:17 341
342
398
16:17-21 399
400
16:18 414
16:19 400
16:21 400
17 45
17:5 43
100
112
17:12-14 46
17:15 352

18 45 98 101 243
18:1 102 233
18:1-3 18
18:1-4 61 99 107
18:2 102 104 105 233
18:2,5 303
18:4 62 66 102 233 234
18:5 61 102 234
18:8 288
18:10 289
18:17 289
18:19 289
19 45
19:6 445 457
19:9 34
19:11 45
19:11,14 422
19:11-16 46 440 441
19:16 422
19:17,18 47
19:17-21 441
19:19 47
19:20 48
20:1-3 436 439
20:4 319
20:4,6 447
20:11 452
20:12 453
21:1 457
21:3 460
21:4 97 460
21:11 460
21:22 460
22:5 460
22:6,7 8
22:11 297 423
22:11,12 288 307 373
22:12 149

Spirit of Prophecy Index

A WORD TO THE LITTLE FLOCK
12 293 294

ACTS OF THE APOSTLES
11 59
53 107

BIBLE ECHO AND SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Feb1,93 3 4

CHRIST'S OBJECT LESSONS
70 146
72 148 256
74 151
84,85 108
122 162 184
122,123 152 153 239
154 205
206 71
307 74
308 76 77 94
308,309 77 78 438
310 149 150
333 87
363 27
411 257
412 132 133 144 219 237
419,420 206

DESIRE OF AGES
115 130 307 308
121,122 124 125
122 251 390 392
124 131 308
311 195
324 200 222
490 90 436 437
633,634 273
761 179 386
768 167
786 429

EARLY WRITINGS
15 419 420 425
16 294
36 298
42 216
55 83 171
58 197
75 332
124 396 420
146 178 179
178 439
259,260 109
260,261 109 111
269-271 246 258 259
269-272 153
270 161 259 260
277 104 105 106 107 241
280 80 292 298 439
280,281 437
281 439
282 364 365
282,283 293
283 366
284 365
284,285 366
286 412
287 412
290 439
294 439
295 439

EDUCATION
29 200
190 466

ELLENG. WHITE 1888 MATERIALS
484 319

EVANGELISM
198 **5**
235 16
695 84
695,696 273
702 218

GREAT CONTROVERSY
41,42 21 22
42,43 22 23
43 23
269 346 347 355
344 4 7 8
382, 383 100
389 31 98 99 100 243 244

390 101
234
402 65
414,415 168
169
418 206
420 224
225
422 434
424(1884) 243
425 140
141
142
217
373
427 83
438 329
443 29
443, 444 20
30
445 12
13
115
463
448, 449 13
457, 458 111
458 273
464 234
235
480 313
483 184
185
485 439
486 439
489, 490 138
139
490 184
230
490, 491 307
491 310
521,522 2
581 320
586 35
36
587 36
38
301
302
588 52
53
588, 589 54
589 55
338
589, 590 55
290
302
338
590 56
252
253
291
339
603 102
233
243
603, 604 233
604 61
62
66
102
234
235
236
604, 605 236
237
605 237
239
605,606 107
240
606 241
243
606-609 129
607 175
245
246
248
608 135
136
252
255
258
259
262
608,609 265
266
278
609 12
270
613 190
613,614 144
145
614 296
297
312
615 305
615,616 133
134
291
292
616 134
369
618 80
273
275
308
619 375
620 378
621 174
383
621-623 381
382
622 176
270
271
623 201
624 48
337
627,628 297
298
300
628 321
322
323
629 324
631 320
634 320
635 331
332
635, 636 332
335
636 336
341
342
357
359
360
397
398
636, 637 414
637 342
400
405
414
424
637-640 409
638 409
410
415
638, 639 410
416
639 410
411
416
639, 640 397
411
417
418
419
640 412
419
640,641 422
641 423
643, 644 407
408
409
645 413
424
425
427
654 336
337
340
655 337
655, 656 340
396
397
656 444
657 426
658 432
438
439
659 444
660 439
660,661 446
447
663, 664 448
449
664 451
452
668 314
452
668, 669 453
669 453
454
670 454
670, 671 454
671,672 455
672 455
673 439
444
445
456
457
674-678 457
458
459
460
461

LIFE SKETCHES OF JAMES AND ELLEN WHITE

431 215

MARANATHA

199 319

OUR HIGH CALLING

321 385

PATRIARCHS AND PROPHETS

39 178
201 132
134
297
363
339, 340 155
350 165
358 439
627 379

PROPHETS AND KINGS

188, 189 122
453 312
588 372
591 439
686, 687 131
714 78

REVIEW AND HERALD

Dec 17, 72 157
Aug 12,84 385
Nov 25, 84 3

Dec 18, 88 15
17
103
Jun 18, 89 3
Nov 5,89 103
Mar 11, 90 87
Apr 1,90 112
Apr 15, 90 17
Jun 3, 90 3
Aug 19, 90 71
Nov 4,90 223
Dec 23, 90 92
Mar 22, 92 192
Nov 22,92 113
Jan 3, 99 462
463
Jul 5,06 177
178
181
Nov19,08 308
331

SDA BIBLE COMMEN-TARY

1:1109 312
313
2:995 27
4:1161 192
196
6:1052 309
7:968 319
7:971 191
289
7:976 15
17
134
143
189
238
248
327
7:979 177
178
181
7:982,983 43
7:983 14
44
46
47
121
327
7:984 212
213
7:987 186
7:989 309

SELECTED MESSAGES
1:63,64 68
69
179
181
1:234,235 89
273
1:348 386
2:69 159
2:372 116
2:373 16
2:380 263
3:299-305 462
3:397 319

SIGNS OF THE TIMES
Jun 17, 89 168
Oct 1,95 3
May 6, 97 119
120
121
Jan 25, 10 464
Mar 22, 10 465

SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD
51 192

SPALDING AND MAGAN COLLECTION
1 125
126

SPIRIT OF PROPHECY
2:226 214
4:290 192
4:407 302
4:444,445 126
128
4:447 294
295

STEPS TO CHRIST
62 223
224

STORY OF REDEMPTION"11
66l 11

TESTIMO-NIES
1:186 184
1:187 182
183
218
1:353 139
2:355 373
374
4:583, 584 177
5:80,81 66
5:81 67
5:136 264
5:209, 210 246
5:212,213 132
5:383 106
5:451 16
103
5:464,465 17
18
364
5:472,473 279
5:473 285
291
5:473, 474 369
370
5:681 108
6:18 15
119
327
6:395 15
119
327
7:141 122
123
7:182 121
327
9:16 308
18,19 34
91 88
407 48
409 130

TESTIMO-NIES TO MINISTERS
47 159
91 112
91,92 261
234 148
300 150
256
407 337
409 285
307
448 183
467 89
473 131
285
506 138
140
208
210
213
214
507 174
175

THOUGHTS FROM THE MOUNT OF BLESSING
60 201
116 204
128, 129 261

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