

Unraveling **Revelation**



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Introduction

I have felt for some time that there should be a small booklet that would explain a few chapters of Revelation, a booklet that would create a desire in the minds of people to know more about this last book of prophecy.

Now, with a feeling of great responsibility, I undertake to unravel a few chapters of Revelation, showing some of the hidden mysteries that are brought to light both in history and prophecy.

If I have explained any symbol in a way that the reader can understand what the Revelator wrote about, I shall be satisfied and give God all the glory. I send this little booklet forth praying that God may bless many souls through the message that it carries.

Yours in the Master's service,

—A. Q. Bridwell

Unraveling Revelation

A Book of Symbols

The Book of Revelation is not a sealed book, as some think. “And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 22:10. “Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” Revelation 1:3. These scriptures show that the Book of Revelation is not a sealed book; it is something revealed.

Since the Book of Revelation is a book of symbols, we will give biblical interpretations as to what is meant by a symbol. “My people hath been lost sheep: their shepherds have caused them to go astray” Jeremiah 50:6. Sheep are here given as a symbol of God’s people. Shepherds are symbols of the pastors. (Matthew 25:31-46.) Jesus shows that sheep are a symbol of God’s people while the goats are a symbol of unsaved people. “. . . Go ye, and tell that fox, . . .” Luke 13:32. Jesus used a fox as a symbol of Herod because Herod had the characteristics of a fox. When Jesus spoke of wolves in sheep’s clothing, He meant people with a profession of religion but inwardly they were filled with wickedness. So you will remember that the woman (Revelation 12:1) does not symbolize a literal woman but is symbolical of the true church. The woman of Revelation 17 symbolizes an apostate church. Beasts symbolize a kingdom; waters symbolize people. (Revelation 17:15.)

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Woman—Revelation 12:1

“And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars.” (Revelation 12:1.) This woman was clothed with God’s salvation. “Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.” Revelation 19:7-8. She was dressed in righteousness. The twelve stars are a symbol of the twelve apostles. The moon under her feet is a symbol of the Old Testament. For under the Old Testament the people could not have sin removed from their hearts by the sacrifice of animals. (Hebrews 10:3.) “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it.” Ephesians 5:25. “For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Ephesians 5:30-32.

It seems to me that God could not have chosen a more beautiful symbol of His church than a clean woman dressed in white. On the other hand, I think that He could not have chosen a more appropriate symbol of the apostate church than a drunken woman filled with fornication and wickedness.

Christ Is the Bridegroom

“Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom’s voice:

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this my joy therefore is fulfilled. He must increase, but I must decrease. John 3:28-30. Christ then is the head of the church. “He is the head of the body, the church: . . .” Colossians 1:18. This church has only one head, or husband. “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a chaste virgin to Christ.” II Corinthians 11:2. Christ was crucified, buried, resurrected, went back to heaven to prepare a place for His bride. “In my Father’s house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.” John 14:2-3.

Since Christ was the Son of the living God (Matthew 16:16), He was the Son of the highest. (Luke 1:32.) “Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11. Jesus Christ was the only begotten Son of God. Then He is divine. He was not begotten by the will of man but by the Holy Ghost. “And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” Luke 1:35. Since Christ is divine, He is the head of the church.

The Church Is a Divine Organization

“For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” Ephesians

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5:30-32. “For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.” I Corinthians 12:12. “And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence.” Colossians 1:18. The church is a divine organism by virtue of a spiritual birth. “Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.” II Peter 1:4. The church is not a church among sectarian churches, but the church of God is the bride of Christ. Her origin is divine and she stands by the side of her husband, with Jesus Christ, her head.

The Name of the Church

Since Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the church is His wife, naturally she would be called by His Father’s name. “I am come in my Father’s name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive.” John 5:43. How can you reject the church of God without rejecting Christ? For Christ and His church are one. “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.” Acts 20:28. “Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.” I Corinthians 1:2.

These two scriptures show the name of the universal church, and also the local church at Corinth. Other Scriptures also bear out the same testimony. “For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.” I Corinthians 15:9. “For ye have heard of my conversation in

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time past in the Jews' religion, how that beyond measure I persecuted the church of God, and wasted it." Galatians 1:13. "For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?" I Timothy 3:5. "But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." I Timothy 3:15.

This will prove to those who will accept the testimony of the Scriptures that the name of the church is the church of God and the body is the church, then there is only one church with Jesus Christ as the head. And the fact that every saved person is in the body makes all Christians one in Christ.

What Is the Name of the Local Congregations?

Local congregations have the same name as the universal church. "For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judea are in Christ Jesus: for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews." I Thessalonians 2:14. In this scripture Paul mentions the local churches in Judea, and if you will examine the map, you will see that Jerusalem is in Judea; so the first church that was established was the church of God, for Christ bought it with His blood. "So that we ourselves glory in you in the churches of God for your patience and faith in all your persecutions and tribulations that ye endure." II Thessalonians 1:4. "But if any man seem to be contentious, we have no such custom, neither the churches of God." I Corinthians 11:16. These scriptures prove that the name of the universal church is the church of God and that the local congregations were called by the same name. This is the woman of Revelation 12:1. This is the woman (church) that went into the wilderness. (Revelation 12:6.)

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And it is the same woman that is coming out of the wilderness.
(Song of Solomon 8:5.)

The Man Child

“And she [the woman, the church] being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Revelation 12:2. This analogy between a woman suffering in the pains of childbirth was to show the earnestness of the early church in its deep soul travail that souls might be converted. In the fifth and sixth verses the writer states that the woman was delivered of a man child. Some people think that Christ is the man child spoken of here. But that could not be, for Christ is the head of the church; He is not an offspring of the church. F. G. Smith in *The Revelation Explained*, says the man child “Symbolized the mighty host of new converts, or children, that the early church by her earnest travail brought forth.” (p. 217.) Albert Barnes says, “It refers to the church.” Robertson says, “This child is a collective expression and takes in the whole brood of the church under paganism.” Since we have the testimony of these men, let us turn to God’s Word and see what it has to say. “And the dragon was wroth with the woman [church], and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Revelation 12:17. Here is positive evidence from the Word of God that the seed (man child) was the children of God, for only the children of God keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. But we have other evidence that many people are represented as being one man. We will give one more scripture: “Before she travailed, she brought forth; before her pain came, she was delivered of a man child. Who hath heard such a thing? who hath seen such things? Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once? for as soon as

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Zion travailed, she brought forth her children.” Isaiah 66:7-8. On the day of Pentecost three thousand souls were added to the church and in a short time there were thousands of others added to the church. **Zion** means the church. Peter said the Christians were a holy nation. (I Peter 2:9.)

It seems that this is enough scriptural evidence to prove that the man child was the saved people during the reign of pagan Rome, and these were slain for the Word of God. These souls are symbolized by the man child being caught up to God and His throne. The woman going into the wilderness is a symbol of the church upon earth that was being pursued by the dragon.

The Red Dragon—Revelation 12:3

We have given a picture of the first symbol of Revelation 12, which shows two phases of the early church: the man child caught up to heaven and the woman in the wilderness. But we must establish the identity of the next symbol so that we may be able to see the truth. “And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon [notice that the writer uses the definite article “the”] stood before the woman [the church] which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.” Revelation 12:3-4. Here is another symbol entirely different from the first symbol.

Some good brethren do not believe in bringing out the political side, but we find that prophecy is history prewritten. The prophet foretold events before the historian made a record of them. So true prophecy and true history will harmonize.

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We have here a terrible looking creature of a mythological nature, a symbol drawn from the animal kingdom. Daniel tells what a beast symbolizes. In the seventh chapter of Daniel he saw four beasts and the last one had ten horns. "These great beasts, which are four, and four kings, which shall arise out of the earth." Daniel 7:17. Then, according to Daniel's interpretation, a beast means a kingdom. "Thus he said, The fourth beast shall be the fourth kingdom upon earth, which shall be diverse from all kingdoms, and shall devour the whole earth, and shall tread it down, and break it in pieces. And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings." Daniel 7:23-24. These four kingdoms are: Babylon, Medo-Persia, Grecian and Roman. The second chapter of Daniel tells us that Nebuchadnezzar saw an image and Daniel gave the interpretation and told the king that he was the head of gold. (Daniel 2:38.) Nebuchadnezzar was the king of Babylon at that time. Then the head of gold and the first beast of Daniel 7 symbolizes the same kingdom—Babylon.

The next two kingdoms are also named in the writings of Daniel. "The ram which thou sawest having two horns are the kings of Media and Persia. And the rough goat is the king of Grecia: and the great horn that is between his eyes is the first king." Daniel 8:20-21. This was Alexander. We shall here give biblical testimony to show that Persia was the kingdom that followed Babylon. "And them that had escaped from the sword carried he away to Babylon; where they were servants to him and his sons until the reign of the kingdom of Persia: To fulfill the word of the Lord by the mouth of Jeremiah, until the land had enjoyed her sabbaths: for as long as she lay desolate she kept sabbath, to fulfill threescore and ten years." II Chronicles 36:20-21. This was the seventy years spoken of by Jeremiah. (Jeremiah 25:11.) "Now in the first year of Cyrus king of

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Persia, that the word of the Lord spoken by the mouth of Jeremiah might be accomplished, the Lord stirred up the spirit of Cyrus king of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom, and put it also in writing, saying, Thus saith Cyrus king of Persia. All the kingdoms of the earth hath the Lord God of heaven given me; and he hath charged me to build him an house in Jerusalem, which is in Judah. Who is there among you of all his people? The Lord his God be with him, and let him go up.” II Chronicles 36:22-23. These texts show that the Persian kingdom was the next kingdom after Babylon. Many times God used the contemporary kingdoms to chastise His people when they would not live by His Word. It is impossible successfully to bring out the truths about God’s people without showing the contemporary political kingdoms that were in existence.

It is evident from the scriptures quoted that the first three kingdoms were: Babylon, Persia and Grecia. These were followed by the establishment of the empire or Rome and reign of Caesar Augustus from 31 B. C. to 14 A. D.

We reiterate that prophecy is history prewritten. God spoke by the mouth of Daniel saying, that “. . . In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which . . . shall break in pieces . . . all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.” Daniel 2:44. And in Daniel 2:34 he stated that the rock that was taken out of the mountain without hands would smite the image that Nebuchadnezzar saw upon his feet. (This rock was the church, with Christ at her head.)

Let us note the scriptural interpretation as to whether pagan Rome was a universal kingdom at the time Christ was born and during the time when He set up His church. “And it came to pass in those days, that there went out a decree from Caesar Augustus that

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all the world should be taxed. And all went to be taxed, every one into his own city.” Luke 2:1-3. At this very time Joseph and Mary went up to be taxed and Jesus was born in Bethlehem. Here is proof from history and the Word of God that pagan (heathen) Rome was a universal kingdom at the birth of Christ. It continued until 476 A.D., when it was abolished.

Now to the symbol of Revelation 12:3, the red dragon. There is no doubt but that this is a symbol of pagan Rome. It had seven forms of government: 1. regal, 2. dictatorial, 3. decemviral, 4. consular, 5. triumviral, 6. imperial, 7. patrician. The imperial head was the persecuting head which was in existence when John wrote the Book of Revelation. Now this red dragon was to stand before the woman (church) and devour her child as soon as it was born. History records a great persecution against the Christians during the reign of Nero. Nero was emperor of Rome at the time mentioned in the Book of Revelation. Nero accused the Christians of having conspired to burn the city in order to help out their prophecies. The doctrine which was taught by some that the world would be destroyed by fire lent color to the charge. “The persecution that followed was one of the most cruel recorded in the history of the church. Many victims were covered with pitch and burned at night to serve as torches in the imperial gardens. Tradition preserves the names of the apostles Peter and Paul as victims of this persecution.” (*Myers Gen. Hist., Rev.*, p. 284. A. D. 64, the tenth year of the reign of Nero.) There were nine other persecutions against the church by the Roman power that caused thousands of Christians to be put to death in many different ways. “The reason the pagans persecuted the Christians rather sprang from political motives. It was believed that the welfare of the State was bound up in careful performance of the rites of the national worship. They required men of every faith to recognize the Roman gods and burn incense to their statues; this the Christians

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refused to do. This neglect was thought to anger their gods, bringing droughts, pestilence and every disaster. This brought persecution.” You can see by these historical facts that they are a fulfillment of the prophecy that the dragon was trying to destroy the man child, which is a symbol of the people of God under pagan rule. But you say that he called the dragon the devil, Satan and serpent. The Revelator said in Revelation 12:9 that he was called the devil and Satan. Jesus said in John 6:70, “Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?” He had reference to Judas. The word devil means accuser; that is what pagan Rome was doing, accusing the Christians of all kinds of things that they were not guilty of. The word Satan means adversary. So you can see that pagan Rome was an adversary to the church. Serpent means subtle. Those people who were murdering God’s people were filled with the devil and they were doing all they could to defeat the church and overthrow its work. Hear the words of Christ as He describes those who are murderers. “Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.” John 8:44. Jesus called Judas a devil because the devil was in him and He said the devil was the father of these people and the lust of their father they would do. He said that they were murderers. So John, in writing about the Roman nation that persecuted and killed the people of God, could call them Satan, the devil or serpent and speak the truth.

Binding and Loosing the Dragon

The historical and biblical facts prove that pagan Rome is symbolized by the red dragon. (Revelation 12:3.) This is the same dragon that is laid hold on by the angel in Revelation 20. Revelation 12:3 says, “And there appeared another wonder in

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heaven; . . . a great red dragon, . . .” The indefinite article is used here. If you will notice after that when the dragon is spoken of the Revelator uses the definite article **the** every time. This shows that he has reference to the same dragon. In the first three centuries God’s church is represented as overcoming the dragon “by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony.” (Revelation 12:11.) Constantine issued an edict in 313 A. D. that read as follows: “We grant to Christians and to all others full liberty of following that religion which each may choose.” (*Myers Gen. Hist.*, p. 301.) Another of Constantine’s acts touching the new religion is of special historical importance. He recognized the Christian Sunday, “the day of the sun,” as a day of rest, forbidding ordinary work on that day and ordering that Christian soldiers be then permitted to attend the services of their church. This recognition by the civil authority of the Christian Sabbath meant much for the slave. “Now, for the first time in history of Aryan peoples, the slave had one day of rest in each week. It was a good augury of the happier time coming when all the days should be his own.” (*Myers Gen. Hist. Revised*, p. 302.) During the reign of Theodosius 379 to 395 A. D. the Christian religion was made the state religion. Theodosius was associated with Gratian.

The Prohibition of Pagan Cult

“Both Gratian and Theodosius were zealous champions of the orthodox church and a large portion of the edicts issued during their joint reign had for aim the uprooting of heresy or the suppression of the pagan worship. Speaking generally, from the accession of Constantine down to the time which we have now reached, the pagans had been allowed full liberty of worship. At first the pagans were merely placed under certain disabilities, but finally it was made a crime for anyone to practice any pagan cult or even to enter a

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temple. In the year 392 A. D. even the private worship of the Lares and Penates was prohibited. The struggle between Christianity and heathenism was now virtually ended—and the Galilean had conquered. Pagan rites, however, were practiced secretly long after this.” (*Myers Gen. Hist., Revised*, p. 306.) In 476 A. D. Odoacer, the leader of the Heruli, a small formidable German tribe, dethroned the child emperor. (*Myers Gen. Hist., Revised*, p. 315.) This is the close of Ancient History. Since Roman paganism was overthrown in 476 A. D., the devil could not use this heathen power to persecute the church any longer. Perhaps you will ask, “What deceived the people through the dark ages that followed?” It was a false Christianity in the form of papal Rome.

It was through the preaching of God’s Word that Constantine was influenced to make the decree that the Christian religion should have a place among other religions and that Christians should have their liberty and freedom. Then when Roman paganism was abolished in 476 A. D. the devil could not use its doctrine to deceive the people. You must remember that the religion of pagan Rome was polytheism, many gods. In fact, you could worship any kind of a god you wanted to just so you obeyed their national rites and burned incense to their statues. This the Christians refused to do. So after the thousand-year period the devil was to be loosed a little season and go out and deceive the nations. “And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, God and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.” Revelation 20:7-9. In the twelfth chapter of

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Revelation John said the tail of the dragon would draw the third part of the stars of heaven and cast them down to the earth.

George Herbert Betts sent a questionnaire to seven hundred ministers and students of various faiths in 1930. He found the answers to show that only nine percent of these preachers believed in a personal devil, only twenty-five percent believed in the virgin birth of Christ, only twenty-eight percent believed in the atonement and only eighteen percent believed in man's resurrection.

In answer to a questionnaire by the Northwestern University in Chicago, IL, February 8, 1934, sixty-nine out of one hundred pastors denied hell being a place. Fifty-four percent said there is no devil. Since we find by reading the first chapter of Revelation, which shows that a star symbolizes a minister, then the devil must be loose at this time in the form of atheism, infidelity, evolution, spiritualism and every other ism that is against God's Word. Jesus Christ gave us a picture of the last days. "And as it was in the days of Noe, so shall it be also in the days of the Son of man. They did eat, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noe entered into the ark, and the flood came, and destroyed them all. Likewise also as it was in the days of Lot; they did eat, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they builded; But the same day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven, and destroyed them all." Luke 17:26-29. Then he adds: "Even thus shall it be in the day when the Son of man is revealed." Luke 17:30. This shows that the day Christ comes will be the consummation of this world and the things that are therein.

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When Is the Reign of Christ?

There are many people today who are looking for a period of one thousand years, somewhere in the future, when Christ will set up His kingdom upon earth and reign with His people. They say the devil will be bound during that period. Let us lay aside our preconceived ideas and make an investigation by letting the Bible do its own interpreting. So in the light of the Scripture, we will examine some of the main points in Revelation. “And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. And he laid hold on the dragon [pagan Rome], that old serpent, which is the Devil [accuser], and Satan [adversary], and bound him a thousand years. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls [disembodied spirits of people who had been killed] of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Revelation 20:1-4. These people had been killed before the beasts, papal Rome, Protestantism and the image came into existence, so they were killed under the reign of pagan Rome. The Revelator says, “I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, . . . and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” The souls of these martyrs were caught up to a place of rest in the presence of God. He did not say, “I see people who have been resurrected walking around here on earth reigning with Christ.”

When Does the Resurrection Take Place?

“She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth.” I Timothy 5:6.

There are two kinds of dead: spiritual and literal. “But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with him a thousand years.” Revelation 20:5-6. What is the second death? I shall let the Bible answer, for he said these who had part in the first resurrection, the second would have no power over them. “And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.” Revelation 20:14. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Revelation 21:8. Here are two texts that positively state that the unsaved will be hurt by the second death or will be cast into the lake of fire. Then the question would be—what kind of a resurrection will keep a sinner out of the lake of fire? Listen to the Word of God: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.” Revelation 2:11. The liar is not an overcomer but is being overcome by the devil. Then who is an overcomer? “For whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith. Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?” I John 5:4-5. “Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.” I John 5:1. Then to be converted is to be born again. “We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the

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brethren. He that loveth not his brother abideth in death.” I John 3:14. Yet another text on this point says, “Verily, Verily. I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” John 5:24. This shows that those who are saved are not condemned and only those who are condemned will be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death. So the first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection. Adam died a spiritual death first; if the first death is a spiritual death, then the first resurrection is a spiritual resurrection.

Literal Resurrection of the Dead at Christ’s Second Coming

We have been dealing with those who were raised from the dead state of sin but we now turn to the question of the resurrection of the body. The apostle Paul was charged with teaching false doctrine. Here is his testimony. “And have hope toward God, which they themselves also allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust.” Acts 24:15. He positively states that both the wicked and righteous shall be raised from the dead.

The great controversy is that there will be a period of one thousand years between the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked which is not supported by the Word of God. “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming [this is His second coming] of the Lord shall not prevent [precede] them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we

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which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.” I Thessalonians 4:14-18. This shows that the Christians shall be resurrected at the second coming of Christ and that the living righteous will not be caught up to meet the Lord before the righteous dead are raised, but the righteous dead will be raised first and all be caught up together to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord.

The apostle John tells us the day that this will take place. “And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.” John 6:39. “. . . And I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:40. “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:44. “Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day.” John 6:54. Then according to these texts the righteous will be raised on the last day, at the second coming of Christ. For Paul stated positively that the righteous would be raised at the coming of Christ. And John said it would be the last day. There will be no more days, as we know them, after the last day. But it will be a never- ending eternity. “Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha saith unto him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.” John 11:23-24. But what about the wicked dead? “Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation.” John 5:28-29. Here Jesus positively states that the righteous and the wicked will be resurrected in the same hour and we have proved that the righteous will be raised on

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the last day. What day will the Judgment take place? “He that rejecteth me, and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day.” John 12:48. Then the Judgment will be the last day. “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.” Revelation 20:11-12. The remainder of this chapter tells of the Judgment scene. And the first part of the twenty-first chapter tells of the new heaven and earth, where there is no sickness, sorrow, death or any such things, for they had passed away with the first earth. We must remember that the general resurrection destroys death. No one will ever die after that for physical death is done away with in the resurrection of the body from the grave and the changing of those who are living at His coming. Paul said it would happen in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Christ’s Reign Is This Side of the Resurrection

“For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.” I Corinthians 15:22-26. Then the reign of Christ is this side of the resurrection for then is when physical death is destroyed. “For if by one man’s offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive

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abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:17. “But his citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us.” Luke 19:14.

Friends, if you do not let Christ reign in your life here, you will miss heaven. Perhaps you will ask, “Do you believe in the second coming of Christ?” Yes, indeed, I believe in Christ’s second coming and when He comes it will be eternal glory for the righteous and eternal punishment for the wicked. In Matthew 25:31-33, Christ tells us that there will be a separation. The righteous will go into life eternal and the wicked into eternal torment. Oh sinner, prepare to meet thy God!

Unraveling Chapter 13

“And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, . . . ” Revelation 13:1. Instead of the crowns in this symbol being upon the heads, as they were on the dragon, they were upon the horns. According to Daniel 7:24 and Revelation 17:12, a horn is a symbol of a king, for John and Daniel both positively state that the ten horns are ten kings. Under pagan Rome the crown was upon the emperor. After the fall of pagan Rome, ten minor kingdoms arose with their kings and, of course, the kings wore the crowns. “And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon [pagan Rome] gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast. And they worshipped the dragon which gave power unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying, Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war with him?”

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Revelation 13:2-4. The head that was wounded to death will be explained in the seventeenth chapter. Notice that this beast took the same seat that the dragon, pagan Rome, had, which was in the city of Rome. Historians will tell you that papal Rome followed pagan Rome. Here is a beast which means a kingdom and can be applied to a spiritual kingdom as well as a literal kingdom. Here it is a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church. The question arises: Does the Pope have temporal power? The following statement is quoted from *Catechism of Christian Doctrine, Book Four*, p. 90: "What power besides spiritual power does the Pope Possess? (Answer) He also possesses temporal power in the states of the church. What power have bishops in their diocese? (Answer) They have power to teach, to administer the sacraments, and to govern the faithful; in other words, they have, within the limits of their respective diocese, the same power that the Pope exercises over the whole church." (p. 91.) The papal church claims temporal power as well as spiritual power.

Did you know that the United States is divided up into sixty- six diocese with sixty-six bishops appointed by the Pope, to whom nominations are made by the clergy? These nominations may be accepted or rejected. The diocese are united in thirteen provinces, each under an archbishop, and over all are three cardinals appointed from Rome. So American Catholics are under the rule of the Pope. (*Hurlbut's History*, p. 166.) We quote from a newspaper clipping printed February 6, 1929: "Vatican City, February 6—The pontifical banner, yellow and white, bearing the insignia of the tiara or triple crown and the massive cross keys of St. Peter below it, was run up this morning at dawn in the courtyard of St. Damascus, in the heart of the Vatican City State, to commemorate the eighth anniversary of Pope Pius XI's election to the highest office in the Catholic world. . . . A year ago the Pope was still 'the prisoner of the Vatican.' Today he is . . . a free and independent monarch in his own

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domain and many of the messages received touched on that fact.” This shows that the Pope still has a shadow of temporal power.

“And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Revelation 13:5-7. This shows the time period, twelve hundred and sixty years, also that he should make war on the saints and that his power should be universal, also that he would blaspheme God. “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, . . . shewing himself that he is God.” II Thessalonians 2:3-4. Here is a scripture describing the man of sin. Let us examine another quotation from the catechism. “Why is the Pope called the Vicar of Christ? (Answer) Because he holds Christ’s place and represents him upon earth.” (p. 88.) The Pope of Rome does not take Christ’s place upon earth any more than any other man. However, he claims power on earth to forgive sins: “Who in the Church has power to forgive sins? This power belongs to the Pope, the successor of St. Peter, to the bishops, the successors of the apostles, and to the priests approved by bishops.” (*Catechism*, p. 95.) Is this not blasphemy against God?

The papal church made war upon the Christian people, calling them heretics; those people who were born of the Spirit of God could tell that the Roman Catholic Church was not the true church. Revelation 13:10 says, “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: . . .” The Pope was a prisoner in his own domain from

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1870 until 1929. He has only a small piece of land now which has been given him by Mussolini. Referring back to the Book of Revelation we read, “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.” Revelation 13:11. Here is a beast that looks more like a sheep (dressed up in a Christian profession) but yet he speaks as a dragon; this is a symbol of Protestantism. The two horns symbolize Germany and Great Britain who supported Protestantism at the beginning. Verses 12-18 tell us that this beast also has power. The verses reveal that those who have the mark, or name, or number of his name could buy or sell; this no doubt has reference to the doctrine and teachings of sexism. We must belong to them, or have fellowship with them, else they will not let us preach (buy or sell) in their sectarian churches. Verse 18 says that the number of the beast is 666; the Pope wears a triple crown upon which are the words, VICARIUS FILII DEI, which numerically make 666. (See p. 264, *The Revelation Explained* by F. G. Smith.) This identifies the beast as the Roman Catholic Church, and the two-horned beast like a lamb, as Protestantism. Since the papal church left the Word of God and the Spirit of God and made their own catechism, so Protestantism makes its own disciplines instead of living by the Word of God, and its disciplines are an image of the catechism, as well as the organization with a human head with human laws to govern the churches. So the Romish church has her human head, with human laws (catechism) to govern it. In this you can readily see that Protestant organizations are an image of the papal church.

The Seventeenth Chapter of Revelation

This chapter has reference to some of the same things as the thirteenth chapter, so an explanation of it will be made at this time. “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials,

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and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.” Revelation 17:1-3. In these three verses the Revelator said that the woman was “sitting upon many waters”—we will here insert the biblical interpretation. “And he saith unto me. The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15. The woman is here represented as having two positions: sitting upon the waters, and sitting upon the scarlet colored beast which no doubt represents the Catholic Church sitting upon the kingdoms of the world; sitting upon the people symbolizes her spiritual power over the people. It must be remembered that the beast in its persecuting power was to continue 1,260 days, which symbolizes 1,260 years. “After the number of the days in which ye searched the land, even forty days, each day for a year, shall ye bear your iniquities, even forty years, and ye shall know my breach of promise.” Numbers 14:34. “And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.” Revelation 17:4-6. This is a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church as she rode the political powers and caused them to kill the people of God. What an awful

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charge against a church, drunk on the blood of the saints. Think of the Massacre of Bartholomew's Day, August 4, 1572. From twenty to one hundred thousand were killed. Queen Mary executed many persons, trying to bring her people back to the Roman Catholic Church. More than three hundred thousand perished during the reign of Louis XIV of France. *Foxe's Book of Martyrs* says that about fifty-five million people were killed under pagan and papal Rome. This shows the woman drunk on the blood of the saints. This woman had great power during that period of time. "And the woman . . . is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth." Revelation 17:18. History records that the popes could put kings on or off their thrones when they pleased. Of course God had made a decree that there would come a time when the kings would assert their authority against the woman (papal church). "And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfill his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled." Revelation 17:16-17. Here is a positive statement that the kingdoms would support the woman (Roman Catholic Church) until God's Word should be fulfilled, then they would hate her. Germany and England first turned against the papal church and supported the Protestant move, other kingdoms have followed since, and threw off the Roman yoke. In verses 12-14 is stated plainly that the kings and the Lamb should overcome them, for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings. In verses 7-11 we notice that John was receiving instruction as to what the seven heads meant. The Revelator continues, ". . . The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is [the imperial head was in power at that time], and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must

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continue a short space. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.” Revelation 17:9-11. When Odoacer captured the city of Rome in 476 A. D., pagan Rome was abolished (this is the imperial head wounded to death but did live). Revelation 13:3. This being the sixth head, the seventh head was the patriciate. Charlemagne was made patrician in 774 by the Pope. On Christmas day, 800 A. D. Charlemagne was crowned by Pope Leo. This brought back the imperial head (that had been wounded to death). This brought back the line of emperors that was ended when Odoacer captured Rome 324 years before. Since Charlemagne was the seventh head while he was patrician, the act of crowning him emperor of Rome made him the eighth head. The eighth then was of the seventh. Papal Rome has always been against true salvation, according to the Word of God. Of course she does not have the temporal power today, or, no doubt, we would know more about persecution than we do. If you will study your history and compare it with prophecy, you will see that some of the things which John wrote about are being fulfilled at the present time.

Unraveling Chapter Eleven

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

These Scriptures show that God had something to measure the temple with and also those that worship therein. If we can find out what the temple is, we can tell what the measuring reed is. First we notice that the Temple of Jerusalem was destroyed in 70 A. D. when Titus besieged the city. Even the foundations were dug up. John

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wrote the Book of Revelation in 96 A. D. If we take the chronology of the Bible, then it would not be the literal Temple at Jerusalem that he said to measure, for it was not in existence at that time.

The Book of Revelation is a book of symbols and the Temple of Jerusalem was the type of a spiritual temple under the New Testament. This temple is the church of the Living God which is composed of saved men and women. “Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you? If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy; for the temple of God is holy, which temple ye are.” I Corinthians 3:16-17. In the next verse Paul said, “Let no man deceive himself,” but to make it a little clearer he also said, “Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication [literal or spiritual]. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s.” I Corinthians 6:15-20.

Here are Scriptures that positively state that the bodies of the saved people are the temple of God. But there are other texts that make the evidence stronger. “Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto

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an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:19-22. It seems to me that these Scriptures make it very clear that the saved people (the church) are the true temple of God under the New Testament. Paul, in his discourse on Mars Hill, said, “God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands.” Acts 17:24. This proves that God dwells in His people, for He does not dwell in a literal temple made with hands, and the Temple at Jerusalem was built with men’s hands. The holy city is the church; they were the ones that had to be measured by the reed (Word of God). Christ was their head. We notice that an apostate church had come up with the Pope as its head and claiming to take Christ’s place upon earth, setting himself up in the temple of God, showing that he is God. This apostate church is made up of unconverted people. John said when you measure the temple leave them out, and this will include the great host of unconverted Protestantism as well. The next verses describe the two witnesses.

The Two Witnesses

These two witnesses were to prophesy twelve hundred and sixty days, clothed in sackcloth. “And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.” Revelation 11:3-4. The beast (Roman Catholic Church) was to make war against the two witnesses and overcome them and kill them, and their dead bodies were to lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. (Revelation 11:8.) Some people try to prove that Moses and Elijah were the two witnesses but we must remember that

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Moses died and God buried his body. Elijah was translated to heaven, so it was neither of them. Others say that it is the Old Testament and the New Testament. But we must remember that these two witnesses were rejected by the Romish church. Christ was crucified just outside of Jerusalem on Golgotha. But the Revelator said that the two witnesses lay in the street of this wicked city. Sodom was a very wicked city, insomuch that it was destroyed by fire; the same day that Lot left the city, God rained fire and brimstone upon it and destroyed them all. Paul gave us some evidence when he made this statement, “He that despised Moses’ law died without mercy under two or three witnesses: Of how much sorer punishment, suppose ye, shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God, and hath counted the blood of the covenant, wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing, and hath done despite unto the Spirit of grace?” Hebrews 10:28-29.

This is exactly what the Roman Catholic Church has done. She has rejected the Word of God, and the Spirit of God, and accepted works in the place of the blood of Christ in the form of baptismal regeneration. I herewith quote from the *Catechism of Christian Doctrine, Book Four*, “How does baptism cleanse the soul complete? (Answer) 1. Baptism washes away original sin; in adults it also effaces all their actual sins. 2. It remits all the punishment due to sin, whether temporal or eternal.” (p. 265.)

Think of this statement: You can take an individual to the water and baptize him until you drown him but it will not wash away sin. In this, they set aside the Word and Spirit of God. During the twelve hundred and sixty years the Scriptures were mostly in the Greek and Latin language. The common people could not understand them, neither could they read them, so its message was a dead letter unto them until it was translated into the English language.

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We find a prophecy in Zechariah 4 that gives some light upon this subject. The prophet saw a candlestick with two olive trees, one upon the right and the other on the left side of the candlestick, with golden pipes running into the candlestick that emptied the oil into it. In his explanation, the angel told the prophet, “Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.” Zechariah 4:6. The prophet positively states here that it is the Rod and Spirit.

The next thing we prove is: are the Word of God and the Spirit of God witnesses? “. . . This gospel of the kingdom shall be preached . . . for a witness unto all nations; then shall the end come.” Matthew 24:14. “Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.” John 5:39. The Old Testament is a witness against the Jewish nation who rejected it, for God worked with them when they obeyed the Word of God and did that which He had commanded them to do. The New Testament is a witness against the world that rejected it; so today you either have the Word of God as your witness for you or you have it against you.

Next, is the Spirit of God a witness? Jesus said (John 14) that He would send another comforter and that when the Spirit came he would reprove the world of sin. (John 16:8.)

Every one of us will have to acknowledge that the Spirit of God reproved us while we were in sin and when we were converted that the same Spirit was witnessing to us that God had forgiven our sins. “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.” Romans 8:16. “Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put

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my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.” Hebrews 10:15-16. Here is positive evidence that the Word of God and the Spirit of God are the two witnesses that stood by the church in the days that she was persecuted by pagan Rome and when the Roman Catholic Church came up they rejected the Word and Spirit. They may believe the Bible but I ask you how much of the Bible do they obey? So the Bible, the Word of God, had been as a dead body for the period of 1,260 years when the great reformation came and the Word of God and the Spirit of God were allowed to take their places and begin their work as in former days. During the days of sect making the sects said we must have the Bible but at the same time they made disciplines with which to run their organizations.

In the year 1880, brethren in different parts of the country took their stand for the true church of God, outside of sectarian confusion. They took only the Bible and Spirit with Jesus Christ as the Head of the church. Thus the two witnesses took their place by the church, and through obedience to them, the church was filled with oil so she could stand the persecutions that came against her. What we need today is a consecration that is unto death such as is spoken of in Revelation 12:11-12.

If you will notice, this time period of 1,260 days is the same that is spoken of in the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of Revelation. When the reformers began to measure the temple (true church) all the unsaved people were left out, for people must measure their lives by the Word of God or they cannot be members of the church of God. This caused the Roman Catholic Church to call these Christians heretics, and so it is today when the true church of God is shown to the people. Protestantism begins to fight and stand against the truth because her sins are being uncovered. We are glad that the Word and Spirit both have their rightful place in the church of God

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today. Let us continue to be consecrated to the truth, the whole truth, and to walk in the light of the same. Sinner, remember the Word of God and Spirit of God are witnesses against you right now and will be against you at the judgment unless you give your heart to God. Your attitude will settle the matter. If you reject them, they will reject you in testimony at the judgment, but if you will obey them, they will be your witnesses at the judgment.

War in Heaven

War is an armed conflict either literal or spiritual. Did you ever have a battle with the devil? Jesus Christ had a great battle with the devil. (Matthew 4.) Christ withstood the devil and gained the victory, and even in death Jesus came out of the grave with victory over death. “And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.” Revelation 12:7-8. Here the writer informs us that there was war in heaven.

The apostle Paul will help us to understand this truth. “I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven.” II Corinthians 12:2. In the fourth verse Paul said he was caught up to paradise. So he called the third heaven paradise. Now it is a fact that there must be one, two, before we get to the third heaven; the church occupied the first heaven by virtue of a spiritual birth. “And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:6. This shows that while we are in sin we are not in this heavenly place but salvation places us in that heavenly place. Christ said, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” John 17:16. The church occupied the first heaven then by a spiritual

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birth; the dragon (pagan Rome) was trying to destroy the church; so John writing and using many symbols could say there was war in heaven, for this deadly conflict was between the church and pagan Rome. The Romans used the sword, wild beasts, fire and everything they could but God gave the victory. “And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.” Revelation 12:11. In the seventeenth verse, John says that “the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.” There were thousands of people killed in the first three centuries of the Christian era. Constantine issued an edict, in 313 A. D., that the Christian religion should have a place among other religions with equal rights for Christians to worship God as they desired. (*Myers Gen. Hist.*, pp. 392-395.) There were ten persecutions under pagan rule, the last one being by Domitian. But the church, with Christ as her Head, overcame the dragon (pagan Rome) and Roman paganism was abolished in 476 A. D.

The War (Continued)

“And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.” Revelation 13:7. In the fifth verse John said he was to continue forty-two months which make 1,260 days, which mean 1,260 years. This has reference to the battle between the true church and the Roman Catholic Church during the dark ages while the woman was in the wilderness. Now it takes the same weapons to fight this battle as it did under paganism. “(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into

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captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.” II Corinthians 10:4-5. “For the Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, . . .” Hebrews 4:12. So you can see what the people of God were fighting with, and this is the way that the early church was gaining the victory over the devil. The church of God was aggressive. The converts went out and preached everywhere holding up the blood-stained banner of Christ, showing that salvation was through Christ. The church of God is progressive today also and will take advantage of every opportunity to gain more souls for Christ. The true church is not compromising, neither is she fanatical. Perhaps some will say the true church of God is not fundamental. You are mistaken in that, brother, for the doctrines of the church of God are fundamental. As a minister of the church of God, I can preach all the fundamental Bible doctrine any other minister can preach as well as any Bible that a Roman Catholic priest or pope can preach. The papal church was incensed when the reformers took the Bible that they professed to believe and uncovered their false teaching. This caused persecution and thousands were killed.

This brings us up to the sixteenth century, when the Reformation was throwing off the yoke of bondage so people could have their freedom to think for themselves rather than to let the dignitaries of the Church of Rome do their thinking. The devil took advantage of this and began to spread his pagan teachings to draw away people from God. This was near the time when the devil would be loosed a little season and go out and deceive the nations. Notice it is to be with deceptions he was going to work in the last days of this time world.

Three Unclean Spirits Like Frogs

This is the time that the devil is working through Romanism, Paganism and Protestantism. “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.” Revelation 16:13. You will ask, “What are these frogs?” Listen to the words of the Revelator, “For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” Revelation 16:14. Here is a battle to last until the coming of Christ, for in the next verse he states that Christ is coming. “Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.” Revelation 16:15. This is the battle of Armageddon. “And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” Revelation 16:16. These spirits were to work miracles in order to deceive the people. “Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.” II Thessalonians 2:9-10. This will take in the ungodly teaching of modernism, evolution, Protestant division and every other false doctrine. The apostle gives us the true condition of that class of people. “And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” II Thessalonians 2:11-12. The crooked spirits in paganism, the crooked spirits in papal Rome (Roman Catholic Church) and the crooked spirits in Protestantism are the three unclean spirits mentioned in Revelation 16:13-14. They are gathering their combined forces against the true church of God and the truth. If you will notice this comes to pass after the

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

These Scriptures clearly state that when the devil was loosed he went out to deceive the nations (that battle was to deceive). The same thing was to be done by the three unclean spirits (work miracles to deceive). In Revelation 16:15 it is said that Christ is coming as a thief. Also in verse 17 it is stated that the seventh angel pours out his vial, and says, it is done. Then in Revelation 20:11, “And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.” As he continues with this chapter he is describing the Judgment scene. This battle is between righteousness and unrighteousness and the conflict is on. My brethren, we must stand true to God and the message that He has given to every God-ordained minister in the world. We need to preach, “Come out of Babylon,” just as strongly today as ever and preach against worldliness, for God’s people are no more of the world today than when Jesus prayed the prayer in John 17. He said, “They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world.” John 17:16. Which army are you in today? Remember that you cannot be neutral; you are on one side or the other.

THE END

