

**War, Economic Collapse
and Moral Decay – Is
America Headed for
Armageddon?**

**The
Perfect
Storm**

Is Coming !



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Text for *The Perfect Storm* has been simplified and adapted from *The Great Controversy*, a nineteenth century Christian classic by E.G. White.

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Special recognition is given to A&E Television Networks, and The History Channel for the excellent production: *Christianity, The First Two Thousand Years*; aired on The History Channel as *The History of Christianity*. See page 24.

The publishers highly recommend this A&E presentation, readily available on video and DVD—to order, phone (800) 423-1212.

Martech, Alhambra, California:

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Lorenzo Ghiglieri, artist.

Cover: (Terrified Woman).

Pages: 41 (Satanic Mask).

61, 63 and 64 (Composite Leopard Beast).

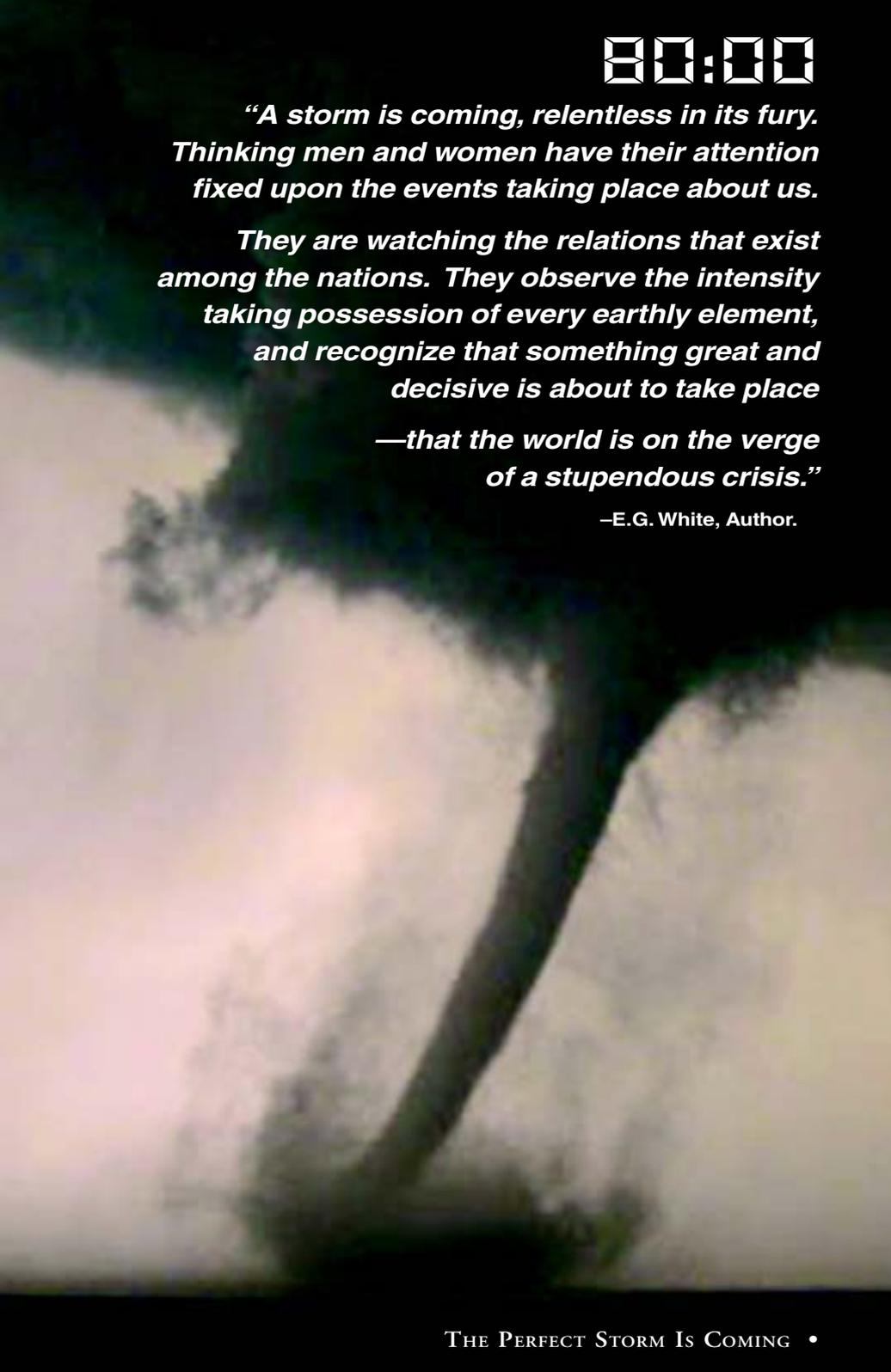
Paintings: “Behold the Man,” Antonio Ciseri, artist, page 6.

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Sculpted Angels, Alan Collins, sculptor, page 53.

Printed in the United States of America

ISBN 0-9785848-0-5



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“A storm is coming, relentless in its fury. Thinking men and women have their attention fixed upon the events taking place about us.

They are watching the relations that exist among the nations. They observe the intensity taking possession of every earthly element, and recognize that something great and decisive is about to take place —that the world is on the verge of a stupendous crisis.”

—E.G. White, Author.

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“WHERE THE END BEGINS AND THE WORLD ENDS”

O Jerusalem, Jerusalem: “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, and shall lay thee even with the ground, and thy children within thee; and they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”
Luke 19:42-44.

From the crest of Olivet,
Jesus looked over Jerusalem.

Fair and peaceful was the scene spread out before Him. It was the Passover season, and from all lands the children of Jacob had gathered there to celebrate the great national festival. In the midst of gardens and vineyards rose the terraced hills, the stately palaces, and massive bulwarks of Israel's capital. The daughter of Zion seemed in her pride to say, "I sit a queen, and shall see no sorrow;" as lovely then, and considering herself as secure in Heaven's favor, as when, ages before, the royal minstrel sang, "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion," "the city of the great King." Psalm 48:2.

In full view were the magnificent buildings of the temple. "The perfection of beauty" it stood, the pride of the Jewish nation. Psalm 50:2. What child of Israel could gaze upon the scene without a thrill of joy and admiration! But other thoughts stirred the mind of Jesus. "When He was come near, He beheld the city, and wept over it." Luke 19:41.

Amid the universal rejoicing of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem, while palm branches waved, while

glad hosannas and happy voices declared Him king, the world's Redeemer was overwhelmed with a sudden and mysterious sorrow. He, the Son of God, the Promised One of Israel, whose power had conquered death, and called its captives from the grave, was in tears, not of ordinary grief, but of intense, irrepressible agony.

His tears were not for Himself, though He knew the path He must take. Before Him lay Gethsemane, the scene of His approaching agony. Not far distant was Calvary, the place of crucifixion. Yet it was not the contemplation of these scenes that cast the shadow upon Him. He wept for the doomed thousands of Jerusalem—because of the blindness and impenitence of those favored people whom He came to bless and to save.

The history of more than a thousand years of God's special favor and guardian care, manifested to the chosen people, was open to the eye of Jesus. **There was Mount Moriah**, where Isaac, the son of promise, an unresisting victim, had been bound to the altar—emblem of the offering of the Son of God. Genesis 22:9. **There, the covenant of blessing**, the glorious Messianic

A PRICELESS GIFT

promise, had been confirmed to Abraham, father of the faithful. Genesis 22:16-18. **There daily the blood** of slain lambs had been offered, pointing forward to the Lamb of God. **There, God had revealed** His presence in the cloud of glory above the mercy seat. Jerusalem had been honored of God above all the earth. The Lord had “chosen Zion,” He had “desired it for His habitation.” Psalm 132:13.

Had Israel as a nation preserved her allegiance to Heaven, Jerusalem would have stood forever, the elect of God. Jeremiah 17:21-25. But the history of that favored people was a record of backsliding and rebellion.

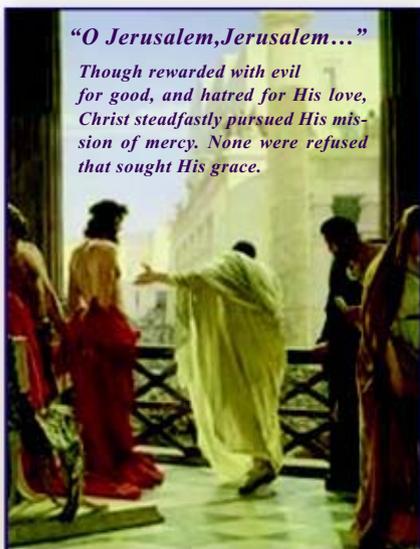
Even though Israel had “mocked

the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets” (2 Chronicles 36:15, 16), God had still manifested Himself to them, as “the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth.” Exodus 34:6.

When entreaty and rebuke had failed, God sent to them the best gift of Heaven, pouring out all Heaven in one priceless Gift—the Son of God Himself was sent to plead with the impenitent city. For three years the Lord of light and glory had gone in and out among His people. “He went about doing good,” “healing all that were oppressed of the devil.” Acts 10:38.

Waves of mercy, beaten back by stubborn hearts, yet returned in a stronger tide of pitying, inexpressible love.

Prophets had wept over the apostasy of Israel, and the terrible desolations by which their sins were visited. Jeremiah wished that his eyes were a fountain of tears, that he might weep day and night for the slain of the daughter of his people, for the Lord’s flock that was carried away captive.



“O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...”

Though rewarded with evil for good, and hatred for His love, Christ steadfastly pursued His mission of mercy. None were refused that sought His grace.

ANTONIO CISERI, ARTIST

Jeremiah 9:1; 13:17. What, then, was the grief of Him whose prophetic glance took in, not years, but ages! Looking down the ages, He saw the covenant people scattered in every land. In the temporal retribution about to fall upon Jerusalem, Christ saw that cup of wrath which at the final judgment she must drink. Divine pity mourned: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!” Matthew 23:37.

Passover, when Christ had departed from the temple for the last time, after denouncing the hypocrisy of the Jewish rulers, He went again with His disciples to the Mount of Olives, and seated Himself with them upon a grassy slope overlooking the city. Once more He beheld the temple in its dazzling splendor, a diadem of beauty crowning the sacred mount.

Looking down to the last generation, Jesus saw that the world would once again be involved in a deception similar to that which would soon result in the destruction of Jerusalem.

A thousand years before, the Psalmist had magnified God’s favor

Looking down to the last generation, Jesus saw that the world would once again be involved in a deception similar to that which would soon result in the destruction of Jerusalem.

The tears Christ shed upon Olivet as He stood overlooking the chosen city, were not for Jerusalem alone. In the fate of Jerusalem He beheld the destruction of the world. The Son of the infinite God bowed down with anguish! The scene filled all heaven with wonder. Two days before the

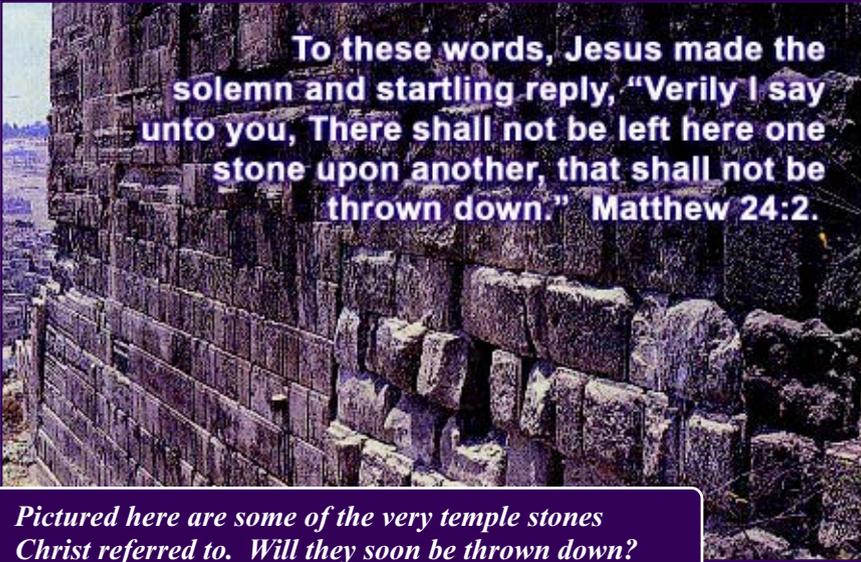
to Israel in making her holy house His dwelling place: “In Salem also is His tabernacle, and His dwelling place in Zion.” Psalm 76:2. The first temple had been erected during the most prosperous period of Israel’s history. Vast stores of treasure for this purpose had been collected by King David, and the

plans for its construction were made by divine inspiration. 1 Chronicles 28:12, 19. Solomon, the wisest of Israel's monarchs, had completed the work. This temple was a magnificent building, yet the Lord had declared by the prophet Haggai, concerning the second temple, "The glory of this latter house shall be greater than of the former." "I will shake all nations, and the Desire of all nations shall come; and I will fill this house with glory, saith the Lord of hosts." Haggai 2:9, 7.

After the destruction of the first temple by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, it was rebuilt about five hundred years before the birth of Christ, by a people who

had returned from a life-long captivity. There were still among them aged men who had seen the glory of Solomon's temple, and who wept at the foundation of the new building, that it must be so inferior to the former.

The second temple had **not equaled** the first in magnificence; **nor was it** hallowed by those visible tokens of the divine presence which had belonged to the first temple. There was **no manifestation** of supernatural power to mark its dedication. **No cloud** of glory was seen to fill the newly erected sanctuary. **No fire** from Heaven descended to consume the sacrifice upon its altar.



To these words, Jesus made the solemn and startling reply, "Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down." Matthew 24:2.

Pictured here are some of the very temple stones Christ referred to. Will they soon be thrown down?

The second temple was not honored with the cloud of God's glory, but with the presence of One in whom dwelt the fullness of the Godhead bodily—who was God Himself manifest in the flesh. The “Desire of all nations” had indeed come to His temple when the Man of Nazareth taught and healed in the sacred courts. Only with the presence of Christ, did the second temple exceed the first in glory.

Wealth, labor, and architectural skill were freely expended to enhance its splendors. Herod the Great had lavished upon it Roman wealth and Jewish treasure. Even Caesar had enriched it with gifts. Massive blocks of white marble, forwarded from Rome for this purpose, formed a part of its structure; and to these the disciples called the attention of their Master, saying, “See what manner of stones and what buildings are here!” Mark 13:1.

To these words, Jesus made the solemn and startling reply, “Verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down.” Matthew 24:2. The disciples were filled with awe and wonder at Christ's prediction of the destruction of the temple.

With the overthrow of Jerusalem the disciples associated the events of Christ's personal coming in temporal glory to take His promised throne. The Lord had told them that He would come the second time. Hence at the mention of judgments upon Jerusalem, their minds reverted to that coming, and as they were gathered about the Saviour upon the Mount of Olives, they asked: “When shall these things be? and what shall be the sign of Thy coming, and of the end of the world?” Matthew 24:3.

The future was mercifully veiled from the disciples. Had they at that time fully comprehended the Redeemer's sufferings and death and the destruction of their city and temple, they would have been overwhelmed with horror.

Christ gave them an outline of the prominent events to take place before the close of time. His words were not then fully understood; but their meaning was to be unfolded as His people should need the instruction given. The prophecy which He uttered was twofold in its meaning: while foreshadowing the destruction of Jerusalem, it also prefigured the terrors of the last great day.

SIGNS & WONDERS

Judgments upon the city and the nation were delayed. Astonishing was the long-suffering of God toward the rejectors of His grace. There were still many among the Jews who were ignorant of the character and the work of Christ. Through the preaching of the apostles and their associates, God would yet cause light to shine upon them. They would be permitted to see how prophecy had been fulfilled in the birth and life of Christ.

But the long-suffering of God toward Jerusalem only confirmed the people of that day in stubborn impenitence. In their hatred and cruelty toward the disciples of Jesus, they rejected Heaven's last offer of mercy. When at last they had reached the limit of divine forbearance, God withdrew His Spirit and protection from them.

The Saviour's fearful words, "Your house is left unto you desolate," would now meet awful fulfillment. Matthew 23:38.

[Note: In A.D. 66, a bitter Jewish revolt against the authority of Rome summoned Roman legions, led by Cestius. Three and a half years later, a second siege, under Titus, would seal Jerusalem's fate. In A.D. 70, her walls were breached and the city with its magnificent Temple was destroyed. More than a million souls perished.]

Jesus had declared to His listening disciples the judgments that were to fall upon apostate Israel, and especially the retributive vengeance that would come upon them. His predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem would soon be fulfilled. As that time approached, signs and wonders appeared, foreboding disaster and doom.

IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT

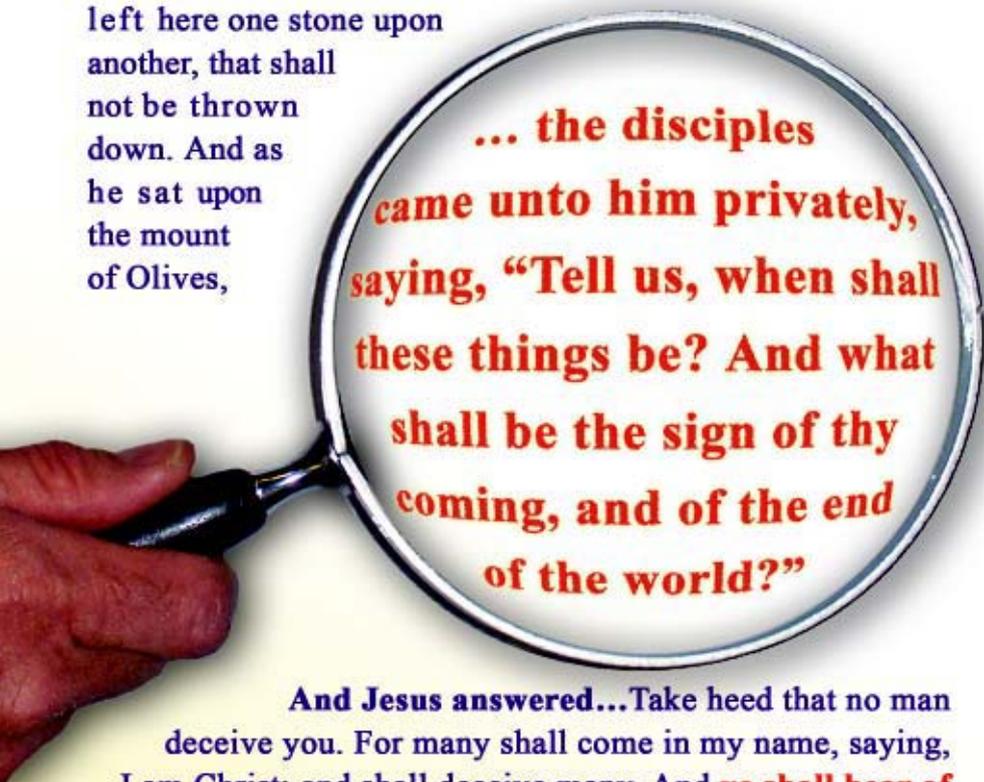
an unnatural light shone over the temple and the altar. In the clouds at sunset were pictured chariots and men of war gathering for battle. Priests ministering by night in the sanctuary were terrified by mysterious sounds; the earth trembled, and a multitude of voices were heard crying, "Let us depart hence." The great eastern gate, which was so heavy that it could hardly be shut by a score of men, and which was secured by immense bars of iron fastened deep in the pavement of solid stone, opened at midnight, without visible agency. —H.H. Milman, *The History of the Jews*, book 13.

FOR SEVEN YEARS A MAN HAD

gone up and down the streets of Jerusalem, declaring the woes

SIGNS OF THE END-TIMES

Jesus went out, and departed from the temple: and his disciples came to him for to show him the buildings of the temple. And Jesus said unto them, See ye not all these things? verily I say unto you, There shall not be left here one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down. And as he sat upon the mount of Olives,



... the disciples came unto him privately, saying, "Tell us, when shall these things be? And what shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?"

And Jesus answered... Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying, I am Christ; and shall deceive many. And **ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars**: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, **but the end is not yet**. For nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: **and there shall be famines, and pestilences, and earthquakes**, in diverse places. **All these are the beginning of sorrows.**

—Matthew 24:1-8

that were to come upon the city. By day and by night he chanted the wild dirge: “A voice from the east! a voice from the west! a voice from the four winds! a voice against Jerusalem and against the temple! a voice against the bridegrooms and the brides! a voice against the whole people!”—H.H. Milman, *The History of the Jews*, book 13. This strange soul was imprisoned and scourged; but no complaint escaped his lips. He answered only, “Woe to Jerusalem! Woe, woe to the inhabitants thereof!” His warning cries were not to cease until he was slain in the siege he had foretold.

Unmistakable signs would precede the awful climax. Though delayed, the dreaded hour would come suddenly and swiftly.

Christ had given His disciples warning, and all who believed His words watched for the promised sign. “When ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies,” said Jesus, “then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out.” Luke 21:20, 21.

After the Romans under Cestius had surrounded the city, they unexpectedly abandoned the siege when

everything seemed favorable for an immediate attack. The besieged inhabitants were on the point of surrender, when the Roman general withdrew his forces, without the least apparent reason. But God’s merciful providence was directing events for the good of His faithful ones. The promised sign had been given to the waiting Christians, and now an opportunity was afforded for all who would to obey the Saviour’s warning. Events were so overruled that neither Jews nor Romans would hinder the flight of the Christians. Upon the retreat of Cestius, the Jews pursued his retiring army, and while both forces were fully engaged, Christians throughout the land were able to make their escape unmolested.

It was with great difficulty that the Romans succeeded in making their retreat. The Jews escaped almost without loss, and with their spoils returned in triumph to Jerusalem. Yet this apparent success brought them only evil. It inspired them with that spirit of stubborn resistance to the Romans which in time returned unutterable woe upon their doomed city.

Terrible were the calamities that fell upon Jerusalem three and a half

years later when the siege was resumed by Roman forces, this time led by General Titus. Countless thousands of Jews were assembled within its walls. Their stores of provision had been destroyed through the jealousy and revenge of contending factions, and now all the horrors of starvation were experienced. So fierce were the pangs of hunger that men gnawed their leather belts and sandals and even the covering of their shields. Great numbers of the people would steal out at night to gather wild plants growing outside the city walls. Many were seized and put to death with cruel torture, and often those who returned in safety were robbed of what they had gleaned at so great peril.

Satanic spirits aroused the fiercest and most debased passions of the people. Among the highest and the lowest classes alike, there was suspicion, envy, hatred, strife, rebellion, murder. There was no safety anywhere. Friends and kindred betrayed one another. Parents slew their children, and children their parents. The rulers of the people had no power to rule themselves. Uncontrolled passions made them tyrants.

Thousands perished from famine and pestilence. Natural affection seemed to have been destroyed. Husbands robbed their wives, and wives their husbands. Children would be seen snatching food from the mouths of their aged parents.

The question of the prophet, “Can a woman forget her sucking child?” (Isaiah 49:15) received the answer within the walls of that doomed city: “The hands of the pitiful women have sodden their own children; they were their meat in the destruction of the daughter of my people.” Lamentations 4:10.

Now was fulfilled the fearful warning given through Moses fourteen centuries before: “The tender and delicate woman among you, which would not adventure to set the sole of her foot upon the ground for delicateness and tenderness, her eye shall be evil toward the husband of her bosom, and toward her son, and toward her daughter...and toward her children which she shall bear; for she shall eat them for want of all things secretly in the siege and straitness, wherewith thine enemy shall distress thee in thy gates.” Deuteronomy 28:56, 57.

Roman leaders endeavored to strike terror to the Jews and cause them to surrender. Prisoners who resisted when taken, were scourged, tortured, and crucified before the wall of the city. Hundreds were daily put to death in this manner, until along the valley of Jehoshaphat and at Calvary, crosses were erected in so great numbers that there was scarcely room to move among them.

Terribly were visited those awful words uttered before the judgment seat of Pilate: "His blood be on us, and on our children." Matthew 27:25.

Leaders of opposing factions at times united to plunder and torture their wretched victims, slaughtering without mercy. Even the sanctity of the temple could not restrain their horrible ferocity. Worshipers were stricken down before the altar. Yet in their blind and blasphemous presumption, the instigators of this hellish work publicly declared that they had no fear that Jerusalem would be destroyed, for, they said, "It was God's own city." False prophets were bribed to proclaim, even while Roman legions were besieging the temple, that the people were to wait for deliverance from God.

But Israel had spurned divine protection, and now she had no defense. Unhappy Jerusalem! rent by internal dissensions, the blood of her children slain by one another's hands, while alien armies beat down her fortifications and slew her men of war! Christ's predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem were fulfilling: "With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again." Matthew 7:2.

Titus would willingly have put an end to the fearful scene, and thus have spared Jerusalem the full measure of her doom. He was filled with horror as he saw the bodies of the dead lying in heaps in the valleys.

Like one entranced, he looked from the crest of Olivet upon the magnificent temple, and gave command that not one stone of it be touched. He made an earnest appeal to the Jewish leaders not to force him to defile their sacred place with blood. If they would come out and fight in any other place, no Roman would violate the sanctity of the temple. One of their own, the Jewish historian Josephus, in a most eloquent appeal, entreated them to surrender in order to save themselves, their

city, and their place of worship. But his words were answered with bitter curses. In vain were the efforts of Titus to save the temple.

The blind obstinacy of Jewish leaders, and the detestable crimes perpetrated within the besieged city, excited the horror and indignation of the Romans, and Titus at last decided to take the temple by storm. He determined, however, that if possible it should be saved from destruction. But his commands were disregarded. After he retired to his tent at night, Jews ranging from the temple, attacked the Roman soldiers. In the struggle, a firebrand was flung by a soldier through an opening in the porch, and immediately the cedar-lined chambers about the holy house were ablaze. Titus rushed to the place, followed by his generals and legionnaires, and commanded his soldiers to quench the flames. His words were unheeded. In their fury the soldiers hurled blazing brands into other chambers adjoining the temple, and then with their swords slaughtered great numbers of those who had found shelter there. Blood flowed down the temple steps like water. Thousands perished. Above the sound of battle, voices were

heard shouting, “Ichabod!”—the glory is departed.

Titus found it impossible to check the rage of his soldiers; he entered with his officers, and surveyed the interior of the temple. Its splendor filled them with wonder; and as the flames had not yet penetrated to the holy place, he made a last effort to save it, again exhorting the soldiers to stay the progress of the conflagration. The centurion Liberalis endeavored to force obedience with his staff of office; but even respect for the emperor gave way to the furious animosity of the soldiers against the Jews, to the fierce excitement of battle and the insatiable hope of plunder.

The soldiers saw everything around them radiant with gold, which shone dazzlingly in the wild light of the flames; they supposed that incalculable treasures were laid up in the sanctuary.

One soldier thrust a lighted torch between the hinges of the door, and the whole building was in flames in an instant. Blinding smoke and fire forced the officers to retreat, and the noble temple was left to its fate.

“It was an appalling spectacle to the Roman—what was it to the

Jew? The whole summit of the hill which commanded the city, blazed like a volcano. One after another buildings fell in with a tremendous crash, and were swallowed up in the fiery abyss. Their cedar roofs were like sheets of flame; gilded pinnacles shone like spikes of red light; the gate towers sent up tall columns of flame and smoke. Neighboring hills were lighted up, and dark groups of people were seen watching in horrible anxiety the progress of the destruction.

“The shouts of the Roman soldiers as they ran to and fro, and the howlings of the insurgents perishing in the flames, mingled with the roaring of the conflagration and

the thundering sound of falling timbers. Echoes from the mountains replied and brought back the shrieks of the people on the heights; all along the walls were heard screams and wailings; even those weak with famine found strength to utter cries of anguish and desolation.

“The slaughter within was even more dreadful than the spectacle from without. Men and women, old and young, insurgents and priests, those who fought and those who entreated mercy, were hewn down in indiscriminate carnage. The number of the slain exceeded that of the slayers. The legionnaires had to clamber over heaps of dead to



DAVID ROBERTS, ARTIST

carry on the work of extermination.” –H.H. Milman, *The History of the Jews*, book 16.

After the destruction of the temple, the whole city fell into the hands of the Romans. Both the city and the temple were razed to their foundations, and the ground upon which the holy house had stood was “plowed like a field.” Jeremiah 26:18.

disobedient and unthankful have great reason for gratitude for God’s mercy and long-suffering in holding in check the cruel, malignant power of the evil one. But when men pass the limits of divine forbearance, that restraint is removed. God does not stand toward the sinner as an executioner of the sentence against transgression; but He leaves the rejecters of His mercy to themselves,

The Saviour’s prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow.

In the siege and the slaughter that followed, more than a million people perished. The survivors were carried away as captives, sold as slaves, dragged to Rome to grace the conqueror’s triumph, thrown to wild beasts in the amphitheaters, or scattered as homeless wanderers throughout the lands.

We cannot know how much we owe to Christ for the peace and protection which we enjoy. It is the restraining power of God that prevents mankind from passing fully under the control of Satan. The

to reap that which they have sown.

The Saviour’s prophecy concerning the visitation of judgments upon Jerusalem is to have another fulfillment, of which that terrible desolation was but a faint shadow.

The destruction of Jerusalem is a fearful and solemn warning to all who are trifling with the offers of divine grace, and resisting the pleadings of divine mercy. Never was there given a more decisive testimony to God’s hatred of sin, and to the certain punishment that will fall upon the guilty.

Terrible have been the results of rejecting the authority of Heaven. But a scene yet darker is presented in the revelations of the future.

Dark are the records of human misery that earth has witnessed during its long centuries of crime. The heart sickens and the mind grows faint in contemplation. In the fate of the chosen city we may behold the doom of a world that will at last reject God's mercy and trample upon His law.

The records of the past—the long procession of tumults, conflicts, and revolutions, the “battle of the warrior, with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood,” (Isaiah 9:5)—what are these, in contrast with the terrors of that day when the restraining Spirit of God shall be wholly withdrawn from the finally impenitent, no longer to hold in check the outburst of human passion and satanic wrath! The world will then behold, as never before, the results of Satan's rule.

But in that day, as in the time of Jerusalem's destruction, those who fear God will be delivered, “every one that shall be found written among the living.” Isaiah 4:3.

Christ has declared that He will come the second time, to gather His

faithful ones to Himself: “Then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and they shall see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory. And He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other.” Matthew 24:30, 31. Then shall they that obey not the gospel be consumed with the spirit of His mouth, and be destroyed with the brightness of His coming. 2 Thessalonians 2:8. Like Israel of old, the wicked destroy themselves; they fall by their own iniquity. By a life of sin, they have placed themselves so out of harmony with God, their natures have become so debased with evil, that the manifestation of His glory is to them a consuming fire.

The world is no more ready to credit the message for this time than were His own people to receive the Saviour's warning concerning Jerusalem. Come when it may, the day of God will come “as a thief” to the ungodly.

When life is going on in its unvarying round; when men are absorbed in pleasure, in business, in traffic, in money-making; when

religious leaders are magnifying the world's progress and enlightenment, and the people are lulled in a false security—then, as the midnight thief enters the unguarded dwelling, so shall sudden destruction come upon the careless and ungodly, “and they shall not escape.” 1 Thessalonians 5:3.

Jesus declares, “There shall be signs in the sun, and in the moon, and in the stars; and upon the earth distress of nations.” Luke 21:25;

Matthew 24:29; Mark 13:24-26; Revelation 6:12-17. Those who behold these harbingers of His coming are to “know that it is near, even at the doors.” Matthew 24:33. “Watch ye therefore,” are His words of admonition. Mark 13:35. They that heed the warning will not be left in darkness, that that day should overtake them unawares. But to them that will not watch, “the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night.” 1 Thessalonians 5:2-5.

Let men beware lest they neglect the lesson conveyed to them in the words of Christ. As He warned His disciples of Jerusalem's destruction, giving them a sign of the approaching ruin, that they might escape, so He has warned the world of the day of final destruction, and has given men tokens of its approach, that all who will may flee from the wrath to come.

EARLY CHRISTIANS

“A HATED SECT, WORTHY ONLY OF DESTRUCTION”

When Jesus revealed to His disciples the fate of Jerusalem and the scenes of the second advent, He also foretold the experience of His people from the time when He should be taken from them, to His return in power and glory for their deliverance. From Olivet the Saviour beheld the storms about to fall upon His infant church. His eye discerned the fierce, wasting tempests that were to beat upon His followers in the coming ages of darkness and persecution. In a few brief utterances of awful significance, He foretold the portion which the rulers of this world would mete out to His church. Matthew 24:9, 21, 22. The followers of Christ would tread the same path of humiliation, reproach, and suffering which their Master trod.

The history of the early church testified to the fulfillment of the Saviour's words. The powers of earth and hell arrayed themselves against Christ in the person of His followers. Paganism foresaw that should the gospel of Christ triumph, her temples and altars would be swept away; therefore she

summoned her forces to destroy Christianity. As the fires of persecution were kindled, Christians were stripped of their possessions, and driven from their homes. Great numbers sealed their testimony with their blood. Noble and slave, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, were alike slain without mercy.

These persecutions, beginning under Nero about the time of the martyrdom of Paul, continued with greater or less fury for centuries. Christians were falsely accused of the most dreadful crimes, and declared to be the cause of great calamities—famine, pestilence, and earthquake. As they became the objects of popular hatred and suspicion, informers stood ready, for the sake of gain, to betray the innocent. Christians were condemned as rebels against the empire, as foes of religion, and pests to society. “Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in Roman amphitheaters.” Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals, and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs. Their



***“Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts
or burned alive in Roman amphitheaters.”***

punishment was often made the chief entertainment at public events. Multitudes assembled to enjoy the sight, and greeted their dying agonies with laughter and applause.

The followers of Christ were forced to seek concealment in desolate and solitary places. Beneath the hills outside the city of Rome, the catacombs afforded shelter for thousands. Long galleries had been tunneled through earth and rock; the dark and intricate network of passages extended for miles beyond the city walls. In these underground retreats, the followers of Christ buried their

dead; and when proscribed, they found a home. When the Lifegiver shall return, many a martyr for Christ’s sake will come forth from those gloomy caverns.

The great adversary now endeavored to gain by deception what he had failed to secure by force. Almost imperceptibly the customs of heathenism found their way into the Christian church. The spirit of compromise and conformity was restrained for a time by the fierce persecutions which the church endured under paganism. But as persecution ceased, Christianity entered the courts and

palaces of kings, where she laid aside the humble simplicity of Christ and His apostles for the pomp and pride of pagan priests and rulers. In place of the requirements of God, she substituted human theories and traditions.

The nominal conversion of the Roman emperor, Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, marched into the church. Now the work of corruption progressed rapidly. Paganism became the conqueror. Her spirit, her doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were being incorporated into the faith and worship of Christians.

Idolaters received 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 a change of heart.

A union was formed between Christianity and paganism. False doctrines, superstitious rites, and idolatrous ceremonies were soon incorporated into Christian faith and worship.

With some concessions on their part, idolaters proposed that Christians should also make concessions, that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.

Many Christians rejoiced that they were accounted worthy to suffer for Christ. Said one, "You may torment, afflict, and vex us. Your wickedness puts our weakness to the test, but your cruelty is of no avail. It is but a stronger invitation to bring others to our persuasion. The more we are mowed down, the more we spring up again.

***The blood of the Christians is seed.*"**

—Tertullian, Apology, paragraph 50.

Thus Christianity became corrupted and the church lost her purity and power. This submission to paganism soon opened the way for a deliberate disregard of God's law.

In 321 A.D., the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. The day of the sun was already revered by his pagan subjects, and was soon honored by Christians; it was the emperor's policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity.

He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who perceived that if the same day were observed by both Christians and the heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans, and thus advance the power and glory of the church.

The Biblical Sabbath which God blessed and sanctified (Genesis 2:2, 3) was set aside. In its stead the festival observed by the heathen as "the venerable day of the sun" was exalted. That the attention of the people might be called to the "Sun" day, it was made a festival in honor of the resurrection of Christ.

Now the church was in fearful

peril. Prison, torture, fire and sword were blessings in comparison with compromise. Some Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no concession. 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 for the faithful followers of Christ. Wearing the cloak of pretended Christianity, Satan artfully insinuated himself into the church, corrupting faith. In time, most Christians consented to lower their standard.

Even in her best estate, the church was not composed entirely of the true, pure, and sincere. It required a desperate struggle for those who would remain faithful to stand firm against the deceptions and abominations being introduced into the church.

To secure worldly gain and honor, the church sought the favor and support of powerful men. The early church was induced to yield allegiance to the bishop of Rome. Roman emperors, claiming to be gods, now exchanged roles with Roman prelates.

59:00

CHRISTIANITY

The first two thousand years

"In 312 A.D. the unstable power structure of the divided empire collapses; Constantine, a former soldier, is named Caesar of the West. With his legions, he marches south across the European continent, intent on overthrowing the emperor. Eight miles outside Rome, at the Milvian Bridge, Constantine pauses....

"It is precisely at this point that the would-be emperor has a vision. It is an apparition that will change Constantine's life and the life of all Europe for the next 1,700 years. **LOOKING UP IN THE SKY, CONSTANTINE SEES THE SIGN OF THE CROSS ON THE FACE OF THE SUN.**

"Up until this time, Constantine has been a traditional pagan, worshipping the gods of Rome. Now he is confronted with the miraculous symbol of the forbidden Christian religion. At the same time, he hears an awesome voice announce his destiny. And then he hears a voice say to him, 'You are to conquer in this sign.'...The battle is completely successful.

"...The conversion of Constantine is one of the most important turning points in Christian history. Constantine immediately rewards his newly embraced religion by issuing the Edict of Milan, declaring official tolerance for Christianity throughout the empire.

"...In 323 A.D. Constantine marches against the Eastern Augustus, the pagan Licinius, and defeats him after two years of war. Constantine is now the sole ruler of both East and West. The ceremonies to celebrate the reunification of the empire are Christian. Yet the nature and extent of Constantine's conversion are still matters of debate.

"SOME SCHOLARS CLAIM THAT THE GOD CONSTANTINE ACCEPTED THAT DAY AT THE MILVIAN BRIDGE WAS NOT JESUS, BUT THE SUN GOD APOLLO. HE BELIEVED IN THE GOD 'SOL INVICTUS,' THE INVINCIBLE SUN. HE HAD SOME CONNECTION WITH APOLLO AND THE IDEA OF SUN WORSHIP...."

"DESPITE HIS OSTENSIBLE CONVERSION, CONSTANTINE RETAINS MANY PAGAN PRACTICES WHEN HE BECOMES EMPEROR. His sympathy with Christianity is undeniable, but so is his tolerance for paganism. His coins carry the image of the sun god.

"CONSTANTINE DEMANDS THAT CHRISTIANS CHANGE THEIR DAY OF WORSHIP FROM THE HEBREW SABBATH TO THE ROMAN DAY OF THE SUN. And it is a matter of record that Constantine will not be baptized a Christian until he is on his death bed. The question remains to this day: was Constantine truly a convert to Christianity or was he simply a shrewd pagan politician who embraced a powerful minority?"

Text from **The History of Christianity**, which aired in 2005 on The History Channel. Available DVD / VHS (800) 423-1212



Christianity—The first two thousand years
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By the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Pagan Rome had given place to Papal Rome.

To provide converts from heathenism a substitute for their worship of idols, and promote their nominal acceptance of Christianity, the adoration of images and relics was gradually introduced into Christian worship. The decree of a general council (Second Council of Nice, A.D. 787) finally established this system of idolatry. To complete the sacrilegious work—

The early Roman Church presumed to erase the second commandment from the law of God, forbidding image worship, and to divide the tenth commandment, in order to preserve the number.

A leading doctrine of Romanism was adopted, declaring that the pope is the visible head of the universal church of Christ and is invested with supreme authority over bishops and pastors in all parts of the world. To establish this claim, ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of unknown councils were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of

the pope, and millions accepted these deceptions.

This early compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in a gigantic system of false religion foreshadowing Satan's final efforts to seat himself upon the throne and rule the earth according to his will.

The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, darkness deepened.

The very titles of Deity were claimed for the pope. He styled himself "Lord God the Pope," assumed infallibility, and demanded that all men pay him homage.

Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in the Son of God for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, the people were instructed to look to the pope, and to priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator, and that none could approach God except through him. Further, they came to believe that he stood in the place of God to them, and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed.

THE LAW OF GOD

I

“Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.”

II

“Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.”

III

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.”

IV

“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.”

V

“Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.”

VI

“Thou shalt not kill.”

VII

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

VIII

“Thou shalt not steal.”

IX

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

X

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour’s wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour’s.”

—Exodus 20:3-17

THE LAW OF GOD AS CHANGED BY MAN

I

I am the Lord thy God; thou shalt not have
strange gods before Me.

(The Second Commandment has been omitted!)

II (actually III)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III (IV)

Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

(The Sabbath Commandment has been radically altered!)

IV (V)

Honor thy father and thy mother.

V (VI)

Thou shalt not kill.

VI (VII)

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII (VIII)

Thou shalt not steal.

VIII (IX)

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

IX (Actually X, first part!)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

X (Actually X, second part!)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

—*The General Catholic Catechism.*

QUESTION—“Have you any other way of proving that the (Catholic) Church has power to institute festivals of precept?”

ANSWER—“Had she not such power...she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority.”

—*Doctrinal Catechism, p. 174 (Roman Catholic).*

“Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says ‘Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.’ The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church.”

—*Thomas Enright, CSSR, President,
Redemptorist College (Roman Catholic), Kansas City, MO, Feb. 18, 1884.*

DARK, DARK AGES

Any deviation from the Pope's exactions was sufficient cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of offenders. Through this error the people were turned from God to fallible, erring men. Thus the pope came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, endowed with authority over church and state.

But the doctrine of papal supremacy is directly opposed to the teachings of Scripture. **Said Christ: "Call no man your father [Pope, Papa, Spiritual Father] upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven." Matthew 23:9. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." Luke 4:8.**

It is no coincidence that for hundreds of years people were forbidden to read the Bible or to have it in their houses, while unprincipled priests and prelates interpreted its teachings to sustain their pretensions.

The Bible exalts God, and places finite men in their true position.

Those were indeed dark days for the followers of Christ. Faithful standard-bearers were few indeed.

Though the truth was not left without witnesses, at times it seemed that error and superstition would wholly prevail, and true religion would be banished. The gospel of Christ was lost sight of, while the forms of religion were multiplied, and people were burdened with rigorous exactions.

People were not only taught to look to mortal man as their mediator, but to trust to their own works to atone for sin. Long pilgrimages, acts of penance, the worship of relics, the erection of churches, shrines, and altars, the payment of large sums to the church—these and many similar acts were enjoined to appease the wrath of God or to secure His favor; as if God were like men, to be angered at trifles, or pacified by gifts or acts of penance!

As the darkness deepened, image worship became more common. The most absurd and superstitious customs prevailed. Candles were burned before images, and prayers were offered to them. Men's minds were so completely controlled by superstition that reason itself seemed to have lost her sway. Even before the establishment of the

papacy, the teachings of heathen philosophers had exerted an influence in the church. Serious errors had been introduced into the Christian faith, including the belief in man's natural immortality and his consciousness in death. This doctrine laid the foundation for the invocation of saints and the adoration of the Virgin Mary.

In the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII proclaimed the perfection of the Roman Church. Among the propositions which he put forth was one declaring that the church had never erred, nor would it ever err, according to the Scriptures.

But the Scripture proofs did not accompany the assertion. Next he arrogantly claimed the authority to depose emperors, and declared that no sentence which he pronounced could be reversed by any one, but that it was his prerogative to reverse the decisions of all others.

Then, in the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the machinations of the papacy—the Inquisition. In their secret councils, the minds of evil men invented tortures too horrible for human eyes to behold. The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried out to God for vengeance.

Presumptuous, even blasphemous titles claimed for the pope have been embellished and enlarged over the centuries. A few of these boastful claims appear in an ecclesiastical (Roman Catholic) dictionary, by Lucius Ferraris, entitled *Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica*, Vol. VI, pgs. 438, 442, article "Pope." *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, 1913 edition, Vol. VI, p. 48, speaks of this book as "a veritable encyclopedia of religious knowledge," and "a precious mine of information."

"The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God."

"Hence the pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions."

"So that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the pope."

"The pope can modify divine law, since his power is not of man but of God."

"The pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom."

Popery became the world's despot. Kings and emperors bowed to the decrees of the Roman pontiff. The destinies of men, both for time and for eternity, seemed under his control. For hundreds of years the doctrines of Rome had been extensively and implicitly received, its rites reverently performed, and its festivals observed. Its clergy were honored and liberally sustained. But "the noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world." -J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, b. 1, ch. 4.

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from that spiritual darkness into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Luther was the man for his time. Through him, God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world.

A retentive memory, strong reasoning powers, and untiring application soon placed Luther foremost in rank among his associates. One day while examining books in the university library, Luther discovered a Latin Bible. He was ignorant even of its existence. He had heard portions of the Gospels and

Epistles read at public worship, and he supposed that these were the entire Bible. Now, for the first time, he looked upon the whole of God's word. With awe he exclaimed, "O that God would give me such a book for myself!" -J.H. Merle D'Aubigné, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, b. 2, ch. 2.

An earnest desire to be free from sin and to find peace with God led him to enter a cloister and devote himself to a monastic life. Luther patiently endured this humiliation, believing that it was necessary because of his sins. As his conviction of sin deepened, he sought by his own works to obtain pardon and peace. With fasting, vigils, and scourgings he endeavored to subdue the evils of his nature. Said Luther, "I was indeed a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could attain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it...If I had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death." -D'Aubigné, b. 2, ch. 3.

"LOOK TO CHRIST"

When it appeared to Luther that all was lost, God raised up a friend and helper. The pious Staupitz urged

him to look away from himself, and look to Jesus as his sin-pardoning Saviour. “Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, cast yourself into the arms of your Redeemer. Trust in Him, in the righteousness of His life, in the atonement of His death....Listen to the Son of God. He became a man to give you the assurance of divine favor. Love Him who has first loved you.” -*D’Aubigné*, b. 2, ch. 4. His words made a deep impression upon Luther’s mind. After many struggles with long-cherished errors, he grasped this truth, and found peace.

“The noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world.”

Luther was a true son of the papal church, and had no thought that he would ever be anything else. But in the providence of God he was led to visit Rome. At a convent in Italy he wondered at the wealth, magnificence, and luxury that he witnessed. The monks lived in splendid apartments, attired themselves in the richest and most costly robes, and feasted at sumptuous tables. Luther contrasted this scene with the self-denial and hardship of his own life.

When at last Luther beheld in the distance the seven-hilled city, he prostrated himself upon the earth, exclaiming, “Holy Rome, I salute thee!” -*D’Aubigné*, b. 2, ch. 6.

He entered the city, visited the churches, listened to the marvelous tales repeated by priests and monks, and performed all the ceremonies required. Everywhere he saw scenes that filled him with astonishment and revulsion. He saw that iniquity existed among all classes of the clergy. He heard indecent jokes from prelates, and was filled with horror at their awful profanity, even during mass. “No one can imagine,” he wrote, “what sins and infamous actions are committed in Rome; they must be seen and heard to be believed. Thus they are in the habit of saying, ‘If there is a hell, Rome is built over it: it is an abyss whence issues every kind of sin.’” -*D’Aubigné*, b. 2, ch. 6.

“PILATE’S STAIRCASE”

By a recent decree, an indulgence had been promised by the pope to all who should ascend upon their knees “Pilate’s staircase,” said to have been descended by Christ on leaving the Roman judgment hall, and to have been miraculously conveyed from

Jerusalem to Rome. One day Luther was devoutly climbing these steps, when suddenly a voice like thunder seemed to say to him, “The just shall live by faith.” Romans 1:17. He sprang to his feet, and hastened from the place, in shame and dismay. From that time he saw more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation. His eyes had been opened, and were never again to be closed to the errors of the papacy. From that time the separation grew wider, until he severed all connection with the papal church.

After his return from Rome, Luther received the degree of Doctor of Divinity at the University of Wittenberg. He took a solemn vow to preach the Word of God, instead of the sayings and doctrines of the popes.

He firmly declared that Christians should receive no other doctrines than those which rest on the authority of Scripture. These words struck at the very foundation of papal supremacy, and contained the vital principle of the Reformation.

“SIN FOR SALE”

The Roman Church made merchandise of the grace of God. Under the plea of raising funds for the erection of St. Peter’s Church at

Rome, indulgences for sin were publicly offered for sale by authority of the pope. By the price of crime a temple was to be built for God’s worship—the cornerstone laid with the wages of iniquity. It was this heresy that aroused Luther and led to the battle which shook the papal throne.

The official appointed to conduct the sale of indulgences in Germany—Tetzel by name—was employed to further the mercenary and unscrupulous projects of the pope. Tetzel related marvelous tales to deceive an ignorant, credulous, and superstitious people. Had they possessed the Word of God, they would not have been so easily deceived.

As Tetzel would enter a town, a messenger went before him, announcing, “The grace of God and of the holy father is at your gates.” *-D’Aubigné, b. 3, ch. 1.* Tetzel declared that by virtue of his certificates of pardon, all the sins which the purchaser should afterward desire to commit would be forgiven him, and that “not even repentance is necessary.” *-D’Aubigné, b. 3, ch. 1.* More than this, he assured his hearers that the indulgences had power to save not only the living but the dead; that the very moment the money should

NINETY-FIVE TIMES NO!

clink against the bottom of his chest, the soul in whose behalf it had been paid would escape from purgatory and make its way to heaven. (See K. R. Hagenbach, *History of the Reformation*, Vol. 1, p. 96).

Many in Luther's congregation purchased certificates of pardon, and soon came to their pastor, confessing their sins, and expecting absolution, not because they were penitent and wished to reform, but on the ground of the indulgence. Luther refused them absolution, and warned them that unless they should repent and reform their lives, they would perish in their sins. Perplexed, they returned to Tetzel complaining that their confessor refused his certificates. Some boldly demanded that their money be returned. Filled with rage, Tetzel uttered the most terrible curses, caused fires to be lighted in the public squares, and declared that he "had received an order from the pope to burn all heretics who presumed to oppose his most holy indulgences." *-D'Aubigné*, b. 3, ch. 4.

Luther's voice was heard from the pulpit in earnest, solemn warning. With conviction, Luther explained that the grace of Christ could not be purchased; it is a free gift. He counseled the people not to buy the indulgences.

Luther decided a more effectual protest was necessary against these abuses. The castle church of Wittenberg possessed many relics, which on certain holy days were exhibited to the people, and full remission of sins was granted to all who then visited the church and made confession. As the festival of "All-Saints," approached, Luther joined crowds making their way to the church. There he posted on its door a paper containing ninety-five propositions against the doctrine of indulgences.

These propositions attracted universal attention. They were read and re-read and repeated in every direction. Great excitement was created in the university and in the whole city. By these theses it was shown that the power to grant the pardon of sin, and to remit its penalty, had never been committed to the pope or to any other man. The whole scheme was a farce—an artifice to extort money by playing upon the superstitions of the people. It was also shown that the grace of God is freely bestowed upon all who seek it by repentance and faith.

In a few days, Luther's questions

spread through all Germany, and quickly sounded throughout Christendom. Many devoted Catholics, including princes and magistrates, who lamented the terrible iniquity prevailing in the church, read the propositions with great joy. They felt that the Lord had graciously set His hand to arrest the rapidly swelling tide of corruption issuing from the seat of Rome.

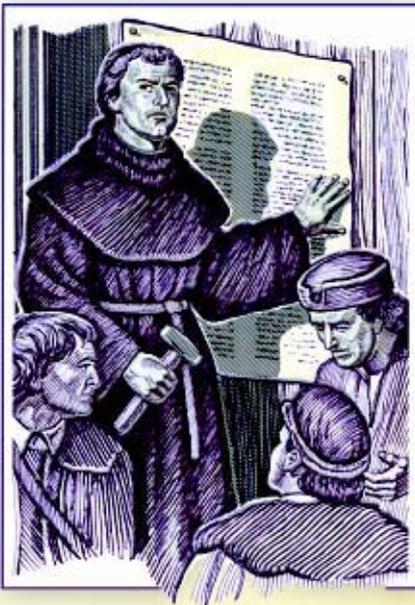
In an appeal for the Reformation of Christianity, Luther wrote to the emperor and nobility of Germany concerning the pope: "It is a horrible thing to behold the man who styles himself Christ's vicegerent, displaying a magnificence that no emperor can equal. Is this being like the poor

Jesus, or the humble Peter? He is, say they, the lord of the world! But Christ, whose vicar he boasts of being, said, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Can the dominions of a vicar extend beyond those of his superior?" *-D'aubigné, b. 6, ch. 3.*

His appeal was rapidly circulated throughout Germany, and exerted a powerful influence upon the people. His opponents desired revenge, and urged the pope to take decisive measures against him. Sixty days were granted the Reformer and his adherents, after which, if they did not recant, they were all to be excommunicated.

A FINAL SEPARATION

It was not without a terrible struggle that Luther decided upon a final separation from the church. The pope threatened Luther with excommunication if he did not recant; now the threat was fulfilled. A new bull appeared, declaring the Reformer's final separation from the Roman church, denouncing him as accursed of Heaven, and including in the same condemnation all who received his doctrines. So began the contest between Scripture and the traditions of men; between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.



“Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture or by the clearest reasoning; unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they render my conscience bound by the Word of God, I cannot and I will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me.”

—*Martin Luther, at his trial.*

Opposition is the lot of all whom God employs to present truths specially applicable to their time.

There was a present truth in the days of Luther— a truth at that time of special importance; there is a present truth for the church today.

The forms of opposition to the truth may change, but the same antagonism still exists, and will be manifested to the end of time.

BEWARE THE SNARE

“THE INVISIBLE WORLD OF SPIRITS”

The connection of the visible with the invisible world, the compassionate service of heavenly angels, and the agency of evil spirits, are plainly revealed in the Scriptures, and are inseparably intertwined with human history. With too many there is a tendency to disbelieve in the existence of evil spirits, while the holy angels, loyal to God, are believed to be the spirits of the dead.

The Scriptures not only teach the existence of angels, both good and evil, but present unquestionable proof that angels are not the disembodied spirits of dead men. Before the creation of man, angels were in existence; for when the foundations of the earth were laid, “the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy.” Job 38:7.

After the fall of man, angels were sent to guard the tree of life, and this before a human being had died.

Angels are superior in nature to men. The Psalmist says that man was made “a little lower than the angels.” Psalm 8:5.

Heavenly angels are sent on errands of mercy to those who fear God—to Abraham, with promises of

blessing; **to the gates of Sodom**, to rescue Lot from its fiery doom; **to Elijah, as he was about to perish** from weariness and hunger in the desert; **to Elisha, with chariots of fire** surrounding the little town where he was shut in by his foes; **to Daniel, while seeking divine wisdom** in the court of a heathen king, or abandoned to become the lions’ prey; **to Peter, doomed to death** in Herod’s dungeon; **to Paul and his companions in the night of tempest** on the sea; **to open the mind of Cornelius** to receive the gospel; **to dispatch Peter, with the message of salvation** to the Gentile stranger—in like manner holy angels have, in all ages, ministered to God’s people.

Evil spirits, in the beginning created sinless, were equal in nature, power and glory with the holy beings that are now God’s messengers. Fallen through sinful rebellion, they are leagued together for the dishonor of God and the destruction of men. United with Satan, the enemy of God and man, in his rebellion, and cast out from heaven with him, they have through the ages cooperated with him in his warfare against the Divine authority. We are told in Scripture of

their confederacy and government, of their various orders, of their intelligence and deceitfulness, and of their malicious designs against the peace and happiness of men.

With the earliest history of man, Satan began his efforts to deceive and enslave our race. After inciting rebellion in heaven, he desired to convince the inhabitants of the earth to unite with him in his warfare against the government of God. Through deception he sought to gain possession of the earth, and establish his kingdom here in opposition to the Most High.

Employing the serpent as his medium, he addressed himself to Eve, “Hath God said, ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden?” Genesis 3:1. “The woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die; for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil.” Genesis 3:2-5.

But what did our first parents, after their sin, find to be the meaning

of the words, “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die”? Did they find them to mean, as Satan led them to believe, they were to be ushered into a more exalted state of existence? Sadly, they did not find this to be the meaning of the divine sentence. As a consequence of sin, God declared that man should return to the ground whence he was taken: “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Genesis 3:19.

The divine sentence, “Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return,” points to the utter extinction of life. Immortality, promised to man on condition of obedience, had been forfeited by transgression.

There would have been no hope for the fallen race had not God, by the sacrifice of His Son, brought immortality within their reach. While “death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned,” Christ “hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.” Romans 5:12; 2 Timothy 1:10.

Only through Christ can immortality be obtained. The one who promised Adam life in disobedience was the great deceiver. And the declaration of the serpent to Eve in Eden—“Ye shall not surely die”—was the first sermon ever preached upon the immortality of the soul.

Yet this declaration, resting solely upon the authority of Satan, is echoed from the pulpits of Christendom, and is received by the majority today as readily as it was received by our first parents.

The divine sentence, “The soul that sinneth, it shall die,” (Ezekiel 18:20), is made to mean, The soul that sinneth, it shall not die, but live eternally.

One must wonder at the strange infatuation which renders men so gullible concerning the words of Satan, and so unbelieving in regard to the words of God.

In consequence of Adam’s sin, death passed upon the whole human race. All alike go down into the grave, and through the provisions of the plan of salvation, all are to be brought forth from their graves. “There shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust” (Acts 24:15); “for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.” 1 Corinthians 15:22.

According to popular belief, the redeemed in heaven are acquainted with all that takes place on the earth, and especially with the lives of the friends whom they have left behind. But how could it be a source of happiness to the dead to know the

troubles of the living, to witness the sins committed by their own loved ones, and to see them enduring all the sorrows, disappointments, and anguish of life? How much of heaven’s bliss would be enjoyed by those who were hovering over their friends on earth if they should see them passing to the grave unprepared for heaven.

When, in answer to his prayer, Hezekiah’s life was prolonged fifteen years, the grateful king praised God declaring, “The grave cannot praise Thee, death cannot celebrate Thee; they that go down into the pit cannot hope for Thy truth. The living, the living, he shall praise Thee, as I do this day.” Isaiah 38:18, 19. Popular theology represents the righteous dead as being in heaven, entered into bliss, and praising God. But Hezekiah’s testimony agrees with that of the Psalmist: “In death there is no remembrance of Thee; in the grave who shall give Thee thanks?” “The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence.” Psalms 6:5; 115:17.

Upon the fundamental error of natural immortality rests the doctrine of consciousness in death, a doctrine opposed to the teachings of the Scriptures, to the dictates of reason, and to the deepest human emotions.

The doctrine of natural immortality was borrowed from pagan philosophy, and in the darkness of the great apostasy, was incorporated into the Christian faith. This doctrine has supplanted the truth, so plainly taught in Scripture, that there is no consciousness in death. Just what do the Scriptures say concerning these things?

David declares that man is not conscious in death. “His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish.” Psalm 146:4. Solomon bears the same testimony: “The living know that they shall die; but the dead know not anything.” “Their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun.” “There is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom, in the grave, whither thou goest.” Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6, 10.

Peter, on the Day of Pentecost, declared that the patriarch David “is both dead and buried, and his

sepulcher is with us unto this day.” “For David is not ascended into the heavens.” Acts 2:29, 34. The fact that David remains in the grave until the resurrection, proves that the righteous do not go to heaven at death. It is only through the resurrection, and by virtue of the fact that Christ has risen, that David can at last sit at the right hand of God. And said Paul: “If the dead rise not, then is not Christ raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished.” 1 Corinthians 15:16-18.

If for four thousand years the righteous had gone directly to heaven at death, how could Paul have said that if there is no resurrection, “they which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished”? No resurrection would be necessary!

And Paul tells us, further, that “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 which are

The doctrine of natural immortality was borrowed from pagan philosophy, and in the darkness of the great apostasy, was incorporated into the Christian faith.

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.” And he adds, “Comfort one another with these words.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16-18.

Jesus, when about to leave His disciples, did not tell them that they would soon come to Him. Instead, He said, “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.” John 14:2, 3.

Scripture is clear: before any can enter the mansions of the blest, their characters and their deeds must pass in review before God. All are to be judged according to the things written in the books, and to be rewarded as their works have been.

This judgment does not take place at death. Mark the words of Paul: “He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead.” Acts 17:31.

Here the apostle plainly stated that a specified time, then future, had been fixed upon for the judgment of the world. But if the dead are already enjoying the bliss of heaven or

writhing in the flames of hell, what need is there of a future judgment? The teachings of God’s word on these important points are neither obscure nor contradictory.

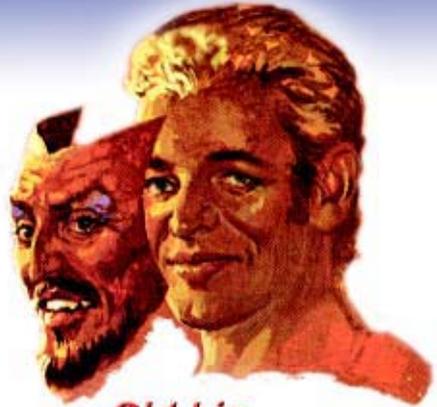
What reasoning mind can see either wisdom or justice in the current theory? Will the righteous, after the investigation of their cases at the judgment, receive the commendation, “Well done, good and faithful servant,” “enter thou into the joy of thy Lord,” (Matthew 25:21, 41), when they have already been dwelling in His presence for long ages? Are the wicked summoned from the place of torment to receive from the Judge of all the earth, the sentence “Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire”?

The Bible clearly teaches that the dead do not go immediately to heaven. They are represented as sleeping until the resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:14; Job 14:10-12.

They that go down to the grave are in silence. They know no more of anything that is done under the sun. Job 14:21. Blessed rest for the weary righteous! Time, be it long or short, is but a moment to them. They sleep; after that, they are awakened by the shout of the Lifegiver to a glorious immortality. “For the trumpet shall

sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible. . . . So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory.” When they arise from the tomb, their first glad thought will be echoed in the triumphal shout, “O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” 1 Corinthians 15:52-55.

Regarding the doctrine of the resurrection, respected Bible scholar Dr. Adam Clarke makes this observation: **“The doctrine of the resurrection appears to have been thought of much more consequence among the primitive Christians than it is now!** How is this? The apostles were continually insisting on it, and exciting the followers of God to diligence, obedience and cheerfulness through it. And their successors in the present day seldom mention it! So apostles preached, and so primitive Christians believed; so we preach, and so our hearers believe. **There is not a doctrine in the gospel on which more stress is laid; and there is not a doctrine in the present system of preaching which is treated with more neglect!”** —*Commentary: 1 Corinthians 15, paragraph 3.*



Old Lie— Modern Deception

All should understand that Satan was once an exalted angel. His rebellion shut him out of heaven, but did not destroy his powers. He is now preparing for a final struggle against Christ and His followers. The last great delusion is soon to open before us. Antichrist is to perform his marvelous works in our sight. So closely will his counterfeit miracles resemble the true that it will be impossible to distinguish between them except by the test of Scripture.

The doctrine of man’s consciousness in death, especially the belief that the spirits of the dead return to minister to the living, has prepared the way for modern spiritualism. Beyond expression is the blindness of this generation. Millions reject the Word of God, while they eagerly receive the deceptions of Satan.

Among the most successful agencies of the great deceiver are the delusive teachings and lying wonders of Spiritualism. Disguised as an angel of light, he professes to bring the living into communication with the dead. He has power to bring before men the appearance of their departed loved ones and friends. The counterfeit is perfect: the familiar look, the words, the tone, are reproduced with marvelous distinctness.

Many are comforted with the assurance that their loved ones are enjoying the bliss of heaven; and without suspicion of danger, they give ear to “seducing spirits.” But the Scriptures offer clear warning concerning the wonders wrought by Satan and his agents.

It was by satanic aid that Pharaoh’s magicians were enabled to counterfeit the work of God. Paul testifies that before the second advent of Christ there will be similar manifestations of satanic power. The coming of the Lord is to be preceded by “the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness.”
2 Thessalonians 2:9, 10.

And the apostle John, describing the miracle-working power that will be manifested in the last days,

declares: “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.”
 Revelation 13:13, 14.

No mere impostures are foretold here. Men will be deceived by the miracles which Satan’s agents have power to do, not those which they merely pretend to do.

But none need be deceived by the lying claims of spiritualism. God has given sufficient light in His Word to enable us to discover the snare. The theory which forms the very foundation of spiritualism is at war with the plainest statements of Scripture. God’s Word, rightly understood and applied, is a safeguard against spiritualism.

God has expressly forbidden all pretended communication with departed spirits. In the days of the Hebrews there was a class of people who claimed, as do spiritualists today, to hold communication with the dead. But the “familiar spirits,” as these visitants from other worlds were called, are declared by the Bible to be the “spirits of devils.” (Compare Numbers 25:1-3; Psalm 106:28; 1 Corinthians 10:20; Revelation 16:14.)

The practice of dealing with familiar spirits (of devils) was pronounced an abomination to the Lord, and was solemnly forbidden under penalty of death. “Regard not them that have familiar spirits, neither seek after wizards to be defiled by them: I am the Lord your God.” “A man also or woman that hath a familiar spirit, or that is a wizard, shall surely be put to death.” Leviticus 19:31; 20:27.

Evil angels are constantly seeking access to us. In our own strength, we have no defense against their attacks. If permitted, they can torment our bodies, destroy our possessions and take our lives.

“There shall not be found among you any one... that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer. For all that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.”

—Deuteronomy 18:10-12

While on earth, Christ had perfect understanding of that with which He was dealing, and He recognized the direct presence and agency of evil spirits.

There are few who have any just conception of the deceptive power of spiritualism and the danger of coming under its influence. Many tamper with it, merely to gratify their curiosity. They have no real faith in it, and would be filled with horror at the thought of yielding themselves to the control of evil spirits. But they venture upon forbidden ground, and the mighty destroyer exercises his power upon them against their will. Let them once be induced to submit their minds to his direction, and he holds them captive. It is impossible, in their own strength, to break away from the bewitching, alluring spell. Nothing but the power of God can deliver these ensnared souls.

None are in greater danger from the influence of evil spirits than those who, in spite of the direct testimony of Scripture, deny the existence and agency of the devil and his angels. So long as we are ignorant of their wiles, they have inconceivable advantage. This is why, as we approach the close

of time, when Satan is to work with greatest power to deceive and destroy, he conceals himself and his manner of working.

Just before us is the “hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world.” Revelation 3:10. In that hour, Satan will not yield one inch of ground except as he is driven back by the power of heaven. We must meet

him today, as Christ met him, with the words, “It is written.” Matthew 4:1-10.

Many will soon be confronted by the spirits of devils personating beloved relatives or friends, and declaring the most dangerous heresies. These visitants will appeal to their tenderest sympathies, and will work miracles to sustain demonic lies.

Satan has long been preparing for his final effort to deceive the world and resist God. The foundation of his work was laid by the lying assurance he gave to Eve in Eden, “Ye shall not surely die.” Genesis 3:4, 5. Little by little he has prepared the way for his masterpiece of deception in the development of spiritualism. He has not yet reached the full accomplishment of his designs; but it will be reached in the last remnant of time.

ALIEN ENCOUNTERS!



“And I saw three unclean spirits...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 16:13, 14.

From *The X-Files* to *Medium*; from *Stephen King* and *J.K. Rowling* to *Coast to Coast AM* with *George Noory* and *Art Bell*, media moguls and marketing geniuses are cashing in on modern-day spiritualism. From psychics to ghosts; from *OBEs* (out of body experiences) to *NDEs* (near death experiences), countless millions are buying the “Grand Eden Lie!”

From *Yoga*, *Ouija* boards and hypnotism to *Harry Potter* and *Lord of the Rings*, millions of professed Christians are tuning in and turning on to the spirits, oblivious to the danger stalking them. Most are comfortable in their presence, finding the spirits helpful and even entertaining.

The *paranormal*—tantalizing so-called enlightened modernists—is but “Eden’s forbidden fruit,” dressed seductively and made palatable for the last generation. Fallen angels, *extraterrestrials*, possess knowledge and energies far superior to our own. They are able to morph themselves, and astound human beings with their supernatural powers and super technology, but they are demons, *cunningly disguised and full of lies*.

UFOs may be “flying objects,” but they are not “UNIDENTIFIED!” “We come from other worlds and we come in peace. We have been visiting and observing your world for centuries. We have made numerous efforts to communicate with your world leaders. It is necessary that we come boldly forward at this time because we see great trouble ahead for your world. We come in the spirit of ‘communion,’ and we are here to inform you that it is time for your Messiah to return to earth, as he promised. You must be ready to receive him and accept the message of peace he brings for all mankind.”

Jesus warned us they would appear at the end: “Take heed that no man deceive you. For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many....Then if any man shall say unto you, Lo, here is Christ, or there; believe it not. For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.” *Matthew 24:4, 5, 23, 24.*

Ready or not, here they come!

THINK ABOUT IT . . . Many people believe that the “soul” or “spirit” of a person remains conscious even after death, but is this so? The Bible has much to say regarding man’s condition in death. Here are only a few of dozens of Scripture references on this topic:

At creation, God made a living soul!

“And the Lord God formed man of the **dust** of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the **breath** of life; **and man became a living soul.**” Genesis 2:7

DUST (or body) + BREATH = LIVING SOUL

What the Bible says about a person at death:

“Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit (breath; similar Hebrew concept as in Genesis 2:7) shall return unto God who gave it.”

Ecclesiastes 12:7

So, DUST (or body) – SPIRIT (or breath) = DEAD PERSON

Note: Here are the same two elements mentioned in Ecclesiastes 12:7. The “dust of the ground” is the body, and the “breath of life” is the “spirit” that comes from God. **God did not put a living soul in Adam! Adam became a living soul after God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life.** A light bulb cannot turn on without electricity. The light turns on only when the light bulb and electricity unite. When the electricity is turned off, the light ceases to exist. According to the Bible, when the breath departs from the body, the soul ceases to exist. Here is the simple equation once more:

DUST (or body) + BREATH (or spirit) = LIVING SOUL

Then, DUST (or body) – BREATH (or spirit) = DEAD PERSON

A dead person has no thought:

“His breath goeth forth, he returneth to his earth; **in that very day his thoughts perish.**”

Psalms 146:4

The dead have no knowledge or emotion:

“For the living know that they shall die: but **the dead know not any thing**, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion for ever in any thing that is done under the sun.”

Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6

The dead do not praise God:

“**The dead praise not the Lord**, neither any that go down into silence.” Psalm 115:17

“For in death there is no remembrance of thee: in the grave who shall give thee thanks?”

Psalm 6:5

How did Jesus explain “death” to His disciples?

“Our friend Lazarus sleepeth; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.

Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep, he shall do well. Howbeit Jesus spake of his death: but they thought that he had spoken of taking of rest in sleep. **Then said Jesus unto them plainly, Lazarus is dead.”**

John 11:11-14

When did Martha expect her brother, Lazarus, to live again?

“Jesus saith unto her, Thy brother shall rise again. Martha said unto Him, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day.”

John 11:23, 24

Note: Martha, Mary and Lazarus were close friends of Jesus. Martha had listened attentively to what Jesus taught about death, and she believed the dead would be raised in the Resurrection at the last day as Christ promised. John 6:39, 40.

When may we expect 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.”

1 Corinthians 15:22, 23

“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

“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 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.”

1 Thessalonians 4:16, 17

THINK ABOUT IT . . . If a person should, by accident or a blow to the head, be rendered unconscious, what awareness or “consciousness” would a person “knocked out” possess? None! This is the meaning of the term “unconscious.” Then is it reasonable to assume, or believe, that if the same person were struck again and killed he would suddenly be conscious, fully knowing and aware? The Scriptures are consistent and reasonable in this regard. Even more, pretended communication with the dead by the living is absolutely forbidden in Scripture (see Isaiah 8:19 & 20). The ancient pagan belief (consciousness in death) is illogical, unreasonable and opens the door for demonic activity (deception by fallen evil angels) and potential eternal loss.

THE IMPENDING CONFLICT

“GOD’S LAW—THE FOCUS OF CONTROVERSY”

“The temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in His temple the ark of His testament.” Revelation 11:19. In the sanctuary in heaven, within the holy of holies, the great original of the divine law is sacredly enshrined—the law that was spoken by God Himself amid the thunders of Sinai, written with His own finger on tables of stone and recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch.

Those who arrive at an understanding of this important point, will be led to see the sacred, unchanging character of the divine law. They will see, as never before, the force of the Saviour’s words, “Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.” Matthew 5:18. The law of God, being a revelation of His will and a transcript of His character, endures forever, “as a faithful witness in heaven.” Not one command has been annulled; not a jot or tittle has been changed. Says the psalmist: “Forever, O Lord, Thy word is settled in heaven.” “All His commandments are sure. They stand fast forever and ever.” Psalms 119:89; 111:7, 8.

From the very beginning of the great controversy in heaven, it has been Satan’s purpose to overthrow the law of God. It was to accomplish this that he entered upon his rebellion against the Creator; and though he was cast out of heaven, he has continued the same warfare upon the earth.

To deceive men, and lead them to join his rebellion and transgress God’s law, is the object which he has steadfastly pursued. Whether this be accomplished by casting aside the law altogether, or by rejecting one of its precepts, the result will ultimately be the same. He that offends “in one point,” manifests contempt for the whole law and he becomes “guilty of all.” James 2:10.

The great deceiver has cast contempt upon the divine statutes. The last great conflict between truth and error is but the final struggle of the long standing controversy concerning the law of God. Upon this battle we are now entering—a battle between the laws of men and the precepts of God, between the religion of the Bible and the religion of fable and tradition.

Many have come to deny doctrines which are the very pillars of the Christian faith. The great facts of creation as presented by the inspired writers, the fall of man, the atonement, and the perpetuity of the law of God, are practically rejected, either wholly or in part, by a large share of the professedly Christian world.

Too many ministers are teaching their people, and too many professors and teachers are instructing their students, that the law of God has been changed or abrogated; and that those who regard its requirements as still valid and to be literally obeyed, deserve only ridicule or contempt.

Every nation has its laws, which command respect and obedience; no government could exist without them. Can it be conceived that the Creator of the heavens and the earth has no law to govern the beings He has made? Suppose that prominent ministers were publicly to teach that the statutes which govern their land and protect the rights of its citizens were not obligatory—that they restricted the liberties of the people, and therefore ought not to be obeyed; how long would such men be tolerated in the pulpit? But is it a graver offense to disregard the laws of states and nations than to trample upon those

Divine precepts which are the foundations of all government?

No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine that God's law is no longer binding upon men. It would be far more consistent for nations to abolish their statutes, and permit people to do as they please, than for the Ruler of the universe to annul His law, and leave the world without a standard to condemn the guilty or justify the obedient.

Would we know the result of making void the law of God? Those who teach people to lightly regard the commandments of God sow, and will reap, disobedience. Let the restraint imposed by God's law be wholly cast aside, and human laws would soon be disregarded and people would practice the sins which brought plagues upon the heathen.

Because God forbids dishonest practices, coveting, lying, and defrauding, men are ready to trample upon His statutes as a hindrance to their worldly prosperity; but the results of banishing these precepts will be such as they do not anticipate.

**“Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law:
for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 3:4**

Wherever the divine precepts are rejected, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Already the doctrine that men are released from obedience to God’s requirements has weakened the force of moral obligation, and opened the floodgates of iniquity.

Lawlessness, intemperance, and corruption are sweeping in upon us like an overwhelming tide. In the family, Satan is at work. His banner waves, even in professedly Christian households. The line of distinction between professed Christians and the ungodly is now hardly distinguishable. Church members love what the world loves.

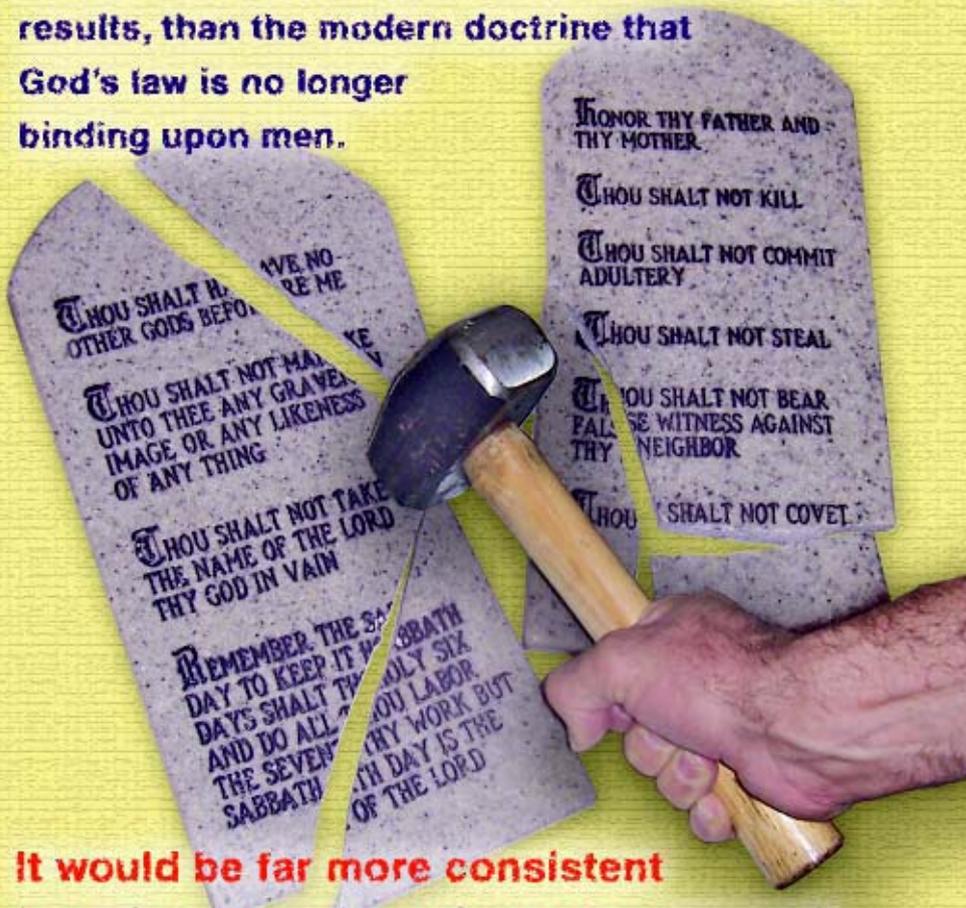
The whole system of religious principles and doctrines, which should form the foundation and framework of society, seems to be a tottering mass, ready to fall. Courts of justice are corrupt. Jurists are perverted and bribed. Dishonesty of every sort is found among those who administer the laws. The vilest criminals, when thrown into prison, are often made the recipients of gifts and attentions, as if they had attained an enviable distinction. Great publicity is given to their character and

crimes. The press publishes the revolting details of crimes committed, thereby initiating others into the practice of fraud, robbery, and murder. The infatuation of vice, the wanton taking of life, the staggering increase of addiction and wickedness of every order and degree, should arouse all who fear God, to inquire what can be done to stay the tide of evil.

Many religious teachers assert that Christ by His death abolished the law, and men are henceforth free from its requirements. There are some who represent it as a grievous yoke, and in contrast to the bondage of the law, they present the liberty to be enjoyed under the gospel.

But the prophets and apostles do not agree with this assertion regarding the Law of God. The Apostle James, who wrote after the death of Christ, refers to the decalogue as the “royal law,” and the “perfect law of liberty.” James 2:8; 1:25. John the Revelator, half a century after the crucifixion, pronounces a blessing upon them “that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.

No error accepted by the Christian world strikes more boldly against the authority of Heaven, none is more directly opposed to the dictates of reason, none is more pernicious in its results, than the modern doctrine that God's law is no longer binding upon men.



It would be far more consistent for nations to abolish their statutes, and permit people to do as they please, than for the Ruler of the universe to annul His law, and leave the world without a standard to condemn the guilty or justify the obedient.

The claim that Christ by His death abolished His Father's law, is without foundation. Had it been possible for the law to be changed or set aside, then Christ need not have died to save man from the penalty of sin. The death of Christ, so far from abolishing the law, proves that it is immutable !

The Son of God came to “magnify the law, and make it honorable.” Isaiah 42:21. He said, “Think not that I am come to destroy the law;” “till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law.” Matthew 5:17, 18.

Those who will accept the light of Scripture concerning the mediation of Christ and the perpetuity of the law of God, will find these foundational truths presented in Revelation, chapter 14. The messages of this chapter constitute a threefold warning, which is to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord's second coming.

A great religious awakening, under the proclamation of Christ's soon return, is foretold in the prophecy of the first message of Revelation chapter 14. An angel is seen flying “in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” “With a loud voice” he proclaims the message, “Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come: and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.” Revelation 14:6, 7.

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments.” 1 John 5:3

A THREEFOLD WARNING

The fact that an angel is said to be the herald of this warning, and his flight “in the midst of heaven,” the “loud voice” with which the warning is uttered, and its proclamation to all “that dwell on the earth”—“to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people”—gives evidence of the rapidity and worldwide extent of the movement. The first of these warnings announces the approaching judgment.

This prophecy, pointing forward to the time for Christ to return, brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message, will be found keeping the commandments of God. Revelation 14:12. The announcement, “The hour of His judgment is come,” points to the closing work of Christ’s high-priestly ministry for the salvation of men. It heralds a vital message which must be proclaimed to “every nation, kindred, tongue and people,” until the Saviour’s intercession shall cease and He shall return to earth as “King of Kings and Lord of

Lords.” Revelation 14:6; 19:11-16.

By the first mighty angel, men will be called upon to “fear God, and give glory to Him,” and to worship Him as the Creator of the heavens and the earth. In order to do this, they must recognize and obey His law.



ALAN COLLINS,
SCULPTOR

A WORK OF REFORM

The call to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence.

“All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens.”
Psalm 96:5.

“To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things.” *Isaiah 40:25, 26.*

“Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens;...I am the Lord; and there is none else.” *Isaiah 45:18.*

“Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things.”
Revelation 4:11.

It follows that the message in Revelation chapter 14, which calls men to worship God as the Creator and keep His commandments, will especially call upon them to observe the fourth commandment. The Sabbath commandment uniquely identifies God as the Creator.

God said “Remember,” then the world forgot! But through the prophet Isaiah, God promises that knowledge of His “hallowed day” is to be revived and restored in the last days.



At the heart of the decalogue is the Sabbath commandment.

This work of reform to be accomplished in the last days is foretold by the prophet Isaiah: “Thus saith the Lord, Keep ye judgment and do justice; for My salvation is near to come, and My righteousness to be revealed. Blessed is the man that doeth this, and the son of man that layeth hold on it; that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, and keepeth his hand from doing any evil.” Isaiah 56:1, 2.

That these words apply in the Christian age, is shown by the context: “The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith, Yet will I gather others to Him, beside those that are gathered unto Him.” Isaiah 56:8.

Here is foreshadowed the great gathering in of the Gentiles by the gospel. And upon those who then honor the Sabbath, a blessing is pronounced.

Thus the obligation of the fourth commandment extends past the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, to the time when His servants should preach to all nations the message of glad tidings.

The claim so often put forth, that Christ changed the Sabbath, is disproved by His own words. In His Sermon on the Mount He said: “Think not that I am come to destroy

the law, or the prophets; I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven; but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven.” Matthew 5:17-19.

It is a fact generally admitted by Protestants, that the Scriptures give no authority for the change of the Sabbath. Catholic teachers acknowledge that the change of the Sabbath was made by their church, and declare that Protestants, by observing Sunday, are recognizing Rome’s authority:

“Protestants...accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change...But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that...in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope.” Our Sunday Visitor, February 5, 1950.

The prophet Isaiah, addressing the forsaken Sabbath, speaks of a

“Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14

time yet future when those who serve God will restore this precious truth: “Thou shalt raise up the foundations of many generations; and thou shalt be called, The repairer of the breach, The restorer of paths to dwell in. If thou turn away thy foot from the Sabbath, from doing thy pleasure on My holy day; and call the Sabbath a delight, the holy of the Lord, honorable; and shalt honor Him, not doing thine own ways, nor finding thine own pleasure, nor speaking thine own words; then shalt thou delight thyself in the Lord.” Isaiah 58:12-14.

That a breach has been made in the Law of God is plain to see. This divine institution is to be restored—the breach is to be repaired. Had the

Sabbath been universally kept, man’s thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship. Scarcely would there have been an idolator, an atheist, or an infidel.

“The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten.” -J. N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27.

Around the World, Christians Are Rediscovering the Biblical Sabbath!

The Bible Sabbath Association, a *non-denominational* organization open to all believers in the Seventh-day Sabbath, lists more than 400 Sabbath-keeping organizations and groups, numbering thousands of national and international congregations.

In the New Testament, essential truths are presented in Revelation chapter 14, in connection with the “everlasting gospel.” They will distinguish the people who serve God at the time of Christ’s return. As the result of the threefold message presented here, it is announced, “Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” And this is the last message to be given before the coming of the LORD. Immediately following its proclamation, the Son of man is seen by the prophet, coming in glory to reap the harvest of the earth.

**“The Lord declares... Those who honor Me
I will honor.” 1 Samuel 2:30 NIV**

“CATHOLICISM SPEAKS”

“Sunday is a Catholic institution, and its claims to observance can be defended only on Catholic principles...From beginning to end of Scripture there is not a single passage that warrants the transfer of weekly public worship from the last day of the week to the first.”

—*The Catholic Press*, Sydney, Australia, August 1900.

“Protestantism, in discarding the authority of the (Roman Catholic) Church, has no good reasons for its Sunday theory, and ought logically to keep Saturday as the Sabbath.”

—John Gilmary Shea, *American Catholic Quarterly Review*, January 1883.

“It is well to remind the Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists and all other Christians, that the Bible does not support them anywhere in their observance of Sunday. Sunday is an institution of the Roman Catholic Church, and those who observe the day observe a commandment of the Catholic Church.”

—Priest Brady, *in an address, reported in the Elizabeth, N.J. “News,”* March 18, 1903.

“Reason and common sense demand the acceptance of one or the other of these alternatives: either Protestantism and the keeping holy of Saturday, or Catholicity and the keeping holy of Sunday. Compromise is impossible.”

—*The Catholic Mirror*, December 23, 1893.

“The observance of Sunday by the Protestants is an homage they pay, in spite of themselves, to the authority of the [Catholic] Church.”

—Monsignor Segur, *Plain Talk About the Protestantism of Today*, page 213.

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath Day. In keeping the Sunday they are following a law of the Catholic Church.”

—Albert Smith, Chancellor of the Archdiocese of Baltimore, *replying for the Cardinal in a letter*, February 10, 1920.

“God simply gave His (Catholic) Church the power to set aside whatever day or days, she would deem suitable as Holy Days. The Church chose Sunday, the first day of the week, and in the course of time added other days, as holy days.”

—Vincent J. Kelly, *Forbidden Sunday and Feast-Day Occupations*, page 2.

“Protestants...accept Sunday rather than Saturday as the day for public worship after the Catholic Church made the change...But the Protestant mind does not seem to realize that...in observing the Sunday, they are accepting the authority of the spokesman for the church, the Pope.”

—*Our Sunday Visitor*, February 5, 1950.

“We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”

—Peter Geiermann, CSSR, *A Doctrinal Catechism*, 1957 edition, page 50.

“PROTESTANTISM SPEAKS”

Baptist: “There was and is a command to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will however be readily said, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week, with all its duties, privileges and sanctions. Earnestly desiring information on this subject, which I have studied for many years, I ask, where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament—absolutely not. There is no scriptural evidence of the change of the Sabbath institution from the seventh to the first day of the week.”

—Dr. E. T. Hiscox, *author of the Baptist Manual.*

Congregationalist: “It is quite clear that however rigidly or devotedly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath...The Sabbath was founded on specific, divine command. We can plead no such command for the observance of Sunday...There is not a single line in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday.”

—Dr. R.W. Dale, *The Ten Commandments, pages 106-107.*

Lutheran Free Church: “For when there could not be produced one solitary place in the Holy Scriptures which testified that either the Lord Himself or the apostles had ordered such a transfer of the Sabbath to Sunday, then it was not easy to answer the question: Who has transferred the Sabbath, and who has had the right to do it?”

—George Sverdrup, *A New Day.*

Methodist: “It is true that there is no positive command for infant baptism. Nor is there any for keeping holy the first day of the week. Many believe that Christ changed the Sabbath. But, from His own words, we see that He came for no such purpose. Those who believe that Jesus changed the Sabbath base it only on a supposition.”

—Amos Binney, *Theological Compendium, pages 180-181.*

Episcopalian: “We have made the change from the seventh day to the first day, from Saturday to Sunday, on the authority of the one holy, catholic, apostolic church of Christ.”

—Bishop Seymour, *Why We Keep Sunday.*

Presbyterian: “There is no word, no hint in the New Testament about abstaining from work on Sunday. The observance of Ash Wednesday, or Lent, stands exactly on the same footing as the observance of Sunday. Into the rest of Sunday no Divine Law enters.”

—Canon Eyton, *in The Ten Commandments.*

Anglican: “And where are we told in the Scriptures that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are nowhere commanded to keep the first day.”

—Isaac Williams, *Plain Sermons on the Catechism, pages 334, 336.*

Christian Church: “Now there is no testimony in all the oracles of heaven that the Sabbath is changed, or that the Lord’s Day came in the room of it.”

—Alexander Campbell, *in The Reporter, October 8, 1921.*

THE BEAST AND HIS MARK

“ALL THE WORLD WONDERED AFTER THE BEAST”

When God sends men warnings so important that they are represented as proclaimed by holy angels flying in the midst of heaven, He requires every person endowed with reasoning powers to hear and heed the message.

In Revelation 14, the first angel is followed by a second, proclaiming, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.” Revelation 14:8. The term Babylon is derived from “Babel,” and signifies confusion. It is employed in Scripture to designate the various forms of false or apostate religion. In Revelation 17, Babylon is represented as a woman, a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church.

“I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, 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.” “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, My people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:1, 2, 4.

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 religious organizations that constitute Babylon.

“And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God.” Revelation 14:9, 10.

In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: “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.” Revelation 14:9, 10.

The “beast” mentioned in this message, is the first, or leopard-like beast of Revelation, chapter 13. 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. In Revelation 12:9, the dragon is said to be Satan; 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.

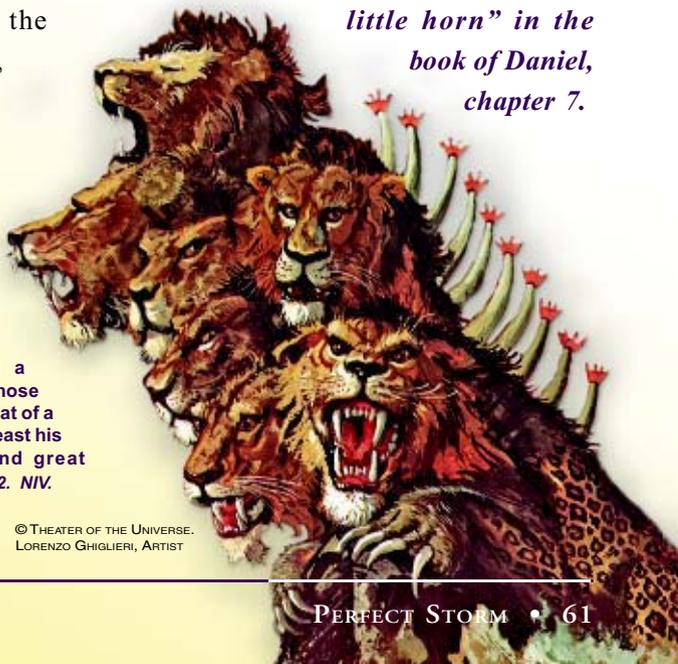
In chapter 13 (Verses 1-10) is described another beast, “like unto a leopard,” to which the dragon gave “his power,

and his seat, and great authority.” This symbol, many Christians believe, represents the Papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once possessed by the ancient Roman Empire. Of the leopard-like beast it is declared: “There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies. . . . 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.”

This prophecy in the book of Revelation parallels the description of the “terrible beast and the little horn” in the book of Daniel, chapter 7.

“I saw a beast coming out of the sea. He had ten horns and seven heads, with ten crowns on his horns, and on each head a blasphemous name. The beast I saw resembled a leopard, but had feet like those of a bear and a mouth like that of a lion. The dragon gave the beast his power and his throne and great authority.” *Revelation 13:1, 2. NIV.*

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LORENZO GHIGIERI, ARTIST



“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.”

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. Men are not to be left in darkness concerning this important matter; the warning against this sin is to be given to the world before the visitation of God’s judgments, that all may know why they are to be inflicted, and have opportunity to escape them.

Prophecy declares that the first angel would make his announcement to “every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people.” The warning of the third angel, which forms a part of the same threefold message, is to be no less widespread.

It is represented in the prophecy as proclaimed with a loud voice, by an angel flying in the midst of heaven; and it will command the attention of the world.

The fearful judgments pronounced against the worship of the beast and his image (Revelation 14:9-11), should lead all to a diligent study of the prophecies to learn what the mark of the beast is, and how they are to avoid receiving it.

But a correct interpretation of the symbols employed is necessary for an understanding of this message.

What is represented by the beast, the image, the mark?



Significant Prophetic Symbols in Scripture

1. Winds: Strife, war, commotion.
See Jeremiah 25:31-33; 49:36, 27.

2. Waters: Peoples, multitudes, and nations. Revelation 17:15; Isaiah 8:7.

3. Beasts: Kings or Kingdoms.
Daniel 7:17, 23; Revelation 13:2, 3, 7.

4. Horns: Power and strength, kings or kingdoms. Deuteronomy 33:17; Zechariah 1:18, 19; Lamentations 2:3, 17; Psalm 89:17, 24; Revelation 17:12; Daniel 7:24; 8:8, 20, 22.

5. Heads: Major powers, rulers, governments. Daniel 2:38, 7:6; Revelation 17:3, 9, 10.

6. Crowns: Kingship, victory.
1 Chronicles 20:2; 2 Kings 11:12; Ezekiel 21:26, 27; 2 Timothy 4:7, 8; 1 Corinthians 9:25.

7. Time: A literal year.
Daniel 4:16, 23, 25, 32; 7:25; 11:13 margin; 12:7; Revelation 12:6, 14; 11:2, 3.

8. Times: Two years. Half a time: half a year.

9. Lamb: Jesus, sacrifice.
John 1:29;
1 Corinthians 5:7;
Genesis 22:7, 8.

10. Lion: Strength, Jesus Christ, Israel.
Genesis 49:9; Revelation 5:4-9;
Psalm 7:2; Numbers 24:8, 9.

11. Lamp / Oil / Fire: The Holy Spirit.
Zechariah 4:2-6; Revelation 4:5.

12. Dragon: Satan or his agencies.
Revelation 12:7-9.

13. Pure, Chaste Woman: God's true or faithful church. Jeremiah 6:2; 2 Corinthians 11:2.

14. Harlot: Apostate church or religion.
Isaiah 1:21; Jeremiah 3:1-3, 6-9; Hosea 4:15; Revelation 17:5.

15. Sickle: Symbol of harvest at the end of the world. Revelation 14:14-19; Matthew 13:39.

16. Bottomless Pit: Earth in chaos,
torn up, dark and empty.

Revelation 20:1-3;

Genesis 1:2;

Isaiah 24:

1-4, 19;

Jeremiah

4:23-28.



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LORENZO GHIGLIERI, ARTIST

Coming Soon

A One World Order

In the Scriptures, the reader is urged to compare the prophetic end-time visions given to the Old Testament prophet Daniel, with the apocalyptic, last-day visions recorded by the Apostle John, in the New Testament book of Revelation (*The Apocalypse*).

A simple comparison of the symbols and actions of the powers described in Daniel chapter 7 and Revelation chapter 13 is fascinating.

The fourth “terrible beast” and its arrogant “little horn” of Daniel 7, are represented with expansion and emphasis as “two beasts” in Revelation 13—the “leopard-like composite beast” and a second “beast with lamb-like horns.”

The prophetic “beast” power, or system, predicted in these visions, doubtless represents the fearsome One World Order of the end-times. Prophetically, this “evil system” will be comprised of secular governments, or “state powers,” represented in Revelation 13:1 as “ten horns with crowns.” These yet-to-be-identified governments will be joined in confederacy with “seven heads,” or “seven religious powers” (world religions), depicted in the prophecy as “heads wearing the names of blasphemy.” Revelation 13:1.

Thus, in the coming “Beast World Order,” the oppressive powers of Church and State will once again unite. History will repeat, and just as in the past, the inevitable result will be intolerance and persecution.

A crisis of global dimension is here predicted; one that will especially threaten the United States of America and its civil liberties, as the Constitution of the United States (unique in world history) forbids the merging of Church and State powers.

The prophetic “beast” power predicted in these visions, doubtless represents the fearsome One World Order of the end-times.

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The great kingdoms that have ruled the world were presented to the prophet Daniel as beasts of prey, rising when the “four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea.” Daniel 7:2. In Revelation, an angel explained that waters represent “peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15. Winds are a symbol of war and strife. The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power.

After describing the leopard-like composite beast of Revelation 13:1-10, the prophet continues: “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....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.” Revelation 13:11-14.

But what is the “image to the beast”? and how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the first, leopard-like beast. This beast with two lamb-like horns also “causeth [commands] 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 13:16, 17.

To learn what the image is like, how it is to be formed and how the dreadful “mark” may be required, one must consider the characteristics of the beast.

When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel, and accepted heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God. Then in order to control the consciences of the people, she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the Papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state, and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of “heresy.”

**“The farther backward you can look,
the farther forward you can see.”** –Winston Churchill

NO KING AND NO POPE

Whenever and wherever the church has obtained secular power, she has employed it to punish dissent from her doctrines. Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance with worldly powers, have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. An example of this is given in the long-continued persecution of dissenters by the Church of England. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thousands of non-conformist ministers were forced to leave their churches, and many, both of pastors and people, were subjected to fine, imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom.

The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the early centuries.

Said Paul, There shall “come a falling away...and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.”
2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. So, a great

apostasy will corrupt the last-day church. The “man of sin” (Antichrist) will prepare the way for the image to the beast and the mark that will be required of all men and all nations.

The Christian exiles and brave settlers who first fled to America from the Old World, sought asylum from royal oppression and priestly intolerance, and they determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty.

The Declaration of Independence sets forth the great truth that “all men are created equal,” and endowed with the inalienable right to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” And the Constitution guarantees freedom of religious faith, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience.

In time, Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles would become the secret of America’s power and prosperity. As a result, the oppressed and downtrodden of the world have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to its place among the most powerful nations of the earth.

In the future, in order for the United States of America to form an image to the beast system, the religious powers must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will again be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends. When this state of ungodliness shall be reached, the same results will follow as in the first centuries.

The founders of this nation wisely sought to guard against the employment of secular power on the part of the church, with its inevitable result—intolerance and persecution. The Constitution provides that “Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,” and that “no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any office of public trust under the United States.”

Only in flagrant violation of these safeguards to the nation’s liberty, can any religious observance be enforced by civil authority. But the inconsistency of such action is no greater than is represented in the symbol.

It is the beast with the lamb-like horns—in profession pure, gentle, and harmless—that speaks as a dragon.

Not all is made plain yet pertaining to the “mark of the beast.” Reasonably, the mark will not be perfectly understood until the scroll unrolls. Nevertheless, the prophetic visions found in Daniel and in Revelation, depicting the “evil beast” of the end times and the “miracle-working little horn” (Antichrist), offer clues regarding the beast, his image and his mark.

Said the angel to Daniel, concerning the “beast,” and especially the “little horn,” “HE SHALL SPEAK AGAINST THE MOST HIGH...AND TRY TO CHANGE THE SET TIMES AND THE LAWS.” Daniel 7:25, NIV.

Here it is plain to see that the “man of sin” is at war with the Most High, and that he purposes to change the “set times” and the “laws.” This is precisely the record of the past. The Roman Church boastfully presumed to change God’s Law, including the very commandment that “sets time.”

“What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun.”

—Ecclesiastes 1:9, NIV.

A PREDICTION...

“There is soon to open before us a period of overwhelming interest to all living. The controversies of the past are to be revived; new controversies will arise. The scenes to be enacted in our world are not yet dreamed of. Satan is at work through human agencies. Those who are making an effort to change the Constitution and secure a law enforcing Sunday observance little realize what will be the result. A crisis is just upon us.”

—The Author.

A PREDICTION...

“A crisis awaits the world.

The most momentous struggle of all the ages is just before us. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast events of the greatest magnitude. The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones.”

—The Author.

After the warning against the worship of the beast and his image, the prophecy declares, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus." Since those who keep God's commandments are thus placed in contrast with those that worship the beast and his image and receive his mark, it follows that the keeping of God's Law, on the one hand, and its violation, on the other, will make the distinction between the worshipers of God and the worshipers of the beast.

The Bible plainly teaches that a time is approaching when the laws of the state shall so conflict with the Law of God that whoever would obey all the divine precepts must brave censure, even arrest.

As the claims of God's Law are urged upon the people, it is found that the

observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined in God's Word. Then some will reason: "We have always kept Sunday, our fathers kept it, and many good and pious men have died happy while keeping it. If they were right, so are we." They will urge that Sunday keeping has been an established doctrine and a widespread custom of the church for many centuries. Against this argument it will be shown that the Sabbath and its observance in Scripture are more ancient and widespread, even as old as the world itself.

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 Finally, a day in which we can come together and celebrate God's eternal moral law.

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Some of the many Christian leaders involved with the Ten Commandments Day include:

- Dr. Paul Crouch, Founder and President, Trinity Broadcasting Network
- Dr. James Dobson, Focus on the Family, Colorado Springs, CO
- Rev. Jerry Falwell, Liberty Alliance, Lynchburg, VA
- Rev. Pat Robertson, Christian Broadcasting Network
- Pastor George Morrison - Chairman, Promise Keepers
- National Religious Broadcasters NRB Committee
- Mr. Chuck Colson, Prison Fellowship, Washington, DC
- Dr. James Kennedy, Coral Ridge Ministries
- Mrs. Roberta Combs, Christian Coalition, Washington, DC
- Richard Roberts, President of Oral Roberts University
- Bishop George McKinney, Church of God in Christ

Christians of past generations observed Sunday, supposing that in so doing they were keeping the Bible Sabbath; and there are now true Christians in every church, including the Roman Catholic communion, who honestly believe that Sunday is the Sabbath of divine appointment. God accepts their sincerity of purpose and their integrity before Him.

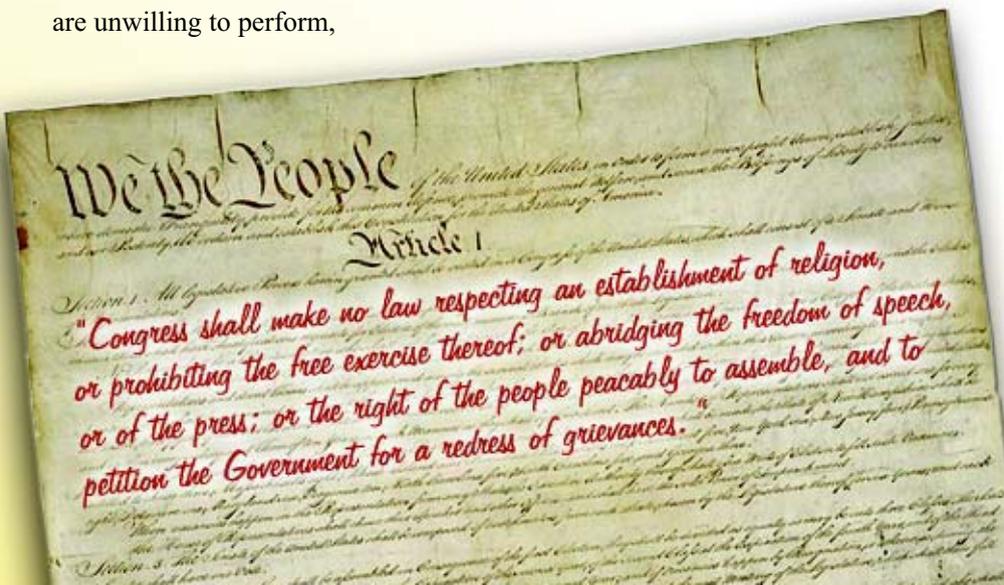
But when the world shall be enlightened concerning the obligation of the true Sabbath and Sunday observance shall be enforced by law, then whoever shall transgress the command of God, to obey a precept which has no higher authority than that of man, will thereby dishonor God.

When this time comes, some popular teachers, in an attempt to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform,

will declare that the Law of God is no longer binding. Thus they will cast away the law and the Sabbath together.

These are the very teachings that have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's Holy Law. Yet this class will 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. This claim will be especially urged in America.

But such action will be directly contrary to the principles of this government, to the genius of its free institutions, to the direct and solemn avowals of the Declaration of Independence, and to the Constitution.



WILL AMERICA SURVIVE?

The fast-fulfilling signs of the times declare that the coming of Christ is near at hand. The agencies of evil are combining their forces and consolidating. They are strengthening for the last great crisis. Great changes are soon to take place in our world, and the final movements will be rapid ones. The days in which we live are solemn and important. The calamities by land and sea, the unsettled state of society, the alarms of war, are portentous. They forecast approaching events of the greatest magnitude.

Through the two great errors, the immortality of the soul, and Sunday sacredness, Satan will bring the last generation under his deceptions. While the former lays the foundation of spiritualism, the latter creates a bond of sympathy with Rome.

Many are disposed to attribute any fear of the Papal system, past, present or future, to bigotry or childishness. They see nothing in the history and attitude of Romanism that is hostile to America's free institutions, or find nothing portentous in its growth.

But Romanism as a system is no more in harmony with the gospel of Christ now than at any former period in her history. The Protestant churches are in great darkness, or they would discern the signs of the times. The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence to undo all that Protestantism has done.

"I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon...."

—Revelation 13:11



**THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES AFFIRMS
LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE AND THE RULE OF LAW;
NOTHING IS MORE FUNDAMENTAL.**

BUT THE PAPAL SYSTEM INSISTS OTHERWISE!

“The absurd and erroneous doctrines or ravings in defense of liberty of conscience, are a most pestilential error—a pest, of all others, most to be dreaded in a state.” —Pope Pius IX, in his Encyclical Letter of August 15, 1854

The same pope, in his Encyclical Letter of December 8, 1864, anathematized **“those who assert the liberty of conscience and of religious worship,”** also **“all such as maintain that the church may not employ force.”**

“If, therefore, the Catholic Church also claims the right of dogmatic intolerance with regard to her teaching, it is unjust to reproach her for exercising this right...she regards dogmatic intolerance not alone as her incontestable right, but also as a sacred duty....

“As the true God can tolerate no strange gods, the true Church of Christ can tolerate no strange Churches beside herself...And it is just in this exclusiveness that lies her unique strength, the stirring power of her propaganda, the unfailing vigour of her progress. A strictly logical consequence of this incontestable fundamental idea is the ecclesiastical dogma that outside the Church there is no salvation...

“However repulsive, when judged from the more refined standpoint of modern civilization, the barbarous cruelty of medieval penal ordinances may be...we may not for this reason condemn the whole penal system of that age as judicial murder; for the legal punishments, while indeed inhuman, were not unjust...

“According to Rom., xiii, 11 sqq., the secular authorities have the right to punish, especially grave crimes, with death; consequently, ‘heretics may be not only excommunicated, but also justly (juste) put to death.’”

—The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1911 edition, Vol. 14, pages 766, 768

(Pope John Paul II) “insists that men have no reliable hope of creating a viable geopolitical system unless it is on the basis of Roman Catholic Christianity.” —Malachi Martin, *The Keys Of This Blood*, page 492, ©1990

Catholic Bishops in US Say They Will Break Immigration Law

www.ekklesia.co.uk / March 5, 2006

“Catholic leaders in the US have said they may break a proposed immigration law, saying that ‘the laws of the gospel always exceed the laws of the land.’

“Cardinal Roger Mahony, the leader of the nation’s largest diocese, has now gone further and promised to defy the bill if it becomes law. ‘I would say to all priests, deacons and members of the church that we are not going to observe this law.’”

Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.

ON THESE TWO COMMANDMENTS HANG ALL THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS." Matthew 22:36-40.



Love to God

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAYEN IMAGE OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING.

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOR

Love to Man

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER

THOU SHALT NOT KILL

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR

Jesus said, "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill. For verily I say unto you, Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled. Whosoever therefore shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven:

BUT WHOSOEVER SHALL DO AND TEACH THEM, THE SAME SHALL BE CALLED GREAT IN THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN." Matthew 5:17-19

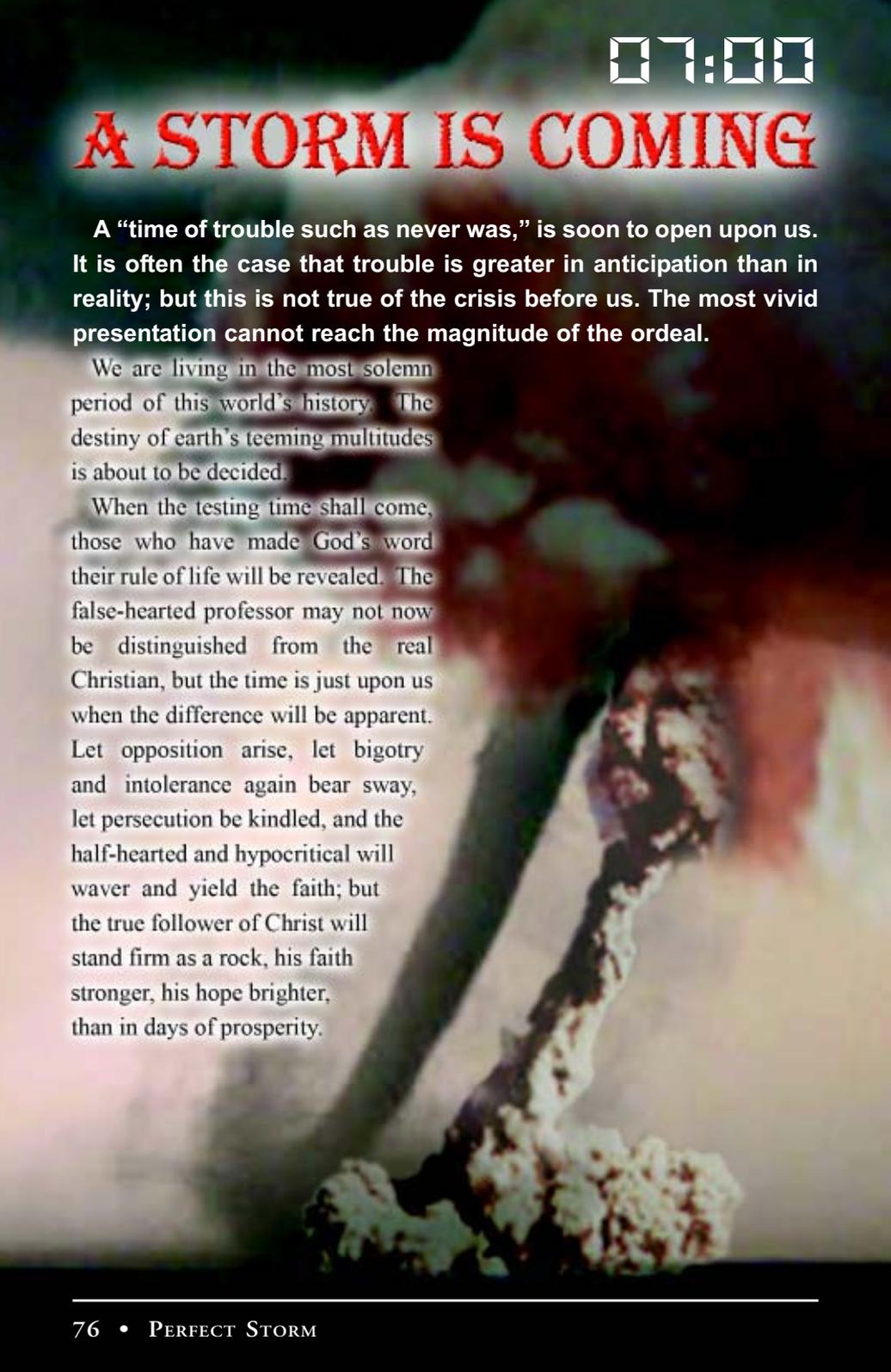
In the future, those who honor God by keeping His Commandments will be denounced as enemies of law and order, as breaking down the moral restraints of society, causing anarchy and corruption, and calling down the judgments of God upon the earth. They will be accused of disaffection toward the government. Ministers who deny the obligation of the Divine Law will present from the pulpit the duty of yielding obedience to the civil authorities as ordained of God. In legislative halls and courts of justice, commandment-keepers will be misrepresented and condemned. The worst construction will be put upon their motives.

As in the past, dignitaries of church and state will unite to bribe,

persuade, or compel all classes to honor the Sunday. The lack of divine authority will be supplied by oppressive enactments. Even in free America, rulers and legislators, in order to secure public favor, will yield to the popular demand for a law enforcing Sunday observance. Liberty of conscience, which has cost so great a sacrifice, will no longer be respected.

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 America will have formed an image of the beast, and the infliction of civil penalties upon dissenters will inevitably result.

In the soon-coming conflict we shall see exemplified the prophet's words: "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." Revelation 12:17.



07:00

A STORM IS COMING

A “time of trouble such as never was,” is soon to open upon us. 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.

We are living in the most solemn period of this world’s history. The destiny of earth’s teeming multitudes is about to be decided.

When the testing time shall come, those who have made God’s word their rule of life will be revealed. The false-hearted professor may not now be distinguished from the real Christian, but the time is just upon us when the difference will be apparent. Let opposition arise, let bigotry and intolerance again bear sway, let persecution be kindled, and the half-hearted and hypocritical will waver and yield the faith; but the true follower of Christ will stand firm as a rock, his faith stronger, his hope brighter, than in days of prosperity.

“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, every one that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12:1.

When the third angel’s message closes, mercy no longer pleads for the guilty inhabitants of the earth. Then Christ ceases His intercession in the sanctuary above. He lifts His hands, and with a loud voice cries, “It is done. 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 eternal life or eternal death. As our great High Priest, Christ has made a final atonement for His people, and blotted out their sins. “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 Christ is to reign as King of kings, and Lord of lords.

As Christ leaves the heavenly sanctuary, darkness covers the inhabitants of the earth. The restraint

which has been upon the wicked is removed, and Satan will have 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. Isaiah 24:1-6. The wicked have passed the boundary of their probation, and the Spirit of God, persistently resisted, is at last withdrawn. Unsheltered by divine grace, they have no protection.

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.

The apostle John in vision heard a loud voice in heaven exclaiming, “Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” Revelation 12:12. Fearful are the scenes which call forth this exclamation from the heavenly voice. We are to prepare for that time. We should now acquaint ourselves with God by proving His promises.

Satan's wrath increases as his time grows short, and his

work of deceit and destruction will reach its culmination in the time of trouble. 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 hail storms, 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.

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, leaders and the people will alike be 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 Scripture.

The church has long professed to look to the Saviour's advent as the consummation of her hopes. Now the great deceiver will make it appear that Christ has come. In different parts of the earth, Satan will manifest himself as a majestic being of dazzling brightness, resembling the description of the Son of God given by John in the book of Revelation. Revelation 1:13-15.

The glory that surrounds him is unsurpassed by anything that mortal eyes have yet beheld. The shout of triumph rings out, "Christ has come! Christ has come!" People prostrate themselves in adoration before him, while he lifts up his hands, and pronounces a blessing upon them, as Christ blessed His disciples when He was upon the earth. He declares that those who persist in keeping holy the seventh day are blaspheming his name by refusing to listen to his angels sent

to them with light and truth. This is the strong, almost overmastering delusion.

But the people of God will not be misled. The teachings of this false christ are not in accordance with the Scriptures. His blessing is pronounced upon the worshipers of the beast and his image, the very class upon whom the Bible declares that God's unmingled wrath shall be poured out.

Furthermore, Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent. The Saviour warned against deception upon this point, and he has clearly foretold the manner of His second coming.

"There shall arise false christs, and false prophets, and shall show great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect....Wherefore if they shall say unto you...He is in the desert; go not forth...He is in the secret chambers; believe it not. For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be." Matthew 24:24-27, 31.

When Christ shall cease His intercession in the heavenly 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 judgments which are to fall upon the world just before the final deliverance of God's people. Says the Revelator, in describing these terrible scourges, "There fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshiped his image." The sea "became as the blood of a dead man, and every living soul died in the sea." "And the rivers and fountains of waters became blood." Terrible as these inflictions are, God's justice stands fully vindicated. The angel of God declares, "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, 8, 9.

Satan is not permitted to counterfeit the manner of Christ's advent; Christ's coming will be witnessed by the whole world! Revelation 1:7

03:00

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. And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

—Revelation 16:14, 16

Seven awful last plagues are to be the portion of the wicked. 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. Those faithful to God will not be free from suffering;

but while persecuted and distressed, while they endure privation, and suffer hunger, they will not be left to perish. 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.” Isaiah 33:15, 16.

The eye of God, looking down the ages, was fixed upon the crisis which His people are to meet, when earthly powers shall be arrayed against them. Like the captive exile, they will be in fear of death by starvation or by violence. But the Holy One who divided the Red Sea before Israel, will manifest His mighty power and turn their captivity. "They shall be Mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up My jewels; and I will

spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him." Malachi 3:17. "Come, My people...shut thy doors about thee; hide thyself as it were for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast. For, behold, the Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity." Isaiah 26:20, 21. Glorious will be the deliverance of those whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life.

In the prophecies the future is opened before us as plainly as it was opened to the disciples by the words of Christ. The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed.

KING OF KINGS

It is at midnight that God manifests His power for the deliverance of His people. The sun appears, shining in 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. 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.

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." Revelation 16:18. The sky appears to open and shut. The glory from the throne of God seems flashing through. Mountains shake like a reed in the wind. There is a roar as of a coming tempest. The sea is lashed into fury, and there is heard

the shriek of the hurricane, like the voice of demons upon a mission of destruction. The whole earth heaves and swells like the waves of the sea. Its surface is breaking up. Mountain chains are sinking. Inhabited islands disappear. 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.

Thick clouds still cover the sky; yet the sun now and then breaks through, appearing like the avenging eye of God. Fierce lightnings leap from the heavens, enveloping the earth in a sheet of flame.

Above the terrific roar of thunder, voices, mysterious and awful, declare the doom of the wicked. Those who a little before were so reckless, so boastful and defiant, so exultant in their cruelty to God's faithful ones, are now shuddering in fear. Their wails are heard above the sound of the elements. Demons acknowledge the divinity of Christ, and tremble before His power, while men plead for mercy, and grovel in abject terror.

LORD OF LORDS

Soon there appears in the east a small black cloud. It is the cloud which surrounds the Saviour, and which seems in the distance to be shrouded in darkness.

The people of God recognize this to be the sign of the Son of man. In solemn silence they gaze upon it

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 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

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," 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 in heaven follow Him." Revelation 19:11, 14.

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.

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.” Jeremiah 30:6; Nahum 2:10. Even the righteous cry with trembling, “Who shall be able to stand?” Then the voice of Jesus is heard, saying, “My grace is sufficient for you.” The faces of the righteous are lighted up, and the angels strike a note higher, and sing again, as they draw still nearer to the earth.

T*he King of kings descends upon the cloud, wrapped in flaming fire. The heavens are rolled together as a scroll, the earth trembles before Him, and every mountain and island is moved out of its place. “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.” Psalm 50:3, 4.*

“And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, hid themselves in the dens 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 that sitteth on the throne, and from the

wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?” Revelation 6:15-17.

The derisive jests have ceased. Lying lips are hushed into silence. Naught now is heard but the voice of prayer and the sound of weeping and lamentation. The cry bursts forth from lips so lately scoffing, “The great day of His wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?”

The wicked pray to be buried beneath the rocks of the mountains, rather than meet the face of Him whom they have despised and rejected.

Those who have held fast their integrity in the very face of death, 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 triumphantly: “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.” Psalm 46:1-3.

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. 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. And the living righteous and the risen saints unite their voices in a long, glad shout of victory.

All come forth from their graves with the freshness and vigor of eternal youth. All blemishes and deformities are left in the grave. Restored to the tree of life in the long-lost Eden, the redeemed will grow 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 reflect, in mind and soul and body, the perfect image of their Lord. Oh, wonderful redemption! Long talked of, long hoped for, contemplated with eager anticipation, but never fully understood.

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 the elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Friends and families long separated by death are united, nevermore to part.

Christ presents to the Father the purchase of His blood, declaring, "Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given Me." What wondrous joy when the infinite Father, looking upon the ransomed, shall behold His image, sin's discord banished, its blight removed, and the human family once more in harmony with the divine!

The cross of Christ will be the science and the song of the redeemed through all eternity. In Christ glorified they will behold Christ crucified. Never will it be forgotten that the Beloved of God, whose power created and upheld the unnumbered worlds through the vast realms of space, humbled Himself to uplift fallen man; that He bore the guilt and shame of sin, and the hiding of His Father's face, till the woes of a lost world broke His heart, and crushed out His life on Calvary's cross.

That the Maker of all worlds, the Arbiter of all destinies, should lay aside His glory, and humiliate Himself for love of man, will ever excite the wonder of the universe.

As the nations of the saved look upon their Redeemer, and behold the eternal glory of the Father shining in His countenance; as they behold His throne, which is from everlasting to everlasting, and know that His kingdom is to have no end, they break forth in joyous song, "Worthy, worthy is the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us to God by His own most precious blood!"

It will be seen that He who is infinite in wisdom could devise no plan for our salvation except the sacrifice of His Son. The compensation for this sacrifice is the joy of peopling the earth with ransomed beings, holy, happy, and immortal.

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. While probation continued, they were blinded by Satan's deceptions, and justified their course of sin.

They neglected to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to deal justly, and to love mercy. They exalted themselves. Now they are stripped of all that made them great, and they are left destitute and defenseless. The result is, their lives are a failure; their pleasures are now turned to gall, their treasures to corruption. The gain of a lifetime is swept away in a moment.

The Lord cometh out of His place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquity; the earth also shall disclose her blood, and shall no more cover her slain." Isaiah 26:21. "And this shall be the plague wherewith the Lord will smite all the people that have fought against Jerusalem: Their flesh shall consume away while they stand upon their feet, and their eyes shall consume away in their holes, and their tongue shall consume away in their mouth. And it shall come to pass in that day that a great tumult from the Lord shall be among them; and they shall lay hold everyone on the hand of his neighbor, and his hand shall rise up against the hand of his neighbor." Zechariah 14:12, 13.



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. “Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste, and turneth it upside down, and scattereth abroad the inhabitants thereof.” “Because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore hath the curse devoured the earth, and they that dwell therein are desolate; therefore the inhabitants of the earth are burned.” Isaiah 24:1, 5, 6.

At the close of the thousand years foretold in Revelation chapter 20, the second resurrection will take place. Then the wicked will be raised from their graves, and appear before God to receive the execution of “the judgment written.” Thus the Revelator, after describing the resurrection of the righteous, says, “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Revelation 20:5. And Isaiah declares, concerning the wicked, “they shall be gathered together, as prisoners are gathered in the pit, and shall be shut up in the prison, and after many days shall they be visited.” Isaiah 24:22.

“And 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. God’s original purpose in the creation of the earth is fulfilled as it is made the eternal home of the redeemed. “The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever.” Psalm 37:29.

Fear of making our future inheritance seem too material has led many to spiritualize away the very truths which lead us to claim heaven as our home. Christ assured His disciples that He went to prepare mansions for them in His Father’s house.

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. “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.

There the tree of life yields its fruit every month; its leaves are for the healing of the nations. **There are ever flowing streams**, clear as crystal, and beside them waving

trees cast their shadows upon paths prepared for the ransomed.

There, widespreading plains swell into hills of beauty, as 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."

There, "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.

It is impossible for pain to exist in the atmosphere of heaven. There will be no more tears or funeral processions: "There shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away." Revelation 21:4. "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." Isaiah 33:24.

There is New Jerusalem, the metropolis of the glorified new earth. "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." Revelation 21:11, 24. 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.

There the people of God will be 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. **There we will 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, in heaven will find truest and sweetest

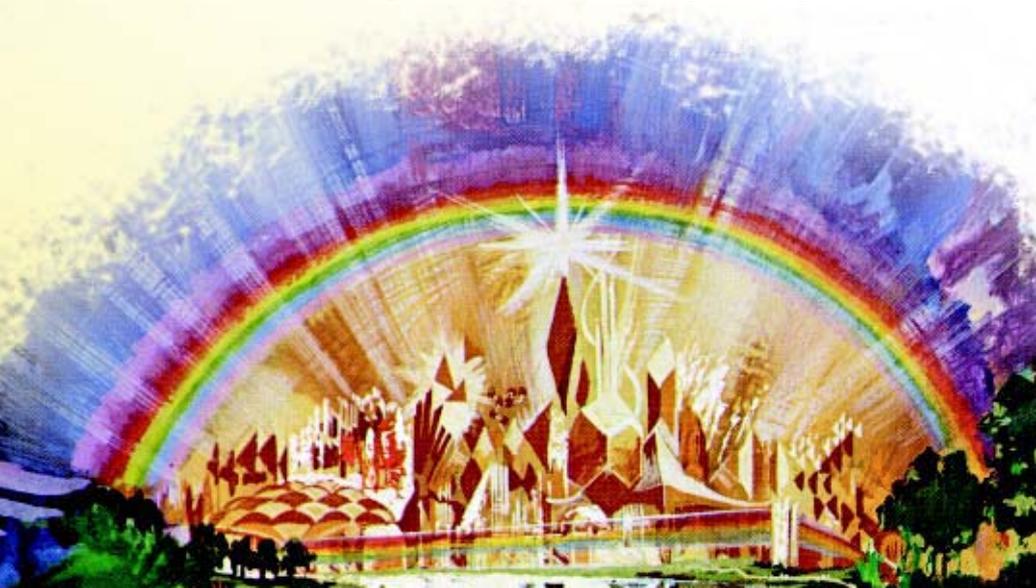
expression. The pure communion with holy beings, the harmonious social life with angels and with the faithful ones of all ages, who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, the sacred ties that bind together “the whole family in heaven and earth,” (Ephesians 3:15)—these will intensify the happiness of the redeemed.

There, immortal minds will contemplate with never failing delight the wonders of creative power and the mysteries of redeeming love. There is no cruel, deceiving foe to tempt to forgetfulness of God. Every faculty will be developed and 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.

There, all the treasures of the universe will be open to the study of God’s redeemed. With unutterable delight the children of earth enter into the joy and the wisdom of unfallen beings. **There they will share the treasures** of knowledge and understanding unfallen worlds gained through ages upon ages in contemplation of God’s handiwork.

There with undimmed vision the redeemed behold the wonders 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.





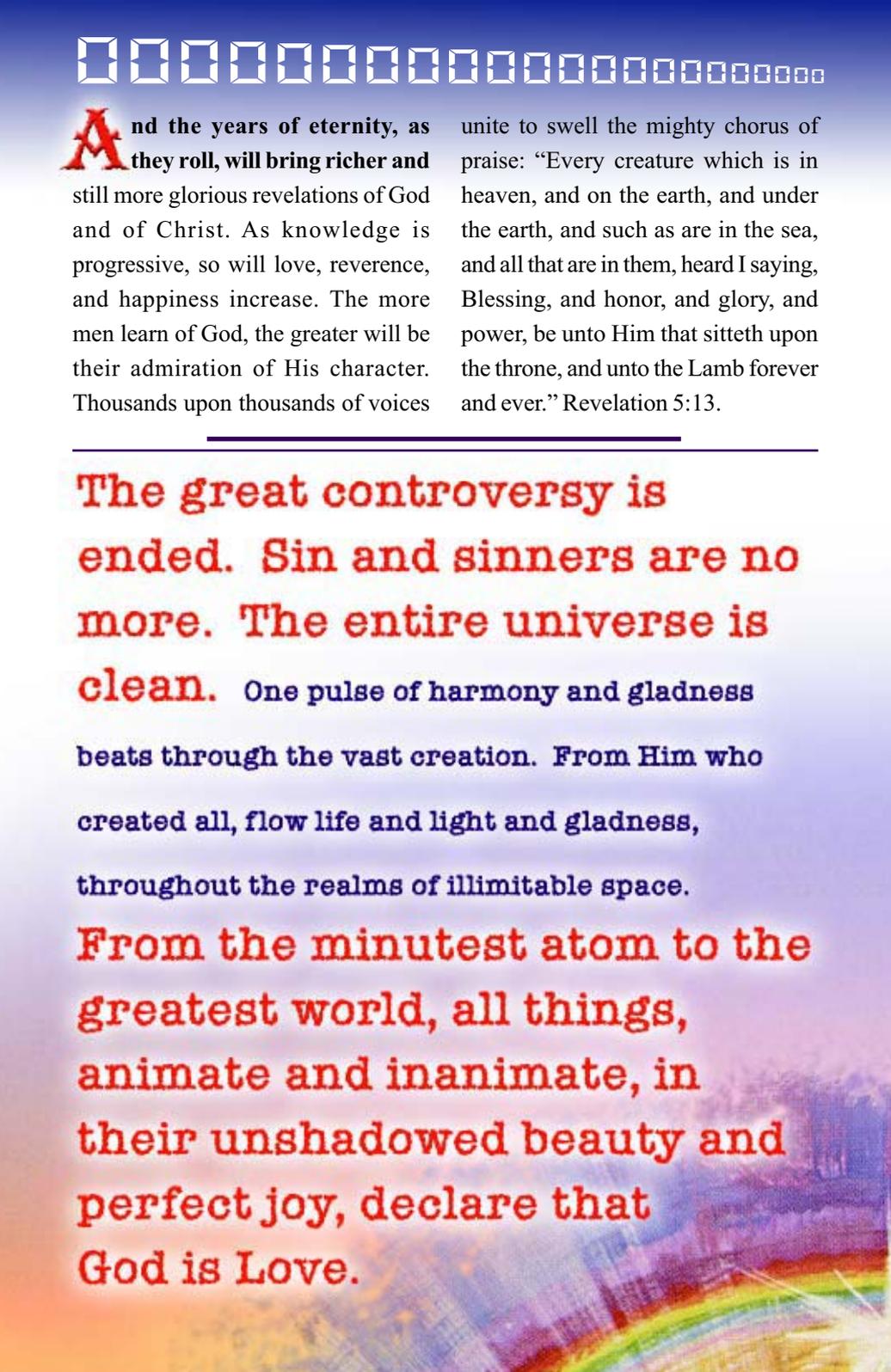
And the years of eternity, as they roll, will bring richer and still more glorious revelations of God and of Christ. As knowledge is progressive, so will love, reverence, and happiness increase. The more men learn of God, the greater will be their admiration of His character. Thousands upon thousands of voices

unite to swell the mighty chorus of praise: "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 forever 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.

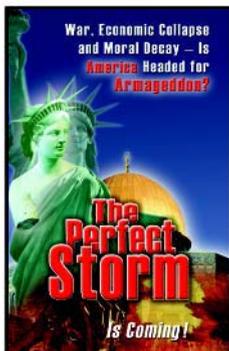
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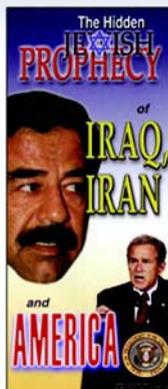
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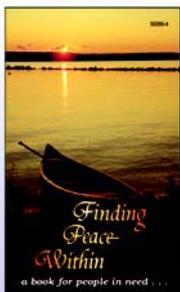


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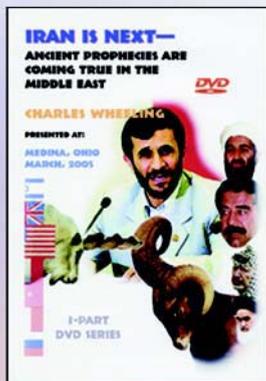
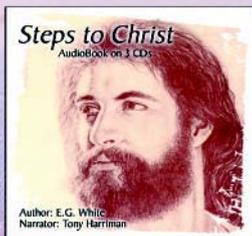
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