

# Magnificent Scenes in the Book of Revelation

BY THE REV. DR. BAYLEY.

Author of The Divine Word Opened, etc.

COMPRISING VOL. I. OF

Sermons for the Times.

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PREFACE.

OF this transcendent volume, the Book of Revelation, it is written, Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein.

By affording helps to understand its marvelous and magnificent disclosures, it has been the hope to enable them to be more largely meditated upon and enjoyed.

The wonderful roll of the worlds inner history for nearly two thousand years past has been opened for us, and we see grand things dawning upon mankind.

Let us pray the Divine Revealer for His aid to keep the things written therein, so that when our books are opened they may speak only the praise of His goodness, Who has called us out of darkness into His marvelous light.

J. BAYLEY.

Kensington, May, 1878.

Sermons for the Times.

THE MAGNIFICENT SCENES IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION,

BY THE

REV. DR. BAYLEY.

THE MALL, KENSINGTON, LONDON.

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# No. 1. THE SON OF MAN IN THE MIDST OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS.

And, in the midst of the seven candlesticks, one like unto the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and His eyes were as a flame of fire; and His feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and His voice as the sound of many waters. And He had in His right hand seven stars; and out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword; And His countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength. Revelation 1:13-16

THIS Divine Book stands out especially and peculiarly as the Prophetic Book of the New Testament. In the Old Testament you are aware there are many Prophets, large and small; but in the New Testament this book is the prophetic one ushered to us when the voice is described as addressing John, and telling him that he was called upon to view scenes foreshadowing the states of the Church that should be hereafter, and to write them in a book. In this respect this portion of Hallowed Writ is worthy of our best attention, for it unfolds to us the progress of the workings of Divine Providence, until the great aim of the whole Word should be accomplished.

This Book is also peculiar in a point of view that has often been overlooked it is the disclosure anew in the sacred volume, after it had become almost forgotten, that the spiritual and eternal world is not far off, that it is an inner sphere permeating this world;

and whenever the Divine mercy should permit the spiritual powers of an individual to be awakened, he would then perceive that world as near to this as the soul of man is to his body. For the revelations that are made here, and in the whole Book, form a series of magnificent scenes which were exhibited to the inner sight of St. John, when his spiritual eye was opened, revealing all that would pass in the Church, and has now been realized. We can look back now and trace every one of the phases that are unfolded in this Book, and know that it has happened. We can scan the dark picture, and then read the sad degeneracy of the dark ages, and say it has been really so. Every development of selfishness, every prostitution of religion. The bewilderment, the anguish, and the misery that are described, can all now be seen written by the finger of the Divine providence on the pages of history. And, happily, we can now know as certainly as we know ourselves that the Lord is bringing about that which the angels were heard declaring would come to pass, when the seventh angel sounded, and the great chorus was heard in heaven: The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He - not they - and He who is Lord and Christ - He shall reign for ever and ever.

We have said that this Book is peculiar in the respect that it brought again to the knowledge of man the fact that the eternal world was not far off. John says he was in the island of Patmos - a small island well-known in, the AEgean part of the Mediterranean sea, now called Palamos. There he was banished for a time, and there he beheld every one of these scenes. How strange that this should have been written in the Word of God, and handed down from that age to this, and yet that men should be found still imagining that the kingdom of heaven was to be found beyond the region of the stars, nobody knows where. Of course, if these fancies had been at all correct, John should have been taken up to incalculable distances to see what he beheld. He describes what he saw in heaven, under heaven, and

in the various parts of the spiritual world.

He was in the island of Patmos, and all that happened to him was that his spiritual eyes and ears were opened. I was in the spirit, he says, on the Lords Day, and heard behind me a great voice as of a trumpet.... And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw, and the first thing that he beheld was a representation of the Lord Jesus Christ, in the midst of seven golden candlesticks. It was not the Lord himself that was seen, it was a likeness of the Lord - one like unto the Son of Man.

The Lord Jesus Christ personally is in the Sun of heaven, the light which the Apostle says, no man can approach unto. Here, and in the other scenes, when he is described as the Lamb slain, with Seven eyes, Seven horns, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and so on, it is not the Lord Himself, but a likeness. These representations having spiritual meanings, portray His majesty, His character, His Divine Humanity and its perfections; combined with various lessons of heavenly wisdom as they are presented in the grand scenes of the eternal world. One of the habitual usages of that world is this: When the Lord deigns to teach, or when angels speak; representations appear before the eye, giving an exact and significant picture of what is intended to be conveyed. That is a thought world, and thought can thus portray itself. Amongst the many improvements now introduced into education is this mode of teaching by objects. You know a good teacher who is skillful uses his pencil freely to endeavor to show to young people precisely what he means. He not only talks to them about it, but he draws a sketch of it. And this is a sort of adaptation in this world of one of the great laws of perfection in the inner world, only that an angel can there throw out, as it were, the picture, and present it in an exact form. In a thought-world, a life-world, thought can make itself visible, and consequently disclose most perfectly what is intended to be conveyed. Now it was in that way that these scenes were presented before the spiritual eye of St. John. He describes them so that we can see as it were stage after stage all these sublime circumstances, and learn to understand them, and thus gather the lessons which they teach.

The first thing which John beheld was the Divine majesty of the glorified Savior as the source and center of all spiritual blessings in heaven and on earth, for this is what is represented by his standing in the midst of the Seven golden candlesticks. Here let us dwell a little, while I endeavor to point out the grand lesson we can learn by studying this sublime and marvelous scene.

It was one of the unhappy circumstances attending the changes of human thought, that, very early in the history of the Church, the circulation of the Word was much curtailed. The lust of power led the dignitaries of the church to clasp the Bible gradually from the people, and only to retail as much as would make their own positions or dignity and grandeur as the lords of the Divine heritage secure. The people knew little of the Bible, and especially of the New Testament, until the time of the Reformation.

The result was that instead of taking all the lessons of the holy counsel of God, as we can do now, a very small portion of Holy Writ was handed down, and made the instrument of ruling over the minds of the people. Hence, one large class got so far as to admit that the Lord became a baby, and thus was incarnate amongst the human race, but stopped there. From previous goddess-worship they made more of His mother than of Himself. They transferred the worship of the Queen of Heaven in Babylon, Diana at Ephesus, and Astarte in Spain, to the Virgin Mary; the Savior being regarded only as a baby. It is true the Lord entered the world as a Divine babe. Unto us a Child was born, unto us a Son was given. This was the beginning of the Incarnation, but there it was not to stop. You will find that even at the present day, in a very large portion of Europe, wherever there is a representation of the Lord, too

frequently it is a representation of a little baby in the hands of His mother; and is the thought of the people it remains so, as if they were unable to progress beyond this beginning of the Divine life in the world. Since the time of the Reformation, many carry on their thoughts through the life of the Lord to the death on the Cross, and there they stop. The representation which they make in their minds is the Lord on the cross. Jesus on the Cross they believe paid their debt of punishment to another God. Their God is not the Lord Jesus Christ, but an exceedingly vindictive awful being, swift to mark, and terrible to punish, who, because one of His creatures disobeyed, and took an apple, was determined to destroy the whole human race by the most awful and eternal fires. He would roast them for ever and ever. The Lord Jesus Christ suffered Him to pour His wrath upon Himself, and, therefore, we are saved. These get to the crucifixion, and there they stop. Whenever they think of the Lord, it is of a bleeding Savior.

My God, through Jesus pacified,

My God thyself declare,

Oh draw me to His bleeding side,

And plunge the sinner there.

This is a common idea. But it is not the scriptural idea. The Divine Word indeed tells us that when no other way of winning man from wickedness, and delivering him from the thralldom of hell, could take place, that then the lord of heaven and earth condescended to come into the world to live through all the stages of human life, and make humanity in Him Divine. Though apparently a babe in the world, He was inwardly the mighty God, the Everlasting Father. He exercised His Divine power in vanquishing our spiritual foes, and setting man for ever free; and by retaining His Manhood, thus guarding the universe, and preserving man from hell.

His work is represented in this chapter, when he says: I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold I am alive for evermore; and have the keys of hell and of death. He was a Divine Babe, because it was in this way alone he could enter into the world to save and bless the world. He grew up, and became a Divine Youth, a Divine Man - God manifest in the flesh. He went through all the processes of trial, of temptation, of troubles and struggles, conquered all the infernal powers by His own Almighty spirit of love and goodness, and then perfected His human nature, and rose God-Man, the conqueror of hell and death - perfect in all respects - no longer a wounded bleeding Savior, but a victorious Conqueror. In His Divine Majesty He disclosed Himself in a flood of glory to John; and through John He manifests to the whole Church, what is now His glorious perfection, His Divine beauty, His Infallible Majesty, as God over all blessed for ever.

He was in the center of the Seven golden candlesticks, because these were probably the definite societies of that time. They were also the symbols of what the churches on earth, and the societies in heaven are. Christian societies are receivers of light, and therefore called candlesticks or lampholders, in order that they may diffuse the light amongst the weak, the wayward, and the ignorant; diffuse it over all the ways of this valley of the shadow of death. They receive from the Savior heavenly wisdom and intelligence, and then hold it up so that all around may enjoy the light, and so they are called candlesticks or lampholders. Such is the real object and the nature of a church. We assemble together and form a society, that we may be glorious lampholders, receiving the light, and then giving light to all

around, just as the Lord himself says, Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven. Every; single soul ought to be in his individual character a sacred lampholder. A one of old said, The spirit of man is the lamp of the Lord. Every society, in a still larger way, ought to be a sacred lampholder. The whole church is represented here by the Seven golden lampholders - because Seven in the Word means what is entire, complete, and perfect. Hence, in so many instances when you find excellent things described, you will find the number seven employed. In Hebrew the same word means seven and perfect.

But these are golden lampholders because gold also, and all the metals, are symbolic objects. Gold, the best of the metals, that which is most capable of expansion, that upon which acids will not act, is, in the Divine Word, the symbol of the highest and holiest affection.

That is love to the Lord. That is the golden love, the golden affection. Where that love exists in fullness, as I have said, acid tempers wont act upon it. The sour spirit of unkindness - of fault finding - of bitter scorn, which tries to act upon heavenly love, is futile to corrode, as ordinary acids when testing pure earthly gold. When the Lord Jesus was about to come into the world the Prophet says (as you will read in Isaiah 60:17), For brass I will bring gold, and for iron silver. He is just describing that the Lord would become a Savior, and excite their highest love; bring gold for brass. The highest good which the Israelites had been able to attain was the love of the neighbor; for this he would bring gold, a higher, a holier affection, the love of the Lord.

This affection, celestial love, refers to the essence of heaven, the region of celestial gold. Gold, you know, can be made almost as fine as a feather. It can stretch to become the finest wire, it can fit to all niceties and sinuosities; it can float upon the air. When we are truly heavenly, the sacred spirit of celestial love permeates, inspires, and blesses us: it makes us altogether of a golden quality. All the candlesticks were to be of gold. They were to hold up the sacred light, first getting it from Him who is in the center - the true light, as the evangelist St. John says, The true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world. The Lord Jesus, therefore, when he was thus in His glorified humanity, Man-God: and God-Man in one glorious person, was the center of all light, the beaming forth of all wisdom, the essence of all happiness, purity, and peace. Thus he was represented in the midst of the Seven golden candlesticks.

And then it is said he was clothed with a garment down to the feet, and girt about the breast with a golden girdle. The garment down to the feet represents the Lords divine truths, manifesting His sacred character. Truth covers goodness just as a garment clothes the body, and hence we read in scripture of the garments of salvation, of the robes of righteousness, and here the Lords garment is said to go down to the feet, meaning that he provides heavenly wisdom for every class of being highest for those that are represented by the head, lower for those that are represented by the breast, and simple truth for those that are represented by the feet. His divine garments go down to the feet. The Divine Truth does not only give high and grand things, but moderate and plaid things. His heavenly wisdom not only is such as the highest angels can enjoy, but it comes down so that little children may learn of the Lord.

He clothes himself with light as with a garment, down to the feet. It is on that account that all these sweet stories of the Bible exist, which persons in the very simplest state of mind, even children, can learn and love to read.

The text proceeds: Girt about the breast with a golden girdle. You will already have perceived the signification of gold. This golden girdle round the breasts represents the sphere of love which goes forth from the Lord to embrace all the world with sympathy, to encircle them with His loving kindness and tender mercy. There is the outflowing of the highest love from the Head of the Lord, but there is also the outflowing of the middle affection of charity. The breast is the symbol of that kindness that feels for others, which sympathizes with and desires to impart whatever it has to bless others. He was girt round with a golden girdle, for He is the source of all the circling sympathies which unites angel to angel, and man to man.

It is said His head and His hair were white like wool. The Divine head is a symbol of the Divine Wisdom. It is said so be white because it is so pure, so resplendent - from perfect purity, white like wool, because it is so soft and kind. But, it is added also, as white as snow. There are souls who can only receive truth coldly at first, as science. To them it is not denied. It is given pure, though cold, white as snow. His eyes were as a flame of fire. His eyes mean the Divine foresight. The Lord foresees from ardent love all that His creatures will need. He foresaw and provided for the redemption of the world. He foresees and provides for all our needs. There is not a sorrow but has its remedy; not a want but there is a provision; not a wound but a power of healing has been secured. Nothing escapes the supervision of Divine intelligence, or the care of all providing love. His eyes are as a flame of fire. His feet, like as fine brass, are as if they burned in a furnace. The Divine Feet represent the lower creative powers. Earth is said to be the Lords footstool, and His feet represent the laws of nature, all tending to good, and all glowing with love, as if they burned in a furnace.

The Divine attributes which govern the world are the Lords feet. When injury is inflicted anywhere, how soon nature flows in to heal. How soothing is sleep, how gentle is night, how restoring is rest. The calmness of nature softens the perturbed spirit, and induces peace. All these restoring influences are from the Lords feet, and are filled with the highest love, as if they burned in a furnace.

And then it is said: His voice was as the sound of many waters. His voice is a grand and majestic voice, but it also consists of Divine truths in infinite fullness. It is the voice of many waters. Waters in the Scripture symbolize truths, and because the divine voice is full of majestic truths in infinite plenitude it is the voice - a sound of many waters.

And then we are told, He had in his right hand Seven stars. Here we have the number seven again, representing that which is sacred, complete, and perfect. In further portions of this Divine Book we shall often have the number seven: the seven angels, the seven trumpets, the seven eyes, the seven lamps, the seven Spirits of God, the seven thunders, the seven vials.

Stars are the symbols of heavenly knowledge. Each bright truth when it goes into the mind is like a little star. All these bright thoughts come from the Lord. He has them all in his right hand, and he opens it just as we are prepared to receive. The Apostle Peter speaks of stars of this kind when he says, We have also a sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts. (2 Peter 1:19) These saving heavenly lights come into the heart just like the panorama that takes place when evening sets in, and first one bright star appears and then another, until the whole sky is lighted up. When the soul is receiving heavenly intelligence from the Lord, it has its milky way. He is the Morning Star. All lights come from Him, Who is the Light of heaven, and the Light of the world.



Out of His mouth went a two-edged sword. The two-edged sword represents the divine truth combating against errors and evils of every kind. The Lord's truth is a two-edged sword ever defending all who are pure and good. It is said to be two-edged, because there are two great comprehensive classifications of wrong - sins which flow from the lusts of a bad heart, and errors which mislead. The divine sword condemns these, and breaks their power, and hence the Lord says: I came not to send peace, but a sword. The same sword came out of his mouth here, a sword that strikes down all that tends to perpetuate wretchedness and wrong. Well is it for us when we seek the defense of this sacred sword. The sword of the spirit is the Word of God. It is not only a sword against evil, but a sword also against false thought for false views lead to evil.

Amongst the ancient Egyptians whose hieroglyphics were but the symbols of the wisdom of the ancient church, they used to represent selfishness and its evils by a great serpent, and false views by a great water animal, whose tail ended in a serpent's head, shewing that false notions in the long run end in evil. The divine defense is two-edged, and seeks to combat against all the fetters that would chain the mind, to strike down all the snares of spiritual fowling, to break, through all the cobwebs of wrong, and thus prevent the souls of men from being in bondage; on the other hand freely giving to man energy to reject all that is against the divine commands, and live the glorious life of doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with his God. If a man will thus suffer the two-edged sword to defend him he will never be overcome. Such is the glorified Savior. Look up. His countenance is as the sun shining in his strength.

The Lord Jesus seeks to save His people from their sins. He lifted up a standard against hell, to overcome all the powers of darkness, and by glorifying His Humanity, He immediately from Himself holds those powers down, so that now not all hell together can fetter or destroy one single human soul. I have the keys of hell and of death. Let no man be afraid; omnipotence is in His hands, Who is mercy itself.

I have the keys of hell and of death, as if He said, when a soul seeks help from Me, I open the influences of heaven and give mine angels charge over him to keep him in all his ways. ( I open and no man shuts. When the tempted one passing through the valley of the shadow of death feels faint, and in despair looks up to the Savior God, and says, Help Lord, or I perish, the Divine hand shuts off the tempting influences. The poorest lamb of His flock is taken into the protecting care of the Savior; the glorious Shepherd brings this bruised one home rejoicing. Not the feeblest of His flock can perish, My sheep are in My hand, He says, and no man can pluck them out of My hand. Other sheep have I that are not of this fold, them also must I bring. This divine power of the Savior God in His glorified humanity, protecting and defending all, is here represented by His saying, in the next verse, I am the First and the Last. I am He that liveth and was dead. I have gone through all that you can go through; I know your sorrows, I know your difficulties, I know your temptations, I have the command of heaven, earth, and hell, and you may safely rely upon my victorious arm. He is not now the man of sorrows; but in His glorified Humanity, with His face like the sun, His garments white as light, all power belonging to Him in heaven and, on earth, He Himself is Almighty to save.

I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End. That is the Beginning and the end of all Divine love, the beginning and the end of all Divine wisdom, the first and the last of all Divine power. He is the Omnipotent God, who was Jehovah from eternity, and Who is to come the King of Kings and Lord of

Lords, in Whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. This, then, was the Glorified Jesus, the center of the Christian Church, the Lord our Savior.

How foreign to this is the picture of Him, as a dying, bleeding man, much less as a mere babe. All angels adore Him All the blessed who enter heaven find Him ruling there. He is the One God from eternity, Who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, or, as it is here expressed, Who is and Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty.

This doctrine of the Lord is the grand touchstone of the soul, the test of true thought. It is a sublime truth that the acknowledgment of the Lord Jesus Christ in His real and perfect grandeur is intended to be the Christians foundation. Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation: he that believeth shall not make haste. The truth respecting the Lord is the foundation of all that is true and good, sublime, the tried stone, the precious corner-stone.

In Matthew 22:42, the Lord Himself points out this, His character - we read: The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner. And whosoever shall fall against this stone shall be broken. The Head-truth, the real glorious character of the Savior God is the sublime test-stone - the magnificent touchstone of doctrine, of thought, of justice, of good. When you have this one great truth laid as a firm foundation, all descriptions of God which would make Him unmerciful fall away. The Savior God is mercy itself.

All descriptions of God that would make Him unjust fall away. The Savior is Justice itself and He is the only God. All descriptions of God derived from old barbarous ideas that would make you terrified vanish, and pour inmost thought is, Jesus, my God and Savior, is my friend, and Jesus is the only God, Jesus is the First and the Last, every attribute of a false God flies away from Him.

The Apostle Paul says in 1 Corinthians 3:11: For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

Everything that is inconsistent with this will sooner or later fall. The soul can build upon this Divine foundation, and then it will never be in terror or in haste. It will rest in Him. Come unto Me, He says, All ye who are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. The Christian will remain quietly and lovingly carrying out the will of this great God, our Savior, in life; and rest assured that all will be right in death, certain of a blessed reception in heaven. The angels hail Him as their God and Savior, Whom they know as the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace. May this be our loving, our gracious foundation, for ever and ever.

And, now, my beloved hearers, let us learn two or three practical lessons from the divine description before us. Do you think of our Savior as St. John describes Him? When you pray how do you think of the Lord Jesus? When you say Our Father Who art in the heavens, do you represent the Lord Jesus before your mind as being our Father to you?

You have been told God is a being without body, parts, or passions, do you then gaze at emptiness, and speak to nothing?

Reflect upon this. Meditate upon it. Wrestle with this subject until you have determined whether you are to attempt to worship a vast formless incomprehensibility, or the Glorious Divine Man Whom John

describes. In the meantime, remember His blessed words, Behold I stand at the door and knock. If any man will open the door, I will come in to him, and sup with him, and he with Me.

Why should you go elsewhere? Say to Him as the disciples said, Lord, shew us the Father and it sufficeth us. And your glad hearts will hear a reply like that which Philip heard. Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me, hath seen the Father. How sayest thou then, shew us the Father? John 14:9. Look up, and you will see His face shining as the sun shineth in its strength.

Do you ask, What atonement Lord shall I make for my past sins? for my nature so rebellious in Thy sight? Hear His answer. I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. Isaiah 43:25. Do you not know that I have taken your nature, and sanctified and reconciled it in Myself, so that Humanity and Divinity are reconciled, are at one in Me.

I have broken down the wall of partition, by destroying the enmity in Myself, and made of the two one New Man. Ephesians 2:14-16. Rest assured God in Christ hath forgiven you. Ephesians 4:32. I have sanctified Myself that you may be sanctified by the truth. John 17:19.

And now, dear child, follow after truth, know the truth, understand the truth, love the truth, do the truth; shun by repentance whatever truth teaches you to shun; devote yourself to carry out whatever truth teaches you to perform; and the truth shall make you free, free to live, free to die, free to enter heaven.

Let us learn also that the Church of the Lord Jesus is a Church of light, not a Church of superstition, mummary, or mystery. Its aim is to make us men of light, men of love, men of virtue, a heaven upon earth. Let thine eye be single, and thy whole body shall be full of light.

But, above all things, let love hold up the light. Be a golden candlestick. Let charity rule in all things. Let patience induce you to deal gently with others though strictly with yourself, and the peaceful happiness which will then flow into you from the Lord, the Prince of Peace, will enable you to say with the Apostle John, We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. I John 3:14.

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## No. 2. Feb. 14, 1878. THE THRONE IN HEAVEN, THE FOUR BEASTS, AND THE FOUR AND TWENTY ELDERS.

IN the fourth chapter of the Book of Revelation, and at the 9th, 10th, and 11th verses, you will find the Word of the Lord thus written: And when those beasts give glory and honor and thanks to twenty elders fall down before Him that sat on the throne, and worship Him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

In our remarks on Sunday evening last, we pointed out that there were two great leading lessons that were afforded in the contemplation of these magnificent scenes in the Book of Revelation. The first is the lesson that the kingdom of heaven - the kingdom which to us is like Canaan was to the Israelites - the land whither we go to possess it - is not so distant as is commonly imagined. In more senses than one this was unfolded by Our Lord in the gospel - the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It is a comfort thus to familiarize ourselves with this important idea, for it enables us to understand that when that period shall come, which is almost the only thing of which we are really certain, the termination of our life here and our entrance upon our everlasting home, that we are not to go into some far distant, unknown, altogether incomprehensible state of being, but that it is simply, as explained by the Lord Jesus, as sleeping and waking.

The second lesson is the history of the Church.

You remember in the account of the Lords Divine goodness in relation to Lazarus, we are told, Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. And this is really all. Death is as a stage in our progress. It is a sleeping in time, and waking in eternity. It is a grand thing to be familiar with this glorious lesson, amidst the varied ups and downs of this life's changing scenes, amidst the different appearances of things around us, some pleasant and some unpleasant, to look up, and feel, with one of our poets:

This world is all a fleeting show,

For mans illusion given,

The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,

Deceitful shine, deceitful flow,

Theres nothing true but heaven.

It is a grand thing to feel that this true and glorious state of being is all around us, and when we come to the condition in which we resign all the shades of time, very soon we awaken, and our angelic friends are near us as they were when the Savior went through the sleep of death, and there were angels at His head and at His feet, so will it be with us. He has given His angels charge concerning us

here, and He has given His angels charge concerning us there, and if we have but learned to obtain the victory over the evil passions of our false nature, then these angelic voices will soon be heard welcoming us. O death where is thy sting, O grave where is thy victory. We too, like John, shall hear angelic voices, we shall hear the most delightful music, and see the blessed friends of our eternal home. We shall find ourselves with the loving servants of the Lord Jesus, who said to John, Fear not, I am the First and the Last.

This nearness of the spiritual world is shewn by the circumstance of these scenes being immediately present with John when he was in the Isle of Patmos, without his going to any distant region; still, while he was bodily present on earth, his spiritual sight being opened. That was all the change that took place. Then he saw either in the world of spirits, or intermediate state, where some of the scenes were represented, or in heaven itself, as in the case now before us. It is said, And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And then he proceeds to describe the various circumstances which were thus presented to his spiritual sight.

In considering this subject you will notice that he saw heaven itself, and then a throne set in heaven. He describes the aspect of the One who sat on the throne, then of the four living ones, rather unfortunately denominated beasts. The real expression in the original language is tessara zoa, simply, four living ones. Besides these there were four and twenty elders who were seen near, and who composed the rest of this sublime picture, which was shown to St. John in heaven. These were not definite, distinct personal existences, but heavenly representations.

I have called your attention to this circumstance because, as we mentioned in our first discourse, it is one of the laws of the inner world to present the appearances visibly of such things as are intended to be taught. The real person of the Lord was not seen as a lion or a lamb, or as having a sword extending from His mouth. It was not the real person of the Lord, but a representation, nor was this throne really heaven. It was in heaven, and it was a representation of heaven. In studying the varied parts of the description, we shall see how very beautiful and how very important are the lessons that come from meditating upon these divine representations. Some persons have a very limited and exceedingly inadequate idea of the heavenly world. They are in the habit of thinking that heaven is a comparatively small place, as if it were end. A comparatively small number of people are allowed to enter, and all the rest of mankind are rejected. But this is altogether an inadequate description of the most glorious collection of the good and the true, from the solar system, and not from this system alone. We shall easily obtain far more extensive ideas of heaven itself if we think, for a moment even, of our own world. Twelve hundred million of human beings leave our earth in each generation of thirty-three years, or thereabouts. These people pass into the eternal world, and some narrow minds think very few out of these will get to heaven. They imagine that only those, at best, that have heard something of the gospel have any well-founded expectation of ever getting to heaven, and of these only those that interpret the gospel in their way, have any secure warrant of getting in. They must just hold to their particular notions, or else there is no possibility for them of everlasting happiness. But this is ascribing the prejudices of narrow minds to the Judge of all the earth, who always does right. There is no authority whatever for any such curtailment of the Divine mercy and love, and I am thoroughly satisfied that he comes much nearer to the Divine way of teaching who says:

Let not this weak and erring hand,

Presume Thy bolts to throw,  
Nor deal damnation round the land,  
On each I judge thy foe.

You may depend upon it, that none will be admitted to heaven because of his particular notions; none will be rejected from heaven because you happen to differ from him; it will depend upon whether he has lived uprightly and lovingly to what he believes to be true. If he has not got quite all the truth now, he will get it in the eternal world, for they love honest minds there. Other sheep have I the Lord Jesus said which are not of this fold: them also must I bring, and there shall be one fold and one Shepherd. Oh yes, the good heathen that have lived more faithfully perhaps to their light, than many of the tenants around St. Pauls do up to theirs, will surely be received in heaven. The good of every land and clime will be welcomed by the God who made all lands, who makes His sun to shine on the evil and on the good, Thou hast created all things, the blessed ones who glorified the Lord, in the words of our text declare, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created. He has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth. The pleasure of the Lord is, to raise to happiness all that are capable of happiness, not one child of His was ever intended for anything else, than to be blessed in as much happiness as his obedience and capabilities would admit. It is not the will of our Father Who is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish. Well, this then will help us to see, that even if the majority of the twelve hundred million that pass away about every thirty years get to heaven (and I have no doubt that will be the case), and we multiply those hundreds of millions, by the generations we know to have existed on this earth, how grand an assembly is the kingdom of heaven.

But we must not think of this world only, we are but one of thousands of worlds, nay, of thousands of suns, each sun having also its hundreds of worlds revolving round it, and each world being a school, out of which the Lord is forming immortal children. Gods love is infinite. We have no more adequate conception of the grandeur of His universe, in all these respects, than the tiny ant running about its little hill in a field, has to the greatness of the world about it. all are under the Lords eye, and in His glorious bosom of love, all these are noticed that He may make them happy. And if the millions of suns were multiplied by millions, that would still be nothing to the infinite affection of the Infinite Lord, He desires perpetually to pour out His happiness, to ever increasing numbers, while generation after generation rolls on.

All thought is lost and reason drowned,  
In the immense survey,  
We cannot fathom the profound,  
Nor trace Jehovah's way.

Let us then comfort ourselves, my beloved friends, with these things, and feel how great a God, how glorious a Lord, how Divine a work is that which is opened up by this magnificent view of the kingdom of the heavens.

The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works; Jesus is the Saviour of all,

because He is the only God.

Let me then ask you not to suppose that you have got a view of all heaven in what is described here, but only that you have a view of a representation in heaven, that was presented before the spiritual eye of St. John, in order that his readers might study the elements of heaven, the real character of the Divine Being and of His glorious operations.

John says, I saw a throne in heaven, a representation of a large throne, and heaven is regarded in scripture as Gods throne, because He is enthroned in the hearts or the angels.

The Lord God governs by His Holy Spirit every angel in heaven, fills with the sphere of His love, their whole souls, and thus governs them as a king governs on his throne. He is enthroned in their affections, and there is not an angel in heaven but embosoms Him in his inmost being, and delights to bless their King who rules with the golden scepter of His love and wisdom. This is to regard heaven as Gods throne.

You remember how oft<sup>3</sup>en, in the sacred volume, a throne stands for heaven. The first verse of the sixty-sixth chapter of Isaiah contains a very grand instance. Heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool. But it is not that the Lord puts His feet literally upon the earth, nor more than He sits literally upon a seat in heaven; it means that by the lower laws of His being, as the feet of the Deity, he governs and arranges all things in the world; the laws of His Divine Providence govern all the earth earth is His footstool; and by the laws of His inner life and wisdom He governs all things in heaven. Heaven is Gods throne.

So when each single heart receives the Saviors loving, guiding, and blessed influence, it becomes a throne on which He sits. It is this, therefore, that was pictured by One represented as sitting on the throne, and that One was evidently the Lord Jesus Christ, the same glorious Being whom I endeavored to describe to you in our last discourse - He is the One sitting on the throne.

He is described as the One Who liveth for ever and ever. If you will turn back to the 18th verse of the 1st chapter, upon which we dwelt in the previous discourse, you will find that such is precisely one of the attributes of the Lord Jesus: I am He that liveth and was dead, He says, and behold I live for evermore; for the words of the original, for evermore, are precisely the same as the words of this chapter, I live for ever and ever. Whenever, therefore, we read subsequently of the worship which is offered by adoring and falling down before Him who liveth for ever and ever it describes the worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, who announces Himself with the passage I have just named as having the keys of hell and of death, and says, I live for ever and ever.

His appearance it is said, was to look upon like a Jasper and a Sardine stone, Jasper is the symbol of the utmost cleanness, and it represents the glorious beauty of the Divine Wisdom of the Lord. The Sardine stone is red, and represents the Divine Love. The Divine Love of the Lord all glowing, and the Divine Wisdom of the Lord all bright. These were what were presented to us, the face of the Divine Redeemer.

It is further written and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald. The rainbow round about, represents the Divine Love, and Wisdom, accommodated to those who form the outer circles of the happy.

The green stone, the emerald, corresponds to the truths of the letter of the Holy Word. You know green is the color most agreeable to tender eyes, it is a common color of nature - all grass is green. When we have just entered upon a new life, the truth we see is just like the color of the emerald, it is the bow of hope, the bow of promise, only green yet, but it is the green of those sacred pastures, of which is written, He maketh me to lie down in green pastures, He leadeth me beside the still waters. To represent the Lord as blessing all the heavens, His loving influences to illuminate and bless the inner circles of the angels, are as the jasper and the sardine stone; and those adapted to lower ranks of the happy multitudes, as the rainbow like the emerald.

And then John says, In the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four living ones. I have already mentioned the very unhappy rendering that we have here beasts. But we shall easily see what is meant, when we know that in the sacred volume, love and life are interchangeable things. Life is described in scripture, as the principle of love, which makes the good man warm in good things. God is life: I am the resurrection and the life the Lord Jesus says. To be spiritually minded, says the Apostle, is life. When a person is a recipient of heavenly affection, it makes him alive to all that is good and right, hence heaven has for one of its appellations, the land of the living. I had fainted unless I had hoped to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the LIVING. It is the land of the living because it is the land of the LOVING. You will not come unto Me, the Lord Jesus said, that you may have life. But I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you, I am come that you may have life, and that you may have it more abundantly.

These four living ones were just the representation of the distinct principles which form heaven; that make men into angels. These were the things which were represented in the midst of the throne, shewing the principles that prevail in the very midst, and are the very center of heaven; they constitute the essence and form of all the blessedness there. They are in the midst of heaven, and round about heaven.

They were full of eyes before and behind. Regenerated minds are filled with heavenly affections, and these give heavenly discernment both before and behind, both within and around, they see what is good and true, and they acknowledge the Divine Goodness in all things. These affections prompt the adoring confession, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty. Let us dwell a little on the particulars.

The first living one was like a lion; the second like a calf; the third had a face as man; the fourth was like a flying eagle. The order here is the order of the regenerate life. The first thing when a person begins to turn away from an unhappy course of life, and to enter upon a better life, is to have the courage of goodness. He will never realize the course that he set out to attain if he has not a brave courageousness, a determination to act up to the purpose that he sees to be right. The lion has a double signification in Scripture, as in fact have all things;

the bravery of goodness is expressed by a lion, also the boldness of the bad; a bold bad man who has become fiendish in his character, is represented often in Scripture, as a lion tearing to pieces. The devil is said to go about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. That is the lion in its bad signification. But on the other hand, a person receives the truth, when he is satisfied that the Lords will concerning him is that he should become an angel, he must dare to say no when he is enticed to do wrong. He must become as a young lion daring to do right, daring to speak what is right, daring to say to any one who would fain entice him into evil company, I don't go there. When the young prince,



afterwards Henry V., became a Reformed character, it became one of the things remarked of him, that if any one ventured to suggest what was improper or false, he at once said, impossible that cannot be done. A young christian must just be of that character, when anyone suggests what is unjust, mean, or untrue, he must say, Impossible; that cannot be done; he must be like a young lion, not a pert sermonizer of others, but a courageous champion of what is right. He must in this respect be one of those described in the 11th chapter of Isaiah, where the happy condition of things is portrayed to us; The young lion and the calf and the fatling shall lie down together, or as in Micah, (chap. V. and 8 ver.) And the remnant of Jacob shall be among the Gentiles in the midst of many people as a lion among the beasts of the forest, as a young lion among the flocks of sheep; who if he go through, both treadeth down and teareth in pieces, and none can deliver.

The next quality pointed out to John is represented by the living one like a calf. The calf represents the new born spirit of obedience. You know oxen and animals of this class are patient, plodding, servants. In Eastern countries they are yoked together just patiently and quietly, to bring out their strength in the work of agriculture. The Lord represents these as types, when he says My yoke is easy. The Lord teaches such souls, and they go on ploughing the good ground, and preparing it for good seed. It is of these that it is said in the last chapter of Malachi, verse 2, Ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall, and again, Ephraim is as an heifer that is taught, and loveth to tread out the corn. Hosea x., 11.

The spirit of obedience, the kindly quiet plodding of a man who not only resists what is evil, but does what is good, this is that which is represented by the second living one being like the calf, and every young soul must thus purpose to do what is right in his daily work.

In doing his duty from hour to hour, and time to time, feel from day to day, that he is walking in the Lord's path; then he gets a second feature of the angels character.

It is next said that the third living one had a face as a man. When a person has got into the habit of doing right because it is right, after a little time he comes into that state in which he acquires a wise and heavenly manliness. Manliness in scripture represents a state of mind in which we discern what is right by reflection, and do it because it is right. Animals act from instinct and impulse; a true man from rational reflection, thus the Lord describes heaven as being the abode of true humanity, of angelic men. In the 1st ver., 5th Jeremiah, you will read, Run ye to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now, and know, and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that executeth judgment, that seeketh the truth; and I will pardon it. And in the chapter going before, the Prophet describes the decay of things all around him (25th verse), I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens are fled.

Now the angels are all men of this class. They would not stoop to anything that is wrong. The third living affection is represented by having the face of a man. In common conversation the remark is often heard concerning a worthless individual, well, that's no man. He has not the principles of a man within him. All the angels, however, are heavenly men, and therefore true men.

Then, lastly, it is said that the fourth living one was like a flying eagle, because the eagle, you know, is the bird that has a wide expanse of vision. That bird sees far around, and it represents the capacity for large thought, for sublime reflection, for perpetual progress. Each soul in heaven is continually going

on, and beholding more of the Wisdom of the Lord. Their progress is like the flight of the eagle in all that is true, beautiful, and good. They realize this in heaven still more than on earth; This is meant when it said in the last verse of the 40th Isaiah, But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. In heaven all classes of the happy ones are making perpetual advancement to higher and grander attainments for ever and ever.

The living ones had, each of them, six wings about him, because these describe truths which defend and protect them in all directions.

Such, then, is the description that is here given of the principles that form heaven. They permeate the angels within and around. These are the things that are in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne.

The four and twenty elders are the representation of those wise ones who embody these principles in themselves. Those who were wise enough to embody heavenly affections in themselves were thus symbolized. The four living ones of heaven, ceasing not day and night, saying Holy, Holy, Holy, teach the gracious lesson that Love never sleeps. Love is like the blood of the soul, it always circulates. Blood is the life of the body, and love is the life of the soul. The life of heaven, which is love always saying Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty! When these blessed emotions are filling the minds of the happy, represented by the four and twenty elders, they fall down on their faces and worship God. They cast their crowns before Him.

This act represents that every victory achieved is from the Lord. There is no merit, there cannot be any merit, in man or angel. By the grace of God we are what we are. Not a hair of our head is our own, not a faculty of the body or mind but is His gift. Every grace which we have or shall have, every victory over self which we have achieved, or shall achieve, all our progress, all things that are good on earth or in heaven, are the gifts of the Savior God. He has created all things, and for His pleasure - the pleasure of making immortal beings happy - the pleasure of making men and women into angels of His kingdom.

The crowns imply conflict and victory, again and again, and such is the Christian life. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee the crown of life.

The work of repentance is a conflict, and requires faithful self-examination, and acknowledgment of our actual sins, and then a resolute resistance steadily maintained. There is a general admission of being sinners which is often and readily made, when the words come readily, but unaccompanied by deep and penitent thought. This is not the temper which fights a battle, or wins a crown.

The genuine Christian will see his sin, his individual misdoing or shortcoming, and pray earnestly to the Lord Jesus for strength to reform and overcome his bad habits. The battle, or rather the campaign of the Christian life, is one that must be faithfully fought out under the Captain of our Salvation, and by His help we are sure to win. There are intervals of rest, of happiness and peace, but when temptation comes, we must renew our efforts, and win another crown.

Every Heavenly Virtue we attain becomes supreme with us, and thus a Crown - a Crown of Life. There

are three great stages of spiritual progress, first, OBEDIENCE; second, HEAVENLY INTELLIGENCE; and third, a state of SUPREME CELESTIAL LOVE.

The first is the struggle against outward sin, and to attain to conformity with the Divine Commandments the drunkard must become sober, the swearer curse no more, the violent must become gentle, the impure virtuous, and the fraudulent upright.

These victories can be attained, and the Crowns of Life be worn, if we are faithful, and pray to Him for strength, Who says for ever to the penitent spirit, Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest. We must not, however, be satisfied with obedience only, we must strive for heavenly intelligence. The letter of the Bible has many grand truths, but the spirit is grander still.

There are the pearls of great price; there is the hidden manna; there the white stone.

We must hunger and thirst after these treasures, and we shall be satisfied.

To the fervent disciple who has done his Lord's will in the first degree, the Divine voice comes again and again, Arise, shine, for thy light has come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen over thee. He advances from light to light, even to the perfect day. Crowns of heavenly intelligence are his. He struggles, seeks, finds, and rejoices in treasures that never fade away.

But a higher class remains, the class of celestial love. These are they with whom purity of motive, and lamb-like innocence are the ever desired attainments. They are more than conquerors, they live in peace. They are in the midst of the throne. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.

As each of these states becomes accomplished and supreme in the soul, it becomes a crown, and all who win these crowns know that their entire light, succor, strength, and triumph have come from the Lord Jesus Who created all things, redeemed all souls, saves all the faithful from their sins, and pours His joys into all the blessed.

All these things come from Him that liveth for ever and ever, and Whom, with the angels, let us for ever bless. Thou, Lord, hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.

To Him be glory for ever and ever.

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# **No. 3. Feb. 21, 1878. THE BOOK WRITTEN WITHIN AND ON THE BACK, IN THE HAND OF HIM WHO SAT ON THE THRONE: AND WHO IS TO OPEN IT.**

IN the fifth chapter of the book of Revelation, and at the 7th and 8th verses, you will find the Word of the Lord thus written: And He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the Throne. And when He had taken the Book of the four beasts and the four beasts and the four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints.

The marvelous and magnificent scenes that are represented in the chapter before us commence with the description of the throne that was presented to the minds eye of the Apostle John, and One sitting on the throne, and having a book in His right hand, written, it is said, within and without, and sealed with seven seals.

And in this description we have represented to us the workings of Divine Providence for the restoration and regeneration of the human race. These great works are always accomplished by the instrumentality of His Word.

It is not difficult to see that when man fell away from the supreme regard to God, and goodness that is represented by dwelling in the Garden of Eden, and eating of every fruit of the garden, excepting the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, he gradually sank into a degradation of his affections.

Selfishness and worldliness took the place of goodness and truth, so that, if there had been no other provision than simply allowing him to remain in that degraded condition, he would for ever have sunk lower and lower into darkness, and into all that causes misery and degradation.

For, if we think for a moment, we shall see that thoughts flowing from affections can only be in harmony with such affections, and if the affections of man have become impure, selfish, vicious, and degraded, every thought of his must be precisely of the same sort. He never could have risen again. The tiger cannot have other than thoughts of cruelty; the fox cannot have other than thoughts of cunning and eagerness of prey; and so every animal, because its whole nature is of a piece, and its affections are the springs of its thoughts. Every animal remains quite incapable of being other than he is. Each race of animals continues precisely to repeat itself, generation after generation, and it cannot be otherwise. If man had not had an extraordinary arrangement from the Providence of God, by which his intellectual part could be loosened from his affections, different from all other animated creatures in the whole universe, he could never have risen again to virtue, but must have continued to love darkness rather than light, because his deeds were evil. Darkness would have covered the earth as the waters cover the sea, and all the dark places of the earth, would have been full of cruelty. The man of tiger heart must have only thought as tigers think, and desired to seize all that he could grasp, and treat it with the utmost possible cruelty. And so in every other case of lust and passion.

But the infinite love of God created every soul to be happy, and when mans necessity required this astonishing thing to be done, infinite wisdom and love performed it. He made a distinction between the intellectual part and the affectionate part of our nature, so that every man can think differently from what he loves. So, God having made this wondrous distinction, it is itself a constant living miracle. The most astonishing thing of all animated being is this remarkable distinction between human nature and that of all other creatures. In man, ever since the time when it was necessary to make this distinction, there has been this wonderful separation. So that man, however bad the affectionate part of his nature is (and the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked, as it is said in the Word - it is like a horrible pit full of miry clay), can think differently.

No beast has such horrible appetites as those which are ingrained in the fallen nature of a man. The most cruel beast only kills when he wants to eat; but bad men slay what they cannot eat, crush thousands more than they could eat, destroy for the very sake of destruction, and commit horrible abominations, such as make, where there is an unchecked condition of these villanies, a very hell upon earth.

Now, happily, to provide against this the Lord has first given us a wonderful nature, so that we can learn ten thousand truths which we otherwise could have never known. We can also retain by memory all that which we obtain through our senses, and through our instruction and training in a thousand ways we have the wondrous gift of reasoning, calculating, weighing, measuring, and we can ascertain what is true. We can condemn ourselves, overcome ourselves, and by battling against the appetites of our fallen nature, we can conquer power of the Divine Word. Now it is this truth that is represented, to all through the Word, and which was the necessity for giving a Word of God. This wondrous instrument of Divine Providence is the medium to bring about new and glorious states of the human race.

In His right hand there was a BOOK, the Book Divine, the source of repentance, instruction, wisdom, and new life. By means of the Word of God light comes into the mind; by of the Word of God feelings come into the soul - comforts, refreshings, strenghtenings. By means of the Word of God and its sacred the soul is released from its defilements. Now ye are clean, said the Lord Jesus, through the Word which I have spoken unto you. (John 15:3) Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy Word is truth. (John 17:17) By the Word of the Lord we are continually strengthened. The Word is living spiritual food for us. Thy words were found, said the prophet Jeremiah, and I did eat them. Happy is the soul that takes care to have a good breakfast of Divine truth before going out to his daily labors, to have some portion of the Hallowed Word, and let it act as a sacred governing impulse, a golden thread through all, the engagements of the day. Often will it be found, when other influences; have failed, that some check from the Hallowed Word, some voice, as it were, from behind, a sacred text, will awaken the conscience when a person is about to do what is utterly wrong, and says: How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?

And so the Word prevents the incoming misery. As it is written: Is not my Word like as a fire, saith the Lord; and like a hammer that breaketh the rock in pieces. (Jeremiah 23:29). There is no power for mental regulation, restraint, reformation, regeneration, or even for refreshing and progress, that can for a moment be compared with the sacred Word of God. It is a grand river of heavenly water.

You know the suggestion that has often been made by observers, that it is an admirable arrangement

that great cities are always to be found by large rivers. They are commonly found together. The reason is that rivers facilitate commerce, and commerce promotes trade. Great trade creates great cities, and brings plenty to the coasts, and scatters prosperity all over a country. Hence great cities rise from rivers. It is just the same with the Divine Wisdom in the Word of God. It brings spiritual prosperity. It elevates and blesses the mind; it refreshes and comforts the soul. It is a grand instrumentality for all progress, and promotes virtue, called by the prophet the trees of life on each side of the river - the river of the water of life. And wherever these sacred waters go, they heal the sorrows of mankind, and make life where death reigned before. This, therefore, is the reason why the Divine Word is presented here: to show us that all the future conquests, all the abundant Divine blessings of the good time coming, are associated with the Book before us. They are varied and multiplied in a thousand ways, but they all come from the glorious Word of God.

He had a book in His right hand. The character of this book is represented in a very interesting light, which has unhappily not always been the light in which persons have regarded the Bible. It is said to be written on the back, and also inside. You will readily understand what is meant by its being written on the back, or the outside. It is very difficult indeed to convince a vast number of persons that the Word of God is anything else than that which is written on the outside. We shall understand, however, the representation given us here if we bear in mind that books in ancient times were not bound as we have them now, with two backs, and then perhaps hundreds of leaves between, but were rolls - hence the word volume, or something rolled up; and therefore the idea that is given here is that in the hand of Him that sat on the throne was a great book, as a scroll written on the outside and written also correspondingly on the inside.

This is the real character, and must necessarily be the real character of the Word of God. The outside means the letter of the Bible, and the inside means the spirit of the Bible. This is precisely the very nature of a Divine revelation. It has been an exceedingly imperfect view of things to imagine God's thoughts to be precisely like our thoughts, and that, therefore, when He speaks to us He must speak of earthly history, geography, and what concerns the natural man. These things may, indeed, be on the outside, but inside must be things spiritual and Divine. My thoughts, he says in Isaiah 55:8, are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways. Whatever, therefore, is the outward character of the Bible, there must also always be within, the thoughts of Divine Wisdom. If the Bible speaks of an outward paradise, it must be to represent an inward paradise. If the Bible speaks of outward gifts, it must be to represent inward graces. If it speaks of foes, of tribulation, of battles, it must be to represent spiritual powers and conflicts, such as take place in the human soul. God is a Spirit. His wisdom must be spiritual wisdom. His object must be to train man for eternal things, not to satisfy his curiosity about what happened in Palestine any more than about what happened in China. The Lord's aim is for ever to be raising man from nature up to nature's God, from letter to spirit, and therefore He provides that there should be writing on the back of His Word, but also writing on the inside. That there should be a chain by means of which the Divine Wisdom could have its feet on the earth, just as Jacob's ladder had, but rising up, range after range, until it reaches heaven, like that ladder. The Lord Himself is at the top of it; for the Word, in its sublime essence, is no other than God Himself. In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The Word, in its infinite essence, is the glorious wisdom of the Eternal God brought down to us; it is the simple teaching that children and naturally-minded men can be interested in. A drowning man must have one end of a rope in order that he may pass hand over hand and be rescued, and placed upon solid footing. Such is the Word of God.

Never forget that it is written on the back, but also written everywhere inside.

Is this the thought that you have had in relation to the Divine Word, when you have read the early chapters of Genesis and seen stage after stage of Creation marked there? Have you said to yourself What does the inside mean?

When you have gone on to the Israelitish history and all the different events unfolded there, have you said to yourself What is the inside? There is a silver lesson under all that you see there. My Word is like silver purified seven times; and, although the outside seems to be occupied with temporary matters and a hundred little particulars, which seems hardly worth while that God should have given a word of Revelation to disclose, this is but the outside - go a little deeper. As the Savior said to Simon, Launch out into the deep.

The Apostle says, in 2 Corinthians 3:5, 6, Our sufficiency is of God, Who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life. Or, as the Lord has worded it, as you will read in John 6:63, The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life. Every word of the Lord contains spirit and life, and the Lord Jesus inspired the Old Testament as well as the New. (1 Peter 1:11) The Divine words are all the words of the Lord Jesus, from the first to the last. He was Jehovah in the flesh, and every word that He has given, whatever be its appearance on the back, has always beautiful instruction within it - full of spirit and full of life. The law to unfold that wisdom is the law of correspondence. This was very well known in early times. There was a Bible before our Bible. We have intimation of it in the early parts of the sacred volume. There is mention of the book of the wars of the Lord-Jehovah (Numbers 21:14) before the time of Moses, and the sayings of those who speak in proverbs - or prophecies (Numbers 21:27)

All over the East there are remains of religions in, which it is quite easy to see the broken clown parts of a grand system which prevailed once over the earth - that is, in all its then inhabited parts - and that continues in fragments, even to the present day, in India, China Japan, Babylonia, and Egypt - everywhere. But man became so gross in evil habits that he cared next to nothing for eternal things. He lost the knowledge even of the eternal world until a large part even of the Jews, when our Lord came into the world, were Sadducees. and did not believe in any resurrection, or everlasting existence, of spirit or angel. This became the condition all over the world, and, consequently, any spiritual Divine meaning that was once familiar, as spiritual wisdom, had become entirely lost.

The knowledge of the soul and the facts of the spiritual world were lost, the knowledge of correspondences was lost, and the spiritual sense of the Bible necessarily became lost.

Even to the present day there are vast numbers who have so entirely lost the idea of everlasting things that they are not quite sure whether there is a world in which we live after we leave this; or whether the soul is a he or a she, or has any form; or whether there is such a thing as a soul or not. In such a state of things the whole spiritual sense of the Bible must of necessity be closed. It is fastened down with seven seals, as it is said here that is, its inner sacred wisdom is completely closed.

This is illustrated by what occurred to myself a few weeks ago, when I was going over the Alhambra in the south of Spain. I saw among the beautiful apartments there a very long room full of exquisite foliage, curves and forms most lovely. When Arabic was lost in Spain, they lost the knowledge of what

these strokes meant. Now Arabic is again known in those parts of Spain, and they know that this was THE ROOM OF BLESSING. There are these lovely forms repeated again and again, and they mean, God is our refuge and strength, God is a fountain of grace and blessing. But you see that the knowledge of the ancients represented in these things was right. All these forms contained wisdom, though the people had lost the meaning. So with the Word of God, the spirit was lost, because the knowledge of spiritual facts was lost. It can never be gained again until spiritual things become well known again. Therefore it is said here, It was sealed with seven seals. You remember I have explained the number seven to mean that which is perfect, sacred, complete. You will find that it often occurs in this chapter with this signification. It means that which is perfectly complete, and hence it means here that the Word was perfectly closed. Yet it was the a great depository of all heavenly wisdom and knowledge. Only by opening the Word in its spirit, life, and beauty, can the things of a higher state of being be restored in the world, therefore John says, I wept because so man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, could open the book. There could be no heavenly advancement in the world without bringing heavenly wisdom down upon earth. The wisdom come out of the Book is to teach how angels live, and therefore how must live to become angels; how the soul can be brought into heavenly order, how a new creation can be produced in all the affections and thoughts of the human mind. The Book must be opened; but it cannot be opened by those who are in heaven, because they do not, communicate with the earth openly. It cannot be opened by those on earth, because they have lost all knowledge of it.

Not by those under the earth, because they hate it. It can be opened only by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself, revealing Himself through some mind prepared for the purpose, and teaching

First, a knowledge of the inner world, a knowledge of the real condition of the inhabitants, a knowledge of the states concerned in mans regeneration, and a knowledge of the law upon which the Word is constructed - the Divine law of correspondences. By bringing this down into the world again, we have the key by which every page, every chapter, every verse can be opened out, so that, as it is beautifully said in the twelfth of Isaiah: With joy we can draw water from the wells of salvation.

Therefore it is written that an angel came and said to John, Weep not, behold the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof. The power of the Lord. Jesus Christ is described by the Lion, His divine love by the root; His innocence and gentleness in His Divine humanity by the lamb. The Lord Jesus could restore this heavenly wisdom to the world, and He would do it.

And John says, first, he beheld the Lord as a Lion, and so He is; because the Lion is the symbol of strength and magnanimity - of divine courage, of power to do all that is requisite. But mark what John further says: I looked, and behold a Lamb.

We have many a time experienced periods in which the Lord has seemed to be very hard to us, rather like a lion in strength and determination, and we could not move him for a time. We did not know what was the reason, but in due time we have been able to see His love. Our Savior appears as a Lamb. He is always very gentle, full of tenderness and loving kindness.

First He is a Lion, and then He is a Lamb.



And He opened the Book. This is the period in which the Divine Book is being unfolded. Now is the Second Coming of the Lord, Who is supremely the Word.

The Word of God in its letter has been amazingly spread. One hundred years ago, there had been produced in all the centuries before only four millions of Bibles. Now there are more than two hundred millions.

The Bible is now familiar in a hundred and sixty languages. These are supplied by the societies in this country. How the Lord is going forth as the Word of God. But, blessed be the Lord, we can now also enjoy the purity and wisdom and power of the Bible in its inner meaning. When the earnest soul asks for explanation, we can now give it. The enquirers who heard, Except ye eat My flesh and drink My blood ye have no life in you, said, How can this Man give us His flesh to eat? The flesh is the Divine Goodness, which is the Body of the Lord. Receive that into your heart, and it will give you a heart of flesh. Eat that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. How can we drink His blood? We can receive into our minds His Wisdom. This flows from Him, and pours new blood into our spiritual nature, and so redeeming us from our evils and errors of every kind. It is written, And when He had taken the Book, that is, when the manifested God, the Divine Savior, is seen to be the center of all which the Book says, when He takes hold of it, shews how it all relates to Him and to His work and to His kingdom; then the four living ones and the four-and-twenty elders, who are all in the heavens, fall before the Lamb. They all fall down before the Lamb. All worship from their hearts the Divine Man, who is the Being that alone can produce a goodlier and happier state amongst mankind, Who is the center of every blessing. They all fall down to worship the Lamb.

And then they burst out in the celestial anthem: Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the seals thereof; for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue, and people and nation.

The adoring angels had every one of them harps, and golden vial full of odors which are the prayers of saints.

The harps represent enraptured minds filled with truths and sounding with grateful praise. The golden vials are doctrines of love engaged in the worship from which arise all the prayers of the blessed in heaven. The vials full of odors represent such doctrines of love full of all grateful aspirations, of all delightful thanksgiving. Oh, yes! it is a new song, but it is a song that all the good amongst mankind are to learn. The song was, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue and people, and nation;

and hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. Thou art worthy as the glorified center of all happiness; Thou art worthy as the beginning and ending of all divine works. It was the song of the Lamb the Lord - the God-Man - the First and the Last, Who by His Word would pour out fresh life and love and blessing to mankind - to men and angels. Thou art worthy, oh blessed Lord, Thou art the King of the regenerated ages, the King of Saints; Thou art worthy to take the Book and open the seals thereof. Thou wast slain, rejected of those Thou camest to save; but, Conqueror of death, Thou hast risen again, and redeemed us by Thy blood, by Thy spirit of holiness circulating in the hearts of Thine obedient children and making them heavenly, thus preparing them for heaven. Now

Thou art seen to be King of Kings and Lord of lords. Now all heaven can proclaim: The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ and Hethe Divine being Who is Lord and Christshall reign for ever and ever. This He who has opened: the Book; taken off the seals.

In every age the Lord was kind,

And to His Church revealed His mind;

But we receive a wondrous store

Of blessings, never known before.

And He has made us kings, each one ruling his own mind. in perfect order. He has made us priests, each offering up holy adorations and aspirations from the altar of his heart

We shall reign on the earth, the tabernacle of God shall be with men; the principles that rule heaven shall rule in the world also; and there shall be One King over all the earth; One Lord, and His Name One.

We must constantly bear in mind that we are not beholding the very personages of the Eternal World, but imagery representing them. The Lord Himself does not appear as a lion in His own person, nor as a lamb. He is in His own person a Glorious Divine Man, the Father in the Son (John xiv 10), in Whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9, 10).

He Who sat upon the throne represented the invisible, incomprehensible Deity, Whom no man hath seen or can see (John 5:37), Who had given the Word, and governed the Church in Old Testament times. The Lamb represented the visible God, the Savior, the Divine Humanity, the governor of the Church in New Testament times. The transfer was made not in the Lord God Almighty Himself, for He is always the Omnipotent, the only Divine person, the only God.

But when the Church, which had adored the invisible High and Lofty One Who inhabited eternity, saw Him manifestly in the Son, the Divine Man who has all power in Heaven and on Earth, then the Book was received from the hand of Him that sat on the throne, and taken by the Lord, the Lamb, the blessed Jesus, Who is God with us.

This passage is a parallel to one in Daniel 7:13, 14: I saw in the night visions, and behold one like the Son of Man came with the clouds of heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought Him near before Him. And there was given Him dominion, and glory, and a kingdom, that all people, nations and languages should serve Him. His dominion is an everlasting dominion, which shall not pass away, and His kingdom that which shall not be destroyed.

Observe the One like the Son of Man, the Divine Man came with the clouds of heaven. His life, His death, His resurrection and glorification, it are plainly set forth in the letter of the Bible, which are the clouds of heaven. He is received as the Son of the Most High God, but not One in person with the Ancient of Days; but the time would come when the Church will more fully behold His real character as One in person, One as the body is one with the soul, One as the Everlasting Father in the Son, to Whom alone they should pray, as He said, Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name, I will do it, that the

Father may be glorified in the Son (John 19:13).

They, then, would bring the Son of Man to the Ancient of Days, and to Him, because it was His right, dominion, glory, and a kingdom would be given, and all people, nations and languages would serve Him. He would then show men plainly of the Father (John 16:25). He would say, I am the root and the offspring of David, the bright and morning star; and they would say, Our Father, Who art in the Heavens, hallowed be Thy name.

The spiritual blood that redeems is the Spirit of Jesus that flows from Him. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His (Romans 8:9). It is the holy influence of the Lord Jesus in the soul. If Christ be in you, the (spiritual) body is dead, because of sin, but the spirit (spiritual mind) is life, because of righteousness (Romans 8:19).

Loving truth flows from the Divine Savior, and is called the blood of the New Testament (Matthew 26:28), that washes us from our sins and makes us white (Revelation 1:5).

It is sometimes called living water, for water refreshes and purifies, and so does TRUTH; sometimes wine because wine cheers and strengthens, and so does TRUTH; sometimes times the Word. In all cases it is the Spirit of the Lord using the Truths of His Word, to edify, convince, quicken, elevate the soul, and remove anything unworthy and unholy. It is the blood of Christ, that cleanseth from all sin. The blood that redeems us is like the love that reconciles us, it is the God of Infinite Love acting on the souls of His children, reconciling them to Himself.

He, our Heavenly Father, reconciled us. He needed no reconciling. God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself (2 Corinthians 5:19). The great God and our Savior gave Himself for us, that He might redeem us from all iniquity (Tit. ii. 13, 14).

He reconciled our nature first in Himself, having abolished in His flesh the enmity (Ephesians 2:15); and then from His glorified Person sent His Holy Spirit (John 7:39), to redeem, sanctify, and regenerate all who trust and love Him.

To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever.

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## No. 4. Feb. 28, 1875. THE PROCESSION OF HORSES WHEN THE BOOK WAS OPENED.

IN the sixth chapter of the Book of Revelation, and at the second verse, you will find the Word of the Lord thus written: and I saw, and behold a white horse; and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him; and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

The horse, the special invaluable companion of man in toil and in triumph, appear; also frequently in the heavenly scenes recorded in the Bible. You will remember Elisha surrounded by the horses of fire and chariots of fire. In this Book of Revelation the horse often appears. All the angels are said to follow the Lord upon white horses. They are not mentioned as distinctive or separate beings, but revelations were made by them as images or symbols in the eternal world - representations of the subject of thought, and of prophecy concerning the things of the Lords Church and kingdom.

On the present occasion, the horses spoken of are said to have come out of a Book.

There was, first, an opening of the book, and a white horse was seen to come forth; and then a second opening, and a red horse came forth, which took peace from the earth; thirdly, another opening, and a black horse;

and then ultimately there came forth a pale horse, and he that sat on him was called Death; and hell, it is said, followed after him.

It is perfectly evident that, as we have said, the manner of instruction in the eternal world, by signs and representations, is exhibited here. It will also be evident that the same law of correspondences which prevails in the world of nature, and in the interpretation of the hallowed volume of heaven, will serve to explain the Divine things which are represented here before us. However mysterious they seem at first sight, a little reflection will enable us, with complete clearness, to behold their lessons of heavenly wisdom. For, although, perhaps, at first sight there would seem to be no particularly close connection between a horse and anything of a spiritual character, yet the intellect is a mental horse. Consider the use of the horse for bodily travel, and of the intellect for mental progress, and you will see its practical value in a thousand different ways.

In fact, almost the very first time a horse is mentioned in the Bible it is mentioned manifestly with a spiritual application. You will find it in Genesis 49:17, where it is said: Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

Now every one will see that Dan, one of the tribes of Israel, was certainly not a serpent of a LITERAL KIND in the path; and he certainly did not bite the horses heels, nor make his rider fall backward. If, however, we ask ourselves a little whether there is not some faculty in the human being, and in relation to spiritual things, which performs the office of a horse, we shall not have very much difficulty in discovering both what it does, and what it is. The office of a horse is that of assisting the earthly traveler to go conveniently, comfortably, and rapidly on his way. We can easily understand that just as there are earthly ways by means of which we go from one part of a city or country to another, and if well made, we go comfortably; so there are spiritual roads, royal paths of Divine truth, highways, by

means of which we can pass from state to state of intelligence and wisdom. There is a faculty which enables us to do this most readily and commodiously - the faculty of the UNDERSTANDING, or what, in other words, is denominated the intellectual faculty of the mind - the power of thought, by means of which, when we vigorously exert it, we go upon the path of truth, make rapid progress, and come to our desired end.

We soon perceive this - and, in fact, it is so natural, that it is not only capable of being readily illustrated in the Divine Word, but it has found its way into language in every direction. How common is it for us, when a person is going on with some series of arguments without due consideration, and we say Stop a little; don't you gallop on so fast. Just rest a while, and let us consider this matter a little more perfectly. When a person has, by clear argument, won his cause, he is said to ride off in triumph. The ancients had a fine fable founded on this spiritual meaning of the HORSE.

Pegasus, they said, was a winged horse, born at a fountain near the sea. It flew to Mount Helicon, and with its hoof broke the cover of the fountain of truth, whose waters streamed forth, to the delight of the Nine Muses who had their temple there, and covered the earth with beauty. Intellectual progress corresponds to the progress of a good horse. And now we shall easily perceive a meaning to that apparently mysterious reference to Dan. When a selfish person is engaged in seeking out his particular ends, he endeavors so to disturb the facts of a case that the judge may decide in his favor, whether it is right or wrong. He thus bites at the horses heels; the meddles with the evidences, and presents the statements so that they do not show fully and fairly what the truth is. Such persons do as Burns describes in one of his poems:

You'll find mankind an unco squad,

And little to be trusted;

When SELF the wavering balance shakes,

Tis rarely right adjusted.

Now it is precisely the same thing that a person does when he tries to have the case turned round and round, till he has got it in his own selfish favor, however unjust this tampering with the truth may be. He bites the horses heels, and makes his rider fall backward. In various other places of the Word we shall see this correspondence of the horse recognized. In fact, it is quite plain when we meditate a little upon it, so that it can be readily perceived by a thoughtful mind. You will find it very often referred to in this sense in the sacred volume. Take, for instance, Zec. 10:3, 4: The Lord of Hosts hath visited His flock, the house of Judah, and hath made them as His GOODLY HORSE in the battle. Out of him came forth the corner, out of him the nail, out of him the battle-bow, out of him every oppressor together.

Now the only way in which the house of Judah could be made into a goodly horse must be the spiritual one of giving them a GOODLY INTELLECT, enabling Judah to see what was grand and right.

And then it is true, out of him comes forth the corner, out of him comes forth the nail, out of him the battle-bow, out of him every oppressor (or conqueror) together, because persons represented by Judah are those who love the Lord, and desire to carry out His ways. When such as truly love the Lord are also men of culture intellectually, they see their way in all the paths of truth with clearness and reason.

Out of them comes forth the corner - the connecting truth which combines the sides of truth one with another, and firmly joins the various parts of a system into one strong fortress. Out of him comes forth the nail. When rational convictions are seen to be in perfect harmony with heavenly wisdom, there come confirming proofs from the Holy Word that nail them down. Not only does a devout, true, and heaven-enlightened mind delight to show what truth is, and illustrate it in a variety of ways, but is diligent to supply the authority of Holy Writ. Thus saith the Lord is a Divine nail to fasten the lesson down.

Out of him comes the corner, out of him the nail. In this way the sacred Word brings the sacred horse in its spiritual character before us, and in this way it is mentioned in our text. It is a disclosure that was made to the seers spiritual vision of the various stages by which the Church would gradually sink from its early purity and nobility of character, through stage after stage of descent, through selfishness, strife, ignorance and darkness, until it arrived at a state of being dead yet having still a name that it lived.

Zeal for God and godliness being the pretense, the real aims being desires for power and pelf. That is the state of evil represented by the pale horse. Pale is not the color of life, but the color of death. On an INTELLECT corrupted by hypocrisy death rides - mischief, misery, and ruin, signified by hell, following after.

Let us, however, a little more closely attend to the description of the first horse in the precise words of our text: And I say, and behold a white horse. White is the color of truth, because it is the color of light. Light for the mind is Divine Truth. Arise, shine, for thy light is come, it is said; and the glory of the Lord hath arisen upon thee.

The first horse represents the intellectual power in the human mind when the Christian Church was young, and the disciples genuine and sincere. Intellectual power at first was combined with simplicity of character and fervor of love. The Lord Jesus had taught two grand things - love to God above all things, that of the heart and soul, and mind and strength. This, He said, is the first and great command, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself is the second, and like unto the first. He had taught that the essence of all religion is constituted in those two great things, and they believed Him. This was their faith. His earnest disciples take these principles in simplicity, and in life and death carry them out. They did not trouble themselves with elaborate creeds and hair-splitting definitions. Christ was in their hearts and clearness in their minds. Their horse was the white horse, simple, strong, one of Gods fair creatures, carrying out its beautiful paces, enabling its rider to advance on the path of truth just as if he were on a goodly charger. Men at that time loved God manifested in the flesh, and said, In Jesus Christ dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. Ye are complete in Him, as the Apostle continued. You do not need to seek another unknown, incomprehensible Deity. You are complete in the Lord Jesus Christ. He forgives, He enlightens, He strengthens, He saves. He is the Godhead, the Head of all principality and power. You ask, What, then, are we to do? Love Him with all your hearts, and do His will. Cultivate charity to your brethren. Be sure He will give you power to do so. Do not stand hesitating and imagining how long a life of goodness you must live in order to get to heaven. Heaven begins with you as soon as you SINCERELY begin to live the life of heaven. The Lord Jesus said, Unless your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven. If ye love Me, keep My commandments. There were no complicated or dark

notions of perplexing mysteries. They rode on a white horse. They knew they could overcome evil, because the Lord said, I give you power to tread upon serpents and scorpions, and nothing shall by any means hurt you. Their heathen friends and neighbors said, How these Christians love one another. Even their persecutors were compelled to say, find no harm in these people. They wont do sacrifices to idols; they wont worship the Emperor; they simply urge one another to keep Gods will, to be honest, to be pure, to be upright, and so they manifested to all the world that their Master was a Divine Savior.

He made new men of them, and built them up for heaven. This was the time is which they rode on the white horse, and they went forth conquering and to conquer. If Christianity is again to go forth triumphantly, it must go upon the same white horse.

In Revelation 19:11 you will find St. John says: And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True; and in righteousness he doth judge and make war. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written that no man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and his name is called the Word of God. And the armies which were with heaven followed upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. That is to say, he saw the Lord was going to introduce ultimately a new state of things in the world, by which men should be enlightened, have understanding by which they should see clearly and simply that the Lord only desires this: Do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God in all the ways of life.

And now allow me: my beloved friends, to ask, before we go further: Are we all furnished with our white horses? What sort of a horse are you riding on? These are not vain things; they are Divine lessons. There are three sorts of riding spoken of - in fact, four; but three more especially in the Divine Word that it will be profitable for us to think of for a moment.

First, the riding upon a white horse; and he who has got a noble white horse has got a noble plan of life. How are you advancing to the good time? The Lord Himself reveals a grand plan, that we, by the new birth, by persistently following His Divine will, may become like Him. Be ye perfect (He said), even as your Father who is in heaven is perfect. Do not heed those persons who say you cannot keep all the commandments of God. You can begin, and you will be imperfect at first, but you will improve as you advance. Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say? We must, therefore, if we would go in the way of the Lord, begin and form a plan of life. We must love every noble purpose - love to become angels; love to realize heaven at home; have a plan of life and go upon it, and we shall be like the victorious knight going on his white horse, overcoming all that comes in his way that would arrest his path, and riding victoriously, going on conquering and to conquer.

The ass is sometimes mentioned in Scripture as a means of travel, too, because the horse is the beautiful symbol of a noble, spiritual intellect moving towards heaven. The ass represents an intellect, but only regarding earthly things, and therefore you will find in the same chapter to which I referred when speaking of the first mention of the horse (Genesis xlix), it is said in the 14th verse, Issachar is a strong ass crouching down between two burdens. And this is exactly the way with everyone who lives only for the world.

The world deceives when most it charms;

It teems with sorrows, sins, and harms.

Compared with the spiritual aims of life, the man who pursues nature only is riding on an ass instead of a horse. A man that does not heed spiritual and eternal matters becomes a burden to himself, wearied and worn, tired of himself and all things, living for nothing. His life has two burdens. Disappointed hopes form one burden. Dreams fulfilled, which turn out worthless, form another. His days are burdensome, He has seen and enjoyed life, and there is nothing in it. He is worn out. He has no pleasure now, and none before him.

There is a third class. They do not ride either a horse or an ass, but only a hobby. They adopt some fancy, and magnify it, and ride it to death. Some of our scientific men at the present day, having won for themselves esteem and admiration for eminent services in their own field, seem strangely prone to rush into the field of religion, to show how life can arise from no life, effects can be greater than causes, creation without a Creator. This is neither riding on a horse nor an ass. It is simply riding a hobby.

The spiritually-minded man, however, desires no hobby; he longs only for the truth. He is not content with an ass only, he desires a noble white horse. He feels and sees that he has hopes and affections above the things of time and sense. He has longings for immortality, aims that only eternity can gratify. The world to him is a school, a nursery, a training-place, a field of battle against evils in himself. His intellect yearns for God, for pure truth, pure goodness, self-denying, virtue. He perceives a whole world of thought and experience of which the mere worldling knows nothing. To him revelation discloses continual themes for contemplation, continual realms of wisdom to be won, fallacies to be dispersed, and evils to be slain. He rides the white horse, on the narrow, but noble way, that leads to life.

The rider on the white horse had a bow in his hand, the symbol of TRUE DOCTRINE.

There is a sort of religion that conforms to general sentiment, and falls in with general ceremony, but is aimless.

Those who are content with this kind of profession will readily admit in general that we are all sinners, and readily adopt the language of the Litany: O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable sinners, but never really charge themselves with sin.

They may be avaricious, quarrelsome, censorious, envious, self-seeking, and self-indulgent, careless about public good, careless to combat public abuses; but they never reflect upon these sins, or condemn them in themselves.

They need the ARROWS of conviction; guided by, the BOW OF DOCTRINE.

Arrows, in a bad sense, are the bitter words that rankle and torture, of which the Psalmist speaks (Psalms 64:3). Arrows, in a good sense, are the weighty words of Holy Writ, directed by sound doctrine and striking on our special faults and shortcomings.

He who rides upon the white horse knows how to aim. He has a bow in his hand, and drives his admonitions home.



He knows that no enemies are so dangerous to a man as his own evils, and, desiring the real good of himself and others, he is faithful to wound, but loving to heal.

Such were Christians in the early days, but such they did not remain.

They went forth conquering and to conquer; but when the radiance of Christian light covered nations and reached thrones, ambition came into the Church.

In the days of Constantine, when the emperor found it politic to unite Christianity to his throne, the greatest self-seeking influences began to agitate the Church, as in the days when the disciples were unconverted. Ambition stalked through the Church, with its creed and its claim for domination: Who is for Arius, who for Athanasius? Which is the greatest bishopric, Rome or Constantinople? Persecution then arose in the Church, Christians persecuting Christians - more fearful persecutions than the world had ever before beheld.

This spirit was the red horse, which would take peace from the earth, or from the Church. Horrible passions were excited, and inquisitions engendered in the name of the Prince of Peace. They slew one another, charity waxed cold, and iniquity abounded. Religion became a thing to quarrel over, with intemperate zeal for crotchets, instead of being God's means of eradicating hate and evil, and transforming once more the world into paradise.

Then came another horse, A BLACK HORSE. This represents the dark ignorance into which the Church fell in the middle ages. Political Christianity taught that ignorance is the mother of devotion, and therefore the more ignorant the people were, the more easy it would be to rule them. The Word was kept out of the hands of the people, and that to such an extent that in this country, in the days of Richard II, it was death by law for a man below the rank of a knight to read the Bible.

From the seventh century to the sixteenth, the date of setting the Word of God free once more, we can with difficulty realize the depth of the darkness. It was thick darkness. The highest positions in the religious world were frequently occupied by the worst of men. Vile popes, bishops, and archbishops, were appointed by the vilest of women. Fighting popes and fighting bishops led armies, more like bandit captains than the pure disciples of the Prince of Peace.

Then a thorough mixture of heathenism and Christianity took place, giving rise to a system of regarding all the falsities of barbarian ignorance as quite sacred, if ticketed with Christian names.

Then the Babylonish idea of Queen of Heaven, denounced by the prophets (Jeremiah 44:17) was adopted, and called Virgin Mary. The heathen idea was retained of local gods and goddesses doing wonders at particular wells, mountains, and other so-called sacred places. Marvelous powers and virtues were attributed to dolls of various sizes, to dead people's bones, toe-nails, hairs, and the remnants and rags of reputed saints, frequently only eccentric and insane people. A system was thus engendered as foreign to the teaching of the New Testament as darkness is to light. Co-existent with this darkness were cruelties of every kind, and wars as ferocious as those waged by the merest savagery.

The dark places of the earth were full of cruelty (Psalms lxxiv. 20).

Persecutions more rife, more horrible, more persistent, more continuous a thousand times than the world had ever sustained before, were perpetrated by so-called Christians; while famine, pestilence, and universal wretchedness, were the result of the universal ignorance.

Then was the time of the black horse. Not only was the Word of God unknown generally by the priests, but their prayer-books were run over as so much mummary, not understood.

King Alfred declares in his work on the Duties of Pastors that he could find very few priests north of the Humber who were able to translate the Latin service into the common language of the people, and south of the Thames not one.

Two hundred years afterwards William of Malmesbury thus writes: When the Normans first came over, the greater number of the English clergy could hardly read the church service, and that, as for anything like learning, they were nearly to a man destitute of it. If one of them understood grammar, he was admired and wondered at by the rest as a prodigy. Many of the nobility, he says, had given up attending Divine service in churches altogether, and used to have matins and mass said to them in their chambers while they lay in bed, and as fast as the priests could hurry them over. They were universally given to gluttonous feeding and drunkenness.

Other nations were in a similar condition. It was the time of the BLACK HORSE.

The balance in the hand of the rider, and the small price announced for the wheat and the barley, represent the small value then regarded as the worth of goodness and truth. A measure of the wheat of heavenly charity, the full corn in the ear, only worth a penny, the smallest Roman silver coin. Three measures of barley, the entire truth of the letter of the Word, valued also at a penny.

See thou hurt not the oil and the wine represents the caution of Divine Providence to preserve the inward truths of Revelation from being profaned.

These are the oil of joy (Isaiah 62:2), the new wine of the kingdom (Matthew 26:29). Ignorance overlooks these things, and so does not plunge into deadlier evils still. Such is the description of the dense darkness into which the Church would sink, and, in fact, did sink.

With the prophetic vision on the one hand, and the records of history on the other, we can see with the clearness of light, and with the sureness of certainty, that all these things have happened. Men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil.

After a time, however, the horrors of such universal depravity and blindness became intolerable, and a persuasion began to prevail in the Church and the world that, for the sake of example to the people in general, reverence for religion must be professed, though it was not felt. A season of hypocrisy set in. This was riding the PALE HORSE - the whiteness of death, not of life; the state of the whited sepulcher.

The Pope who built St. Peters, Leo X., was well known to be a jeering unbeliever. This condition increased and extended until, at the time of the French Revolution, the great mass of the rulers in Church and State were utterly infidel, but with the solemn pretense of sanctimonious regard for religion, as a superior kind of police.

Hell was said to follow this rider; that is, such wide-spread profligacy and villany were manifested everywhere, that hell upon earth was, the result. Nothing but truth can vanquish sin and slavery.

If truth be neglected, repelled, or profaned, impiety will rear its head in horrid forms, pride and passion will assert themselves everywhere, and universal pollution, strife, war, and bitterness, proclaim the reign of self. Only truth can restore the blessed reign of virtue, piety, purity, and peace. No pretenses or hypocrisies can accomplish this. In France, the philosophers, so called, tried hard to do this. They set up a worship of their own, adopted a rest day, one in ten, instead of Sunday, but it all fell into helplessness and contempt. The Lord Himself had provided a remedy, by revealing Divine Truth afresh, and providing a new Church. The intellect would be brightened anew. Great truths long discarded would be revealed afresh. This is represented in the 19th chapter by the appearance again of the WHITE HORSE, a heaven-enlightened intellect. An intellect bright with light would vanquish the pale hypocrisy of make-believe and deceit. I saw heaven opened (says St. John), and behold a WHITE HORSE. He that sat on him is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. It is the Lord Himself the King of kings and Lord of lords. He appears by and in His Word. His name is called the Word of God (Revelation 19:13).

The sword that comes out of His mouth, the truth that comes out of His Word, makes war upon all folly, transgression, and crime, upon that which induces wrong and wretchedness.

His vesture has been dipped in blood; the letter of His Word has been violated and profaned; but now, in harmony with its Spirit, it will everywhere proclaim love to God and love to man. Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, goodwill towards men.

While this general enlightenment proceeds, the individual followers of the Savior will follow Him on white horses. They will be clothed in white linen, pure and clean; their sentiments pure, their lives pure. They will follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. In other words, His precepts and His example will lead them, and be sufficient for them in all things. Intelligently good, lovingly wise, riding each on his white horse, of an enlightened intellect, they will go forth conquering and to conquer until every abuse, every crime, and every sorrow - man-made misery, though self-created from opposition to Divine law, called, from its pain, the fierceness and wrath of God - shall die out; and none shall hurt nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9).

## No. 5. March 7, 1878. THE GREAT MULTITUDE CLOTHED IN WHITE ROBES.

IN 7th the chapter of the Book of Revelation, and at the 14th verse, you will find the Word of the Lord thus written:--And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Heaven is the grand and perpetual home of the true and the good out of every kindred nation, and tongue. This fact, which we have taken occasion to dwell upon from time to time, is set before us in the wonderful scene which John says he beheld. In the 9th verse of this chapter it is written:--After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.

When we reflect that it was in the first century of Christianity when these Divine scenes were opened to the spirit of the Apostle. John, we shall see two or three results of great importance. But the first point of all that we wish to call your attention to is, that salvation is not confined to a very small company who are particularly orthodox in all their ways of thinking, as narrow minds often suppose.

There are many you know who say that unless people believe exactly in the same number of articles, and in the very same confession in which these Persons are accustomed to believe, salvation is not possible for them at all. Yet you see that although there was so very small a number of visible Christians at this time - seven churches comprised the great bulk of those who were yet formed into distinct societies - notwithstanding there were some from all nations and tribes and tongues who already had found their way clothed in white robes, and standing before the Lamb in heaven, and not a small company - a great multitude, he says, that no man could number; and in another place he mentions that ten thousand times ten thousand stood round about Him.

How closely this harmonizes with the speech of Peter, when Cornelius came to him: Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with Him. The Word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ; He is Lord of all (Acts x., 34-36).

But we shall easily perceive how this takes place if we bear in mind not only that the Lord is the universal Father, but that what is meant, by being clothed in white robes is that each one possessed an interior pure religion in his soul, whatever might be the outward appearance of errors and unmeaning ceremonies.

We sometimes fail to understand these subjects, by not bearing in mind that religion has two aspects. There is one before God, who looks upon the heart (1 Samuel 16:7), and one before men. The outside religion that a man has is often one he does not question; he takes it, as he finds it with his friends, and good naturedly supposes it is all right. He has been taught his catechism or his articles, or his mode of belief - sometimes a long one, sometimes a short one - because he was told it was the right thing to do.

Many have this outside religion for talk, and dispute, and discussion, and controversy, and so on, and

are ready oftentimes to struggle very hard for it, but they have no interior religion at all. A persons interior religion is that which he, from his very heart, loves to think of and to practice.

And in thousands and tens of thousands of instances a mans outside religion is one thing - a thing that he oftentimes with very great zeal brings before other people; but when he comes in his very heart to reflect on what his conscience interiorly dictates, it is quite another thing.

We find it an exceedingly common circumstance, when we have come to a fair understanding with one who has a conventional and, perhaps, contradictory creed, and has come to understand exactly what true principles are, it is a very common thing for such all one to say, I have been thinking like that almost the whole of my thoughtful life, although he has on Sundays been hearing, and perhaps repeating, the reverse. I have quietly thought to myself so-and-so, he says; and he has a very clear conception of what his real purpose and aim are in that respect. The white robes represent this interior heartfelt religion; and persons in every form of faith, so far as they are really zealous for the Lord Jesus and goodness, clothe their best affections with a sacred conception of what is loving, true, and right; and this is what is meant in Scripture by the white robe.

I have heard some very good people use language such as this: I don't believe, you know, in our life having anything to do with our salvation. It is Christ alone Who saves us altogether, independently of any works of ours, good or bad - of any keeping of commandments, or anything of the kind. I remember a friend of mine once telling me of a good old lady whom he respected more than anyone else in the world - in fact, his own mother - saying, Christ does everything, my son, as to salvation. She saw a straw lying on the floor, and she added, If my getting up and taking up that straw would secure my salvation, I would not do it. It would rob my Savior of the glory. When that good old lady had any duty or any work of love really to do, there was nobody who was more thoughtful, more persevering, more faithful to what was the will of the Savior, and the carrying out of the spirit of true religion. She was as good as gold.

This was a white robe, and it is this white robe of inner personal religion which constitutes our real fitness to enter the kingdom of heaven, and to stand before the Lamb. When we go into the other life, we may depend upon it there will be no asking one another how many articles of faith we have kept before us, or how many we have signed, but what has been and is the habit of our heart and life.

This term, habit, is a very expressive one. It is a word that means clothing, and the living habit of inward affection, thinking according to truth, and acting according to truth. This is the clothing of the soul. It is the clothing of the souls various parts. He that dwelleth in love, the Apostle John says, knoweth God, for God is love; and if a person is constantly seeking in himself to come into a more thorough spirit of charity and love, he will never attribute to God anything but love. He may know that the love of God is felt like an angry rod by bad people, because it is opposite to their habitual states and aims, opposed to their practices, and to all which unhappily they love. That is the wrath of God, according to them. But there is no wrath really in God, never was, and never will be; He is love itself, and never changes. I am Jehovah, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Now a really loving heart will have this as the highest part of its heavenly dress. Just as the high priest amongst the Israelites had a white miter with a golden plate, on which was written Holiness to the Lord, so every really thoughtful, loving Christian, on this the highest part of his dress, the clothing of

the head, has Jesus, King of Kings, and Lord of Lords. His breast will be clothed with the robe of affection for his neighbor, and he will not think ill of his neighbor. Feeling as the Apostle John felt, he will say, We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren (1 John 3:14). He will endeavor to help others to be truly happy, and this will clothe his breast quite well; and it is no use to have these things as high sentiments, unless he brings them down to useful words and works. The best robe must come down to the feet. It is this inner robe of righteousness that forms a life for heaven, and this robe can be had in every country, in every church, in every class and nation.

Out of those who wear such robes the blessed ones come, and stand before the Lamb. But some one feels a difficulty in taking this truly scriptural as well as truly charitable view. Don't forget, they say, there is no other name given under heaven by which men can be saved but the name of Jesus Christ, and it is perfectly true. The name of Jesus Christ, however, does not mean a word;

it means Jesus Christ Himself, because Jesus Christ is the only God of heaven and earth, and whoever is saved, wherever he may be, and whether he knows His Redeemer or not, is saved by Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ saves all who desire to be saved.

He is the grand center through which the Everlasting Father acts, as He said: I in them, and Thou in me, that they may all be made perfect in One; so Jesus Christ, whether men know Him by that sweet title or not, is the true light that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world; and wherever there is a soul hungering to be good, he helps such to become more loving and holy. That which thus saves them is the spirit of Jesus Christ. There is no other name, there is no other Being, by which men can be saved, because all power is His in heaven and on earth.

The blessed in heaven saw, therefore, that whatever country they came from, however many the multitude that stood there, they saw and rejoiced to confess that it was the Divine Lamb from whom their salvation came, and they cast their crowns before Him.

This appears again and again in many beautiful ways, both in this Book and in the Gospels, as well as in the Old Testament. There is only one God, the Divine Father from eternity, Who became our Savior. All excellence is in Him.

He was pleased to present Himself as the Divine Man, the embodied Godhead, and that is the Lamb. I am the door, he says; by Me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture. The Godhead was within Him. The humanity was the door to the Godhead, just as each mans body is the door of his soul. By means of his body, a mans soul goes out to be useful to others. It is the door by which they can come to him and find him there.

So, in the 22nd and 23rd verses of the 21st chapter of this Book, you will read that it is said not only that the Lord God Almighty is the Light of heaven, but that the Lamb is the Lamp thereof: And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it. And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it; for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light (THE LAMP) thereof. Just what a lamp is to the light, just that the Divine Humanity of Jesus is to His everlasting light and love.

So the whole Godhead, all the blessings of salvation, and salvation itself both in time and in eternity, all

progress, all perfection, and all happiness in heaven, come from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Head, as the Apostle says, of all principality and power.

The Lord is the universal Father, the universal Savior, and the universal Friend. This conception of the white robe is one of the very greatest practical importance. It is one that we should lay well to heart. We live in a Christian country, and belong to a Christian church. That is our profession; but how do we stand as to our inner robes before the Lord? You have the outward robe of profession; but what kind of an inward robe have you got on? Just refer to the 17th and 18th verses of the 3rd chapter of this Book, and you will find the Lord Jesus says of some:--Thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see.

Every soul must be clothed with heavenly robes, unless it will remain in evil lusts and passions. To appear before the Lamb, there must be as entire change, a real new dress, not simply a sham profession. Without a really new dress, no man will be fit to appear in the glorious and orderly company of heaven. I counsel thee, the Lord says, to buy of me white raiment. Let us take this invitation to heart. Are we really intent upon having a pure genuine interior religion from head to foot? No matter what our nominal Christianity or external profession may be; are we doing that one essential thing? Remember what is said in Matthew 22:12: And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment: And he saith unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. The term rendered friend here, in the original language is companion, not friend. It is not so tender a term. A man never becomes a friend of the Lord without doing what He commands. Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you. When a person has the knowledge of religion, he may be a companion; but only when he has it in heart and life is he a friend. The Lord discriminates, Companion, how camest thou in hither, not having on the wedding garment?

The result was that the command went forth to cast him into outer darkness.

Oh, let us, then, my beloved friends, whatever comes of our outside profession, seek from the Lord Jesus Christ this sacred white robe. Do not imagine that it is a thing to be obtained by any mere fancy. It is to be an absolute dress that we are to purchase from the Lord. What, are we absolutely to pay for it? perhaps some friend may say. Certainly; you are to make an exchange, but all the profit will be yours. You are to part with everything that is sinful and pernicious. Whatever takes away your comfort, peace, and happiness, you are to part with, and take instead the bright truths and the blessed affections which form the soul for heaven. All the blessed ones stood there with white robes.

We must not only get the white robes, but we must carefully guard against defiling them; or, if stains get upon them, we must wash them anew. It is said, concerning the truly good and heavenly minded, They have not defiled their garments, and they shall walk with Him in white, for they are worthy. Imperfections, that we have mainly, but not altogether overcome, will sometimes shew themselves in specks upon this white robe. Therefore it is said in our text, they have washed their robes.

To attain complete purification of mind, we must often wash our robes. Wash me thoroughly from

mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin (Psalms 2:2), might be better rendered, wash me often. Harsh thoughts, perhaps imperfections, will come; unkind and fretful observations, it may be; some spirit of impatience, errors that ought to have been overcome, will sometimes appear again, and make defilements on our robes; but when we see them we have to do what is expressed in our text: They washed their robes. In order fully to understand the beautiful lesson, we must not forget that in Scripture, truths which flow into the mind are represented by liquid objects, goodness by solid objects. Hence the Lord Jesus says: I am the bread of life; he that eateth Me shall live by Me. Those who receive the Divine goodness from Him as heavenly bread shall acquire His image and likeness, and spiritually live by Him.

Truths are represented by liquid objects, because these glide into the thought as if we were drinking them.

Indeed, we do mentally drink them in, and hence you will find sometimes that truth is described be water, sometimes by milk, sometimes by wine, and sometimes by blood. Our Lord Jesus Christ says: Whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14). That is to say, those who receive the Divine truths, out of them shall arise a succession of new ideas like the flashing streams from a beautiful fountain.

One of the most charming images you can have is the representation of a fountain on a sunny day, the living water springing up, and streams rising in the sunlight like liquid silver. When new truths spring up in the mind, leading to higher and higher things in our spiritual progress, it is a fountain of heavenly water. Of this, in Isaiah 55:1 we read: Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. MILK represents the simple truth that instructs those who are in the beginning of their progress towards heaven. I have fed you with the sincere milk of the Word, that you may grow thereby.

WINE represents those of a cheering, animating, encouraging kind; those which help a person when he has got weary, and needs rousing again to work out his salvation with fear and trembling. The soul becomes faint and weary at times, and needs the new wine of the kingdom.

But, above all, we need the BLOOD of the Lord Jesus - that is, the inward spirit of Jesus Christ circulating in the human soul, and giving it strength to go on in its progress, removing its old corruption, and forming it into a NEW MAN. Inward impurities are removed, and inward strength is imparted, by NEW BLOOD. They wash their robes, and make them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Were you peevish or selfish yesterday - did you do something that was not quite right, or say something that was unkind - go to the Lord Jesus Christ, and pray Him to give you new strength. The spirit of the Lord Jesus will flow in, and will remove the offensive stains. The robes well washed, the faults will be seen, hated, and subdued. A Christian thus becomes stronger and stronger, because he is purified and renewed by the blood of the Lamb.

The soul can then say, Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits; Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; Who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; Who crowneth thee with loving kindness and tender mercies (Psalms ciii. 2-4). Thus you find, in some parts of the Word, it



is water that purifies us. In some parts it is truth which purifies and saves us, and in other parts it is the Word. Now ye are clean, through the Word that I have spoken unto you (S. John 15:2). Sanctify them by Thy truth; Thy Word is TRUTH (S. John 17:17)

Elsewhere it is the blood; but in reality it is always the inward spirit of Divine Wisdom which flows from the Lord, and that pours itself into mans nature, restores his spiritual strength, and our faults and errors; truth describes our evils and dangers; truth opens new hopes, aims, and encouragements; truth points to the Savior and to heaven. When received in love and circulated through our being, it is new SAVING BLOOD.

A dear old lady friend whom many years ago I had occasion to see and to comfort from time to time, evinced, by her excellent life, that she wore a white robe. She had looked very discouragingly into herself - as often happens in severe affliction and was afraid lest she had not been as sincere, and made as real progress, as she had hoped. She was afraid that she might not have been truly faithful, and she needed to be cheered and comforted. After much mourning and depression one day, her state had quite changed. She received me with a smile, and said, I had a very happy dream last night. Well, I said, what was it? I don't know, she replied, whether it was more than a dream; but I thought I had come into the other world. I was not as I am now, but it seemed as if I had come back to my youthful time of sixteen years of age. I was dressed all in white, and thought I had died. She was almost daily in expectation of dying. I was clothed in white, she continued, and three angels came to me in a most loving and heavenly way. They looked most affectionately at me, and then pointed to parts of my dress. I saw it was white, but a number of little spots were here and there. They told me that I had the right robe, but that it was not quite what it should be.

I must go back again. It was not time for me to go altogether. I had got the right robe on, but it needs must be more purified. She added: I felt so happy when I awoke, and I feel quite happy now. I have got the right robe on, only there are those spots. I know they are there, and I must get rid of them. I have no doubt she did get rid of them. Thus, my beloved friends, remember that we have some lessons for each of us to take home. It is not the Lord who repels anyone from entering into eternal life. He is everlastingly desirous that every soul that He has created should be eternally happy. He loves us a thousand times better than those who love us best; but it is absolutely essential we should acquire the qualities which make heaven in ourselves. This must be our inward condition.

When we enter the eternal world, if we have got this robe on, as those angels had, we shall be welcome amongst the white-robed multitude, and adore the Lord, and say: Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, and cast their crowns before Him.

They had all, however, fought the good fight again and again. Without faithful campaigning, there is no victory. They had palms in their hands. A palm, you know, is that noble tree which is the very picture of an upright man. It has a crown also, the emblem of the CROWN OF LIFE. The Psalmist says: The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree; he shall grow like the cedar in Lebanon (Psalms xcii. 12). We must be soldiers of the Lord Jesus, and fight when our old dispositions to evil show themselves. Our selfishness will come up in a variety of ways, and we must determine to keep it down. Don't imagine that you can get things done in a spiritual way any more than you can get them done in a natural way, by leaving them to do themselves. We must fight when we find we have a tendency to wrong - should any impulse arise to overreach our neighbor, to do anything unkind, or sanction anything untrue we

must immediately take up arms against it. Work out your salvation with fear and trembling. We are sure of victory, if we persevere and do our part. We shall have tribulation, but we shall conquer. It is the only campaign upon which we can enter, and be sure of winning.

We have an Almighty Friend, Jehovah (Jesus), and He will take care that we are not overcome, if we are but faithful.

Should anything morally wrong present itself to us, it is impossible to overcome it of ourselves. Let us look up to the Lord Jesus, and ask Him for strength to overcome it entirely, and we shall overcome it. Then we can have in our hands the palm of victory. A lowly love to the Savior, and faithfulness to Him, will make us ready at length to take our part amongst those who have gone to their eternal home, and say, O, grave, where is thy victory; O, death, where is thy sting?

With palms in the hands of their heavenly bodies, the glorious ten thousand times ten thousand, clad in their white robes, the symbol of pure mind and feeling, had come out of much tribulation. They had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. They could join in the Sacred anthems of heaven: Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne - the infinite Love which fills heaven. Upon, in heavenly language, means within and unto the Lamb, the Visible Deity, the Divine Man.

The circumstance of their having come out of much tribulation implies that they had gone through much trial and sorrow.

The Christian is often the subject of grief, and would fain avoid many of the difficulties with which life is encompassed, yet probably the day will come when we shall know that every trouble had its reason. The clods of earth need much breaking before the ground is mellow enough to produce a fertile harvest. Need we wonder that the ground of the human soul which is to bloom and bear and bless throughout eternity requires to be well broken up.

The gems of earth demand continuous rubbing ere they attain the brilliancy that becomes a joy for ever. Shall the jewels of the Lord complain that they, too, are subjected to treatment seemingly hard to endure, but which will prepare them to shine with angelic beauty among the blessed?

If no great thing is accomplished on earth, whose fashions change and in a few years pass away, without much patient toil, much perseverance, and grave and steady work, can we be astonished that the human soul, that wondrous structure that is immortal, should have its labours and its griefs, its storm and sunshine, its dangers, its difficulties, and its triumphs?

Oh, no! through much tribulation we are made meet for heaven.

But what care we for tribulation, in view of the eternal results! Why should we pine, to endure a few years what He permits who knows us far better than we know ourselves, and who loves us infinitely better than finite being can - than father, mother, sister, brother.

Does the brave earthly soldier endure hardship, face dangers boldly, persevere in spite of obstacles, and labor until his laurels are won, and shall we complain if we endure temptation and struggle to win our everlasting bliss?

Rather, let us smile in our sorrows, rejoice in our tribulations, for they are a sign that our heavenly Father sees we can bear them. He never afflicts men willingly, or grieves needlessly. Tribulation worketh patience, and patience hope, and hope with faith, salvation. These enable us to mingle with the glorious host of whom the Angel said, These are they who have come through much tribulation. They have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

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# No. 6. March 14, 1878. THE MIGHTY ANGEL WITH THE LITTLE BOOK.

And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take it and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey. And I took the little book out of the angels hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey; and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter. (Revelation 10:9, 10).

THE appearance of the glorious angel whom John describes must have been an immense relief after the doleful scenes described in the previous chapter. It is the sign of Divine Providence introducing a new era.

Every new age is ushered in by a special opening of Divine Truth in some new character, which will give the tone, and mould the form, of the coming time.

When the Lord commenced the Jewish Dispensation, He revealed to Moses His name Jehovah, known in a better age, but long forgotten, and dictated the laws and ritual which should form the Israelitish world.

When that world closed in disaster, the Lord provided for a better age, by the Gospel, and the hallowed precepts of the Sermon on the Mount. It was a fresh opening of the book of Divine Truth, fraught with new hopes and blessings for the world.

The two previous chapters have unfolded, in awful types, the baleful influence of false principles and corrupt practices to such an extent, that the world would be darkened as if covered with smoke; and life would be embittered, so that they would fain desire the death that would not come.

Alas, for the perversions which produce these strange extremes of misery! If men would but be loving, simple, sincere, thoughtful, and upright, what a beautiful world this would be. The elements of happiness are all about us. Heaven lies around us in our infancy. A world around us, and a world within, invite us to be happy.

What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God? The Lord Himself is with us, and in a thousand ways whispers His loving kindness to every man, The sun, in its effulgent splendor, announces to the world its Makers goodness. The birds carol of it; the winds waft it. The countless bounties of the fertile earth announce that the Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works.

How gently the Savior said this to His disciples, when they asked Him to show them the Father, and it would suffice them. HAVE I BEEN SO LONG WITH YOU, and yet thou hast not known Me, Philip? He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father.

Yes, our Heavenly Father has been with us, however little we may have known it. One thing only is needful to enable us richly to enjoy His mercies, the one so emphatically impressed on Nicodemus: YE MUST BE BORN AGAIN.

He is with us in our mothers smile, and in the loving song that hushes us to gentle sleep. He is with us in our goodly growth, our noble faculties, our inestimable gifts of mind and body. He is with us even in the pains and diseases that warn us from wrong, and lead to repentance and a better course.

Either His hand preserves from pain,

Or if we feel, it heals again;

From Satans malice shields our breast,

Or overrules it for the best.

O yes, adorable Lord Jesus, Thou art ever with us, either as the Son or as the Father; as Prophet, Priest, or King, Thou art leading or training us; but we too often turn aside from our one essential duty, following Thee in love and life, and prefer DARKNESS to light, because our deeds are evil.

It is this darkness and misery in the Church that are meant in the awful descriptions of the previous chapter - indeed in the two chapters preceding.

When nations are to perish in their sins,

Tis in the Church the leprosy begins.

Anarchy in the Church, in consequence of false views prevalent - views substituting for holy love, and a heavenly life, some modes of faith irrespectible of life, upon which it was supposed salvation depended.

Faith in God, faith in doing His will, faith in His Word and promises, faith in His kingdom of purity and peace, and in the judgment to come: this is undoubtedly an indispensable qualification; for a person can only carry out that in which he really believes.

But faith in faith only being sufficient for salvation, and hair-splitting about the especial dogmas which are the saving securities of everlasting bliss: this is the temper which prevents the change of character that is really indispensable, and which proceeds from repentance and regeneration. Hence, decked in religious profession, the old man remains, with all his lusts, and the new man of righteousness and true holiness is not put on. There is no renewal in the spirit of the mind (Ephesians 4:22-24). Hence self remains enthroned in the heart, engendering pride, jealousy, contempt for others, denial of their rights, animosity, contention, war, cruelty, persecution.

Under the mask of religion, every godless passion lurks and spreads, and hate and violence go forth in the name of the Lord.

In the last century, such prostitution of the sacred principles of religion were terribly rife, and the disasters that were everywhere experienced in Christendom are depicted by the miseries St. John saw represented in the spirit-world. The language is awful and mysterious. Yet it is not so mysterious, but its meaning will become plain if opened by a reference to other portions of Divine teaching.

It is not political devastation, but spiritual destruction in the Church, that is described, though that

issues also eventually in outward upturning and wretchedness. The scenes were spiritual, and the Apostle Paul says: Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth, comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:13).

The darkness from the bottomless pit was darkness in the Church, flowing in from below, shutting out the sun of Divine love, and the atmosphere - the air of Heaven.

The locusts represent false principles, inducing opposition to daily growth in good thoughts of every kind, injuring the grass, green things and trees - all spiritual cultivation, except in those heaven-protected ones, who are sealed to God in their highest affections.

The astounding boldness by which the most absolute characteristics of religion were struck and set aside, is represented by the stroke of the scorpion, as when he striketh a man.

The persuasion that men had nothing really to do in religion, that: they were as so many sticks, and stones, and pillars of salt, though they seemed to have freewill, conscience, and rationality, they were only things that moved as they were pulled, and thus should die as men, would induce in numbers the most insane phantasies. But they would strive in vain thus to unman themselves. Hours of common-sense would come, and Divine mercy would to some extent save them from themselves, and keep their truly human faculties of conscience, liberty, and reason alive.

Reasonings innumerable would come like vast armies of pigmy warriors, making the wrong appear the better reason, exciting the fire of hatred, the obscuration of falsehood, and nauseous lusts, like brimstone; of the pit. They would persuade those who were not inwardly good, and betray them to spiritual ruin. Their power is in their mouths and their tails - their results are serpent-like passions, hateful feelings, and selfishness in all its forms.

With others who do not profess religion, the result is disinclination to commence it, and self-idolization of every kind: a dull, blank deadness, carelessness of life, carelessness of death; neither repentance, hope, nor change - continuing in their sins and uncleanness.

Such is the extremity of misery which comes when the Church, which ought to be the fountain of cure, has become corrupt. Happily a watchful Providence supplies the means of restoration. The Divine Wisdom discloses a remedy. The great angel was an emblem of Divine Wisdom. When calamities come upon earth, especially when a Church declines, and the traditions of men make the commandments of God of none effect, the Living Word comes forward to judgment, and supplies the kernel of a new age. The Word of God, says the Apostle, is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart; neither is naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do (Hebrews 4:12, 13).

How sublime is the representation of Divine: Wisdom by the magnificent form of this angel. It is called an angel, because angel means one sent, and the Divine Wisdom is sent forth or manifested to carry out the purposes of Divine Love. It is indeed Love, in the form of Wisdom. Hence the face of this grand emblem was as it were the sun. He was clothed with a cloud, as wisdom is, and had a rainbow upon his head, to represent the inner loveliness of Divine Wisdom, while his feet, as pillars of fire, represent the

Divine powers flowing into the world, and acting upon the hearts and minds of the members of the Church. They are pillars of fire, because they are glowing with love.

The sea surrounds the land, and in spiritual language it represents those who are external in the Church, the land those who are internal. When the Church is at its end, the best people are outside, and the less truly good are within. Hence the right foot rests on the sea, the power of love is felt more by those who are simply good; while the power of truth applies itself to the rulers and those within the Church - the left foot on the land.

The ardency of the Divine Love for man's salvation is expressed by the loud voice, as when a lion roareth.

The seven thunders uttering their voices, and expressing things that were not to be written, intimate the abundance of Divine truths, for which the members of the Church in that state were not prepared. Write them not. The Lord said to the Jews, I have many things to say unto you, but you cannot hear them now.

So here there were doubtless an abundance of truths uttered, but write them not. The angels proclamation that there should be time no longer, and the mystery of God should be finished, mean that the Church had arrived at its end, its real life as a Church had ceased. It had a name that it lived, but was dead. Its time as a living Church was completed.

Churches wax and wane: they are worlds that come to an end, but God's universe endureth for ever. It was the end of the Jewish age, or Church, when they crucified the Lord. He said from His Cross, It is finished. Christ NOW ONCE in the END of THE WORLD, hath appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself (Hebrews 9:26). There had been the end of the Adamic world at the flood; the end of the Noahic world with Terah; but God's world, the universe of suns, moons and stars, goes on. He hath established them for ever and ever. He hath made a decree which shall not pass (Psa. cxlviii. 5). One generation passeth away and another generation cometh: but the earth abideth for ever (Ecc. 1:4).

The angel who, with uplifted hand, swore by Him who liveth for ever and ever that time should be no longer, was making the awful but needful announcement that the dark and sad dispensation of gloom and misery which is described in the previous two chapters should come to an end, and is pronounced no longer to be the Church of God.

Its dark and during falsities, inducing hardness of heart, animosities, and persecutions in the name of the God of Love, striking all that is noble in the human soul, and paralyzing it for good, like a scorpion striking a man, should be denounced as the product of the smoke of the pit, and Divine Wisdom would provide the germ, the soul and center of a new Church of God, the herald of a better time.

There was a Little Book in the hand of the angel. In treating of the Great Book, mentioned in chapter v., we saw that it was an emblem of the Word of God, the grand means of human elevation and progress. Heaven and earth shall pass away (systems of Church and State rise and fall) but My Word shall not pass away (Matthew 24:35). The grass withereth, the flower fadeth, but the Word of the Lord endureth for ever (Isaiah 50:8).

Fools, because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth

all manner of meat, and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and He saveth them out of their distresses. He sent His WORD and healed them, and delivered them from their destruction (Psa. cvli. 17-20).

Thus we see the Word of God is the only means of spiritual restoration for a Church or for an individual.

But here, the angel has a Little Book, the essence, spirit, or kernel, of the Great Book. It is the doctrine of the Lord Jesus as the Only God, the Divine Man, who is love embodied, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, which should form the beginning of a new and glorious dispensation. This had been the soul of the Bible from the first. Every prophet had announced that Jehovah would come and be a Redeemer and Savior. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for He hath visited and redeemed His people. As He spake by the mouth of His holy prophets, which have been since the world began (Luke 1:68-70).

The Old Testament perpetually taught that Jehovah would come as Jesus, the Savior the New Testament that the Savior had come, and now was the refuge, the strength, and the consolation of all who sought His merciful help Jesus, the All in all.

This was the deep ground in all the ancient religions, of their gods becoming men. They had learned, before they separated into discordant sections, that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpents head. It was embodied in the incarnation of Chrishna in India, and in the labors of Hercules, the son of Jupiter, in the West.

Christ (says the Apostle), is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth (Romans 10:4).

Adam was His emblem as the author of a new and regenerated humanity, Moses as the Lawgiver, Aaron as the Priest, Joshua as the Savior, David as the Conquering Redeemer, Solomon as the Prince of Peace.

This was the grand mystery of ages, the HIDDEN WISDOM, as the Apostle calls it, and which is the true meaning of mystery, for a mystery. is not a contradiction, but deeper wisdom than usual, and fuller of light when explained.

Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God. We speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the HIDDEN WISDOM, which God ordained before the world; which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory (1 Corinthians 2:7, 8). Great is the mystery of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, received up into glory (Tim. Iii. 16).

That Jesus, Jesus only, is the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, Who is, Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty, this is the Little Book, this is the grand principle of a new age, the precursor of the blessed time when the Word of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea; in which none shall hurt nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9). A voice from heaven said to John: Go and take the Little Book which is open in the hand of the angel; that is, receive the doctrine which is now offered by Divine Wisdom. It is important that this offer was made to John. The disciples were types of character, as well as individuals. Peter was the man of faith,



John the man of charity. Peter was always believing and arguing, John was always loving. When the two went to seek the risen Savior, John did outrun Peter. And here it is to John this grand new principle is committed. It is the same when the New Jerusalem was represented as coming down from God out of heaven. It is written I, John, saw the holy city. John said, We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren (John 3:14). It is to the Johns of the world, grand new disclosures of heavenly wisdom come.

John manifested his desire by saying, Give me the Little Book. God operates, man co-operates. The book was given to John, and he was told that it would be sweet in his mouth, but when it entered more deeply, bitterness would be felt.

The sweetness on receiving this doctrine is felt by every recipient; the bitterness which comes after is salutary, though painful.

The soul finds it sweet to have an Omnipotent Savior, a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. It is sweet to have a doctrine that takes in the whole Word, that solves every difficulty which has troubled the spirit when seeking its Savior. Here is a God the mind can conceive, and the heart can love and embrace.

The charm, the peace, the rapture of a soul filled with a Saviors love, has often been expressed in tender and exultant strains.

The words of the American poet Wordsworth are glowing with this sentiment:--

O for a seraphs golden lyre,

With chords of light, and tones of fire,

To sing Jehovah's love:

To tell redemptions wondrous plan,

How God descended down to man,

That man might rise above.

The Apostle Peter is recorded to have been led to execution crying. None but Christ, none but Christ. The good old bishop of Smyrna, Polycarp, when about to be burned alive, and required to revile Christ, replied: Eighty and six years have I served Him, and He never did me wrong; and how can I now blaspheme my King, Who has saved me? Hugh Miller, the great geologist, writes: The great central doctrine, the true humanity and true Divinity of the adorable Savior is a truth equally receivable by at once the humblest and the loftiest intellects. Poor dying children, possessed of but a few simple ideas, and men of the most robust intellects, such as the Chalmers, Forsters, and Halls of the Christian Church, find themselves equally able to rest their salvation the man Christ, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Sir James Macintosh, the statesman and historian, in dying, sank to rest uttering in faint sounds Jesus, love! Jesus, love - the same thing.

So sweet is this doctrine in the mouth. It brings home the striking expressions of Jeremiah: When I

found Thy words I did eat them, and they were the joy and rejoicing of my heart (Jeremiah 15:16). So sweet is the Little Book in the mouth.

But when it penetrates more deeply, it finds our own perversities and evils.

When men believed there were more Divine persons than Jesus, they laid the results of their ignorance and follies upon God, out of Christ, the supreme First Person. When the air was foul with every abomination, and pestilence came, it was the heavy hand of God that was smiting them.

When houses, damp and dark, were not fit to live in, and low fever was never away, it was Gods wrath that was afflicting the people. When water not fit for use was breeding typhus, or drunkenness and gluttony induced apoplexy, juries declared the victim fell by the visitation of God.

Every form of disease and wretchedness, the result of human error or human guilt, was quietly or publicly considered as the result of Divine decree, and borne with terror, as the infliction of unimpeachable Omnipotence.

When Jesus is acknowledged as the Only God, such miseries cannot be charged upon Him. He is the All Merciful and the Ever Merciful. Hence other causes for unhappiness must be sought out, and can only be found in our lusts and shortcomings. From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence even of your lusts? The dear Lord our Savior injures no one. Like His sun, He shines on the evil and on the good. His graces are offered, like His rain, to the just and the unjust.

Whence, then, come sorrows, heart-burnings, misery, private and public, but from prejudice, malice, ignorance, evil tempers, neglect, impatience, and wrong in us?

Self-exploration discovers defects, and induces pain, anguish, bitterness, and sorrow, although it may be a salutary sorrow, leading to repentance. This is the bitterness in the belly, to be followed, in the faithful servants of the Savior, by penitence, change, and sweetness once more.

The alternation of sweetness and bitterness in the career of a Christian is often represented in the Divine Word.

When the Israelites had passed the Red Sea, and were delivered from the bondage of Egypt, how sweet were their triumphal rejoicings, how exultant their songs! But in three days they came to the waters of Marah, and they were so bitter that the people could not drink - emblem of the delivered Christian, whose experience brings him to duties that seem hard, difficult, and painful, until he prays to the Lord, Who infuses the love of duty into him, represented by the wood thrown into the water, when the bitter becomes sweet again.

Remember, also, the experience of Samson. He was assailed on his way to Timnath by a lion in his path. He was fearless and strong, and tore the raging beast as if it were a kid. He pursued his journey after the conflict, and on coming back and turning aside to see the carcass of the lion, he found that bees had already made enough of honey to supply him with sweet food, and to give his father and his mother some. So is it ever in subdued evil habits, or conquered lusts - useful thoughts, like busy bees, soon fill the mind with healthful satisfactions, and blessings, like sweet honey, both for ourselves and others. In the 81st Psalm it is written: O that My people had hearkened unto Me, and Israel had walked

in My ways! I should soon have subdued their enemies, and turned my hand against their adversaries... He should have fed them also with the finest of the wheat: and with honey out of the rock would I have satisfied thee.

These alternations of sweet and bitter, followed again by pain and triumph, continue during our whole regenerating career. The time, however, comes at last when we can say, with the Apostle: I have fought the good fight; I have finished my course. Henceforth, there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness (2 Timothy 4:7).

My beloved friends, this grand angel is before us now. The book is in his hand. Shall we not accept it? It is intended for each of us.

Born to become angels, we have the charter of our happiness presented in this Little Book. Christ in you is the hope of glory. The Lord must enter into us, and there enlarge His beneficent authority as our Friend, Teacher, Redeemer, Savior, King, God over all.

He must, in us, open the eyes of the blind, make the lame to walk, restore the maimed, heal the lepers, and raise the dead.

O what unspeakable rapture it is, when we open our hearts, and this life of the Savior is commenced in the soul!

Jesus, the very thought of Thee, with sweetness fills the breast, But sweeter far Thy face to see, and in Thy presence rest; Nor voice can sing, nor heart can frame, nor can the memory find, A sweeter sound than Thy blest name, O Savior of mankind.

The soul commencing its regenerating work is like the slave claiming his freedom, and having his claim allowed - the son taking up his heritage, and entering upon its enjoyment.

The Little Book of saving truth, when accepted and incorporated into our hearts and lives, overthrows self, and, with it, all baneful habits.

The sources of wrong and wretchedness in the world are unjust principles, evil tempers, and the unwillingness to accept truth which crosses our humors. But when Jesus enters as the Light of our world, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, old things pass away, and all things become new.

The world is glorified with a new radiance; the seeds of paradise are sown; we live, and work, not only for earth, but for heaven. The good time coming for us has already begun. An inner beauty and order commence in the soul, and our Fathers name is seen on our foreheads. We become strong for overcoming our spiritual foes, and conquer again and again, until we become more than conquerors, and taste the inner peace that passes all understanding.

Take and eat the Little Book. It is for you fraught with the greatest destinies. A new heaven and a new earth will grow out of its hallowed lessons. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Oh, why will men hug the demons of pride, envy, profligacy, and folly, which rob them of every virtue,

when they are every one invited to take the sacred charter of heavenly freedom, purity, peace, and bliss, for time and eternity, by taking the sacred truth which will realize the Divine promise: Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. He shall call upon Me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble. I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him, and grant him My salvation.

Take the Little Book, and eat it up: and it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

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# **No. 7. March 21, 1878. THE TWO WITNESSES THAT LAY DEAD IN THE STREET, AND AFTERWARDS LIVE AGAIN.**

And after three days and a half the Spirit of Life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them (Revelation 11:11, 12).

THERE are two essential principles which are witnesses to their possessor, and to all the world, that he is a genuine Christian these are fervent LOVE TO GOD and CHARITY To MAN. He in whose heart and life these are predominant is a true servant of God. He who has them not is none of His.

These two supreme virtues form the essence of all religion, and therefore we find them referred to by the prophet Zechariah in similar terms to those used in this chapter by the Apostle John. The prophet beheld in vision two olive trees, on the right and on the left side of a golden candlestick, and it is said they are the two anointed ones that stand before the Lord of the whole earth (Zechariah 4:11-14).

One of the Pharisees, who was a lawyer, asked the Redeemer, in the days of His flesh, Which is the great commandment of the law? Jesus said unto Him, 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 neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets (Matthew 23:37-40).

The whole Bible is indeed these two grand principles drawn out like gold into all the varying appliances of human need. At the bottom of history, parable, precept, prophecy, these two are the bases of the entire Word of God.

They are called olive trees, no doubt, from their soothing influences in the heart, being represented by the varied uses of olive oil - softening, healing, and light-supplying.

The olive, as a representative of love, and of those in whom love is predominant, is an ancient symbol in the Word of God. The trees, when they went out to choose a king, it is said, addressed the olive first, and said, Reign thou over us. But the olive tree said unto them, Should I leave my fatness, wherewith by me they honor God and man, and go to be promoted over the trees? (Judges 9:8, 9).

Here, evidently, the olive stands for celestial affections, which are estimable to God and man.

David says: I am like tine green olive tree in the house of God: I trust in the mercy of God for ever and ever (Psalms 3:8). Thus describing the heavenly-minded man, upright and loving in himself, and trusting implicitly in his Heavenly Fathers loving kindness.

It was because of this symbolic meaning of the olive that the doors, posts, and cherubim of the oracle of the temple were constructed of olive wood, and the lamps derived their light from olive oil. The substance of true religion is derived from love, and all the light that shines in the good mans soul is evidence, as the Apostle Paul says, that charity rejoiceth in the truth. When the dove, after the Deluge, came back with an olive leaf in its mouth, it was a sign of the commencement of better things.

The two olive trees and the two candlesticks are said in this chapter (v. 4) to stand before the God of the earth, to intimate that the Lord looks at the heart, and judges men not by the appearance outside, but by the presence of heavenly virtues inside; not by specious words or outward fair-seeming do we stand well before the Divine Judge, but He sees the two olive trees when they are there.

The Lord seeth not as man seeth, for man looketh upon the outward appearance (the eyes), but the Lord looketh upon the heart (1 Samuel 16:7).

The two olive trees are accompanied by two candlesticks, to intimate that true heavenly love favors light, receives light, and diffuses it. The two olive trees represent the holy affections of love to God and love to man in the good mans heart, diffusing the oil of joy, and the oil of consolation, the sweet healer of human sorrow, and disposing the intellect to acquire and dispense truth around, that truth may lead to virtue, to happiness, and to heaven.

The chief feature, however, in this chapter, by which the two sacred principles meant by the olive trees are designated, is that they are witnesses, and the Lords two witnesses. My two witnesses, He calls them (v. 3); and this character or witnessing is a very significative and important one. There are times when earnest souls feel cold and doubting as to the genuine character of their spiritual state. The soul is cast down by inward trouble, and tossing doubts come.

If God would speak to me,

And say He was my friend,

How happy I should be--

Oh, how would I attend.

Now love to God and love to our neighbor are Gods witness in the human breast that we are right with Him. These are gifts from our Heavenly Father, for they are godlike. Now if any man have not the spirit of Christ, says the Apostle Paul, he is none of His (Romans 8:9).

It will not be indifferent to a thoughtful man whether or not he is indeed living for heaven. The carnal, careless man may pass on heedlessly, without much troubling himself about his eternal future, because, as to his highest interests, he is asleep. But even he will sometimes be rudely awakened by sickness or sorrow, by a friends sudden death, or a wreck of worldly fortune, to ask himself, How do things really stand with me? Am I ready for the dread realities of an eternal scene?

When dancing round in pleasures ring,

Religion may be blinded;

Or, if it gives a random sting,

It may be little minded.

But, oh! when we are tempest-driven,

And conscience but a canker,

A correspondence fixed with heaven,

Is een a noble anchor.

We love God first, because we are convinced that God loved us.

The evidences of the Lords love to us are so palpable, so multiplied, both in ourselves and in the universe around us, that they are absolutely more than can be numbered.

The heavens declare the glory of God. The earth is full of His riches. The body, with all its gifts and beauties, the fit temple of an Immortal Mind. The senses, that we may enjoy the universe around, and make its grandeurs our everlasting inheritance - the glorious sun, the silvery moon, the ever-changing, ever-beautiful panorama of the magnificent world. Our bodies, in every part human, made to subserve the mental and affectional dualities of a being formed to be wise and good - in the image and likeness of the Divine Maker.

Our skin is formed that we should not be confined to a narrow range, but may seek intelligence everywhere, all over the world. Our fingers are constructed that we can experiment, manipulate, and diffuse knowledge by the pen, as well as perfect and enjoy our handiwork. Our feet even are arched, so that we can stand and enjoy the firmament above, and the innumerable benefits and lovely things around us, and say, My Father made them all.

We have the daily gifts of food, of air, of light and warmth, of being and well-being. But who can describe our mental gifts? What language can portray the wonders of language? Who can describe the powers and possessions of memory, of reason, of imagination, of the realms of art, of literature, of poetry, of mind and feeling?

And all these glorious things are gifts - are gratuitous.

Our only duty is to receive and to enjoy; and ever-increasingly to receive, and ever-increasingly to enjoy.

Our Maker is our Redeemer too; our Savior from sin; the One Who loves us with more than a brothers love, a fathers, or a mothers. How can we do otherwise than love Him? In one word, He is Jesus.

Jesus, in Whom is the Father - Jesus, Who lived on earth for man, died and rose again for man - Who comes softly to the heart, and knocks at the door - He excites more or less of love in every one. Love, sentimental or solid, intermittent and spasmodic, or persistent and dutiful, is excited in every one. It is the same God which worketh all in all; but the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal (1 Corinthians 12:6, 7).

Whether it will endure and increase, and re-mould the whole man, depends upon whether or not it takes the practical form of obedience to the truth - obedience to the commandments of God.

If thou wilt enter into life (that is, into love), said the Savior, keep the commandments (Matthew 19:17). This is the love of God (said St. John), that we keep His commandments and His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3).

Of course, we must have faith in the Lord, and have faith in His commandments, for without faith it is impossible to please God; but it is a faith whose ground is love, and the results are good works, which alone can be agreeable to our Heavenly Father and Savior.

Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say? is still the expostulation of our best Friend.

How clear are the declarations of the Apostle John on this subject. Hereby we know that we do know Him, if we keep His commandments (chap. 2:3). He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in him verily is the love of God perfected: hereby know we that we are in Him (1 John 2:4, 5).

Plainly, then, the love of God, showing itself in doing the Divine will, and obeying His commandments, is the witness that we are in Him, have been new-born of Him, and are His sons and daughters.

At first, our obedience is very imperfect, and surrounded by many fears and imperfections but as we proceed and persevere, bur love becomes stronger; the love of God, from God, becomes perfected in us, and perfect love casts out fear (1 John 4:18).

This love of God, therefore, is the first witness; and the more we love the more we know that God loves us, and the more we are happy in His love.

Love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God (v. 7). God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him (v. 16).

While our attainments in the heavenly life are feeble and imperfect, our capacity for loving God will be weak and intermittent;

but with steady obedience it will increase and expand, until it will form in us an inner heaven - a constant spirit of love, wisdom, joy and peace. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God (Romans 8:16).

But there is a second witness. This commandment have we from Him, That he who loveth God loveth his brother also (1 John 4:21). We know that we have passed from death to life, because we love the brethren (1 John 3:14).

The power of loving is the very jewel of the Christian life. It is not liking, for that depends on susceptibility, taste, subserviency, pleasure, or selfishness. The eagle likes the lamb which it devours. But love is the glowing desire to do good to others, to aid them, and make them happy.

Sympathy is a sweet and hallowed thing. Sympathy softens human life, and imparts and receives innumerable satisfactions. Sympathy heightens joy, and lessens suffering. We yearn for sympathy, and



enjoy it as a present comfort. But love is a principle far higher; it is the spirit of promoting another's good, unalloyed by any selfish aim. Love is the desire to elevate and bless others. It rejoices in another's joy; it mourns with another's sorrow. It is self-forgetful. It does good, and lends its powers and efforts to advance the general good, hoping for nothing in return.

Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men, was the utterance of the angels of heaven; and in the souls of those men who are becoming angels the two witnesses will ever be suggesting the same sentiments, and they bear witness that the hearts in which they dwell are prepared for heaven. Already there is in them a little heaven.

At the commencement of this chapter, John says an angel addressed him, and said, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein. But the court, which is without the temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given unto the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

The temple, the altar, and the worshippers, stand for the Church in heaven, and in the interiors of heavenly-minded men.

They might be measured, for they remained an example of purity, order, and peace. The court means the Church on earth, the external Church, according to frequent scriptural usage. A day in Thy courts is better than a thousand. Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God (Psalms xcii. 13).

The court being given to the Gentiles, measure it not means that the Church upon earth would be desecrated by worldliness. The world would take possession of the Church, and masquerade as a Church. Measure it not. It is not worth while. As a Church it is worthless.

This happened in the days of Constantine, when wealth was poured out for the Church, and especially for the clergy, and the spirit of self-seeking and ostentation became as rife as it was the empire.

This era has often been regarded as a glorious one for the Church, and Constantine as its nursing father. Worldly churchmen have glorified the time, because earthly splendor and pomp were offered and received by its dignitaries; but true judgment pronounces a very different conclusion.

The semi-pagan Constantines cruel victory over the entire pagan Maxentius has been trumpeted forth by worldly churchmen as the triumph of Christianity.

Spiritual progress is not advanced by horrible warfares and political intrigues, or the earthly triumph of this party or that. Hear what Wesley truly states as the result of Constantines adhesion, and you will not be astonished that his whole life was stained by murders and other serious crimes, and he deferred baptism until the hour of death, under the vain expectation that the outward ceremony would make him entirely pure; at a time when he could not again lose the spotlessness he imagined to be attained.

The venerable founder of Methodism, in his sermon on the Mystery of Iniquity, says, The whole essence of religion was struck in the fourth century by Constantine the Great, when he called himself a Christian, and poured a flood of riches, honor and power upon the Christians, more especially upon the clergy. Then was fulfilled in the Christian Church what Sallust says of the people of Rome: Sublata

imperii amula, non sensim, sed praecipiti cursu, a virtutibus descitum, ad vitia transcursum. Just so. When the fear of persecution was removed, and wealth and honor attended the Christian profession, the Christians did not gradually sink, but rushed headlong into all manner of vices.

Then the mystery of iniquity was no more hid, but stalked abroad in the face of the sun. Then not the golden, but the iron, age of the Church commenced. Then one might truly say--

At once in that unhappy age broke in

All wickedness, and every deadly sin;

Truth, modesty, and love fled far away,

And force and thirst of gold claimed universal sway.

And this is the event which most Christian expositors mention with such triumph; yea, which some of them suppose to be typified in the Revelation by the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven. Rather say it was the coming of Satan and all his legions from the bottomless pit, seeing from that very time he hath set up his throne over the face of the whole earth, and reigned over the Christian as well as the pagan world, without hardly any control.

There can be no doubt by a thoughtful, well-informed mind, that Wesleys statement is the exact truth.

The world took bodily possession of the Church, and proceeded to perform Church in its way.

First, the Bishop of Rome began striving to make out he was the greatest of bishops, and soon that he was greater than the Emperor of the Roman world.

He continued the conflict amidst quarrels, wars, and animosities, during centuries, swelling up until he claimed to be far above all kings and rulers, and required these to kiss his feet.

The Cardinals were created to perform the part of princes in the Church, spiritual barons to correspond with the temporal barons, and the clergy to be above all secular law. Astounding titles were invented, sinful men styled Holinesses, Eminences, Right Reverend Fathers, while equally astounding millinery was called into vogue, that these followers of the pure, meek, and lowly Jesus might parade themselves in tawdry finery.

In a short time, curious calculations were made as to how much a pope was greater than an emperor, founded upon the assumption that the pope was like the sun, and the emperor like the moon.

One writer, La Close, maintained, after exact calculation, that the papal throne was forty-seven times greater than the empire. A canonist, Laurentius, discovered that the more correct reckoning was that the Pope was one thousand seven hundred and forty-four times greater than kings;

while a third, Bodin, completed the rectification, and reduced it to a caricature, by shewing that, if we believe Ptolemy and the Arabs, the Pope is six thousand six hundred and forty-five and seven-eighth times greater than kings, neither more nor less. (\*)

(\*) F. Laurent, L'Empire et la Papauté.

But what has all this to do with the religion of the New Testament, with the Spirit of the Divine Savior? Not a word of all this pretense and parade is to be found in the teachings of the Lord Jesus or His Apostles. The very reverse is taught.

Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister, and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant, even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister (Matthew 20:25-28). Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Whoso shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter therein.

How, then, had this strange alteration come about? Simply as declared in this chapter; for the Gentiles (worldly, unregenerate men) having taken possession of the externals of the Church, the COURT, trampled the internal Church, THE HOLY CITY, under foot forty and two months.

The periods named are all different forms of three and a half.

Forty and two months (v. 2) are three years and a half. The one thousand two hundred and three-score days (v. 3) are also three years and a half, and the witnesses are said to come to life again after three days and a half (v. 11). Three and a half, in the spiritual idea, signifies one dispensation, or Church completed-beginning, middle, and end; and a half means the commencement of a new one. When the Church was, as we have seen, corrupted in the time of Constantine, and immersed in Gentile degradation, though good men here and there remained in it, and struggled against its vices and impieties, yet it became less and less a Church, and more and more a SUPERSTITION, to the end, in the last century. The Bernards, the Savonarolas, the Fenelons, the Wickliffes, and the Waldenses, stood against it with all their feeble power, but in vain - the canker spread.

The two witnesses prophesied in faithful souls from time to time, but prophesied in sackcloth - that is, in mourning and lamentation.

Holy affections strove yet to sustain themselves; but, as the increase of iniquity, the more they strove to arrest it the more they excited rage and contempt.

All who strove to inflict death, spiritual death, upon them, inflicted death upon themselves.

They did not intend to kill anyone, but to do them good. The effect, however, of the most perfect love upon enraged and opposing minds is to excite their opposition, even to agony and hate. A comparatively young man whom I once knew, when dying, having lived in hatred of what is good, on his innocent baby being brought to look upon and embrace him, he shrieked, Take the little fiend away!

The Savior Himself, though meekness and goodness embodied, excited the Pharisees and the misled multitude to the most violent passions, which found vent in hateful cries; Crucify Him! crucify Him!

The witnesses have power to shut heaven against all who reject and condemn them - in fact, they are

heaven.

For love within itself includes

The source of all beatitudes,

And they who act from love,

Whateer they do, find pleasure still;

Performing thus their Fathers will,

His nameless peace they prove.

But no rain, no heavenly influence, no living water, can descend upon those who reject and hate the two great principles of love to God and love to man. When opposing them, their water will be turned into blood, their truth into falsity; perversion and corruption, and self-inflicted misery, will plague and harass them as long as they oppose.

At the utter end of the Church, when they have finished their testimony, a fearful outbreak of the deadliest evil, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit, shall destroy the two witnesses, so far as they are concerned. They shall reject heavenly affections as at all necessary to salvation, exult over having cast out love to God and charity to their neighbor as at all needful to real Christianity; for if a man will confess himself to belong to their faith, or some tenet they deem essential, even at the hour of death, it will be quite enough. Sola fides. Believe as the Church tells you. FAITH ALONE.

No repentance necessary, no working out your salvation with fear and trembling; no doing unto others as you would they should do unto you, upon which hangs all the law and the prophets; no craving for more love, and wrestling against your sins in the power of your Savior.

Believe, and all your sins forgiven;

Only believe, and yours is heaven.

Nothing, either great or small,

Nothing, sinner - no;

Jesus did it, did it all,

Long, long ago.

Till to Jesus work yon cling,

By a simple faith,

Doing is a deadly thing;

Doing ends in death.

Cast your deadly doing down,

Down at Jesus feet;

Stand in Him, in Him alone,

Gloriously complete.

Thus the two great essentials of religion have been rejected, slain, lying in the street, as of no concern on the way to heaven, as judgment, truth, and equity were in Isaiah's time. Judgment is turned away backward, and justice stands afar off, for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter (Isaiah 59:14).

The two witnesses were not even to have graves, as things that were unworthy of resurrection. The ancient idea was that when the body was buried the soul was rising; hence the very old practice of the tolling of a bell at the funeral, implying

Mortals say a man is dead,

Angels, a child is born.

But these were not to have graves, nor resurrection. In due time, however, midnight passes, and a new morning begins. The two witnesses were dead to men, but not to God. No real Church can exist without them. The God of Heaven will not leave the world, or no flesh could be saved. The world would become a den of wild beasts, and universal savagery would end in universal destruction. The remnant of good people here and there prevent that, and in these few the Spirit of the Divine Savior flows again, and gives life to the two witnesses, and animates good souls to proclaim again love to God and love to the neighbor to be the supreme, the essential principle of all religion, the very essence of heaven.

When this truth is announced again by an earnest few, it is undeniable, indisputable - it stands on its feet.

The Divine cloud of witnesses, the whole letter of the Bible, surrounds them and proclaims, On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

What is religion?--tis to love

Our God with all the heart;

In charity with all men prove,

And good to all impart.

In the Old Testament, equally with the New, love is taught as the very ground-work and essence of all salvation.

Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name. With long life will I satisfy him, and grant him My salvation (Psalms xci. 14-16).

The Lord preserveth them that love Him (Psalms cxlv. 20). Her sins, which are many, are forgiven, for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little (Luke 7:47).

Love believes the promises and the commandments, and hence arises FAITH. With the heart a man believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth makes confession unto salvation.

Love and faith, like fire and water, give birth to force, and hence produce good works, heavenly deeds, and heavenly words: FAITH WORKING BY LOVE (Galatians 5:6).

Now the end of the commandment is charity (or love) out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned (1 Timothy 1:5).

Above all things, then, put on charity (or love), which is the bond of perfectness (Colossians 3:14).

Then let us all in love abound,

And charity pursue;

So shall we soon in heaven be crowned,

And love as angels do.

While those who reject the two witnesses, and persist in phantasies of their own, fall into troubles, and tremors, mental earthquakes, and difficulties, the happy followers of the two witnesses will grow more into the religion of love and life. Love will fill the Church, the state, the business and avocations of the world. Employers will pray from love. Workmen will labor from love. Over them, as on the glad morn before in Bethlehem, the angels song will be heard. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever (Revelation 11:15).

## No. 8. March 28, 1878. THE WOMAN CLOTHED WITH THE SUN.

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars (Revelation 12:1).

IN considering the remarkable scenes that were connected with the opening of the book, as mentioned in the sixth chapter of this sacred volume of Revelations, we learned that under the striking imagery of the succession of the horses was represented the various changes which came over the Church as centuries passed on. The horse corresponds to the intellectual faculty, by means of which we advance on the road of truth, just as the traveler, by his horse, advances upon one of the roads of the earth. Consequently the subject that is there given, the state of one who rode upon a white horse, and advanced conquering and to conquer, depicted the intellectual condition of Christianity when bright with the new truth, passing out of the dark shades of a decayed Judaism and a decayed Gentile condition.

Triumph after triumph was associated with the new publication of Divine truth, by which men learnt that the first of all the commandments was: Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy with all thy soul, and with all thy mind; and the second was: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself (Matthew 26:37-39).

Then came horse after horse, indicating change and decay, until we got to the death and misery represented by the pale horse.

Now the effect of these changes in the religion of mankind, especially in the religion of Christianity, was all that was produced during the dark centuries of the middle ages, when, although religion was still professed, and a vast amount of effort, under the name of religion, was made, yet there was a continued series of sins and sorrows, of calamities and misfortunes, of wars, pestilences, and famines, and all that devastates the human race. A little more than one hundred years ago a great change and improvement set in, which is still advancing, and which will go on advancing until wisdom and goodness, uprightness and happiness, and. universal instruction in all that is really right and good, attended by ever-increasing comfort, will gradually spread over the earth, as is beautifully said in the language of the Prophet Isaiah (xi. 3): They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain; for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea.

Now in these brief observations you will see that the leading idea is, that it is religion which forms the basis of society. Nations are what their religions are. It has always been so, and never can be otherwise. Society is formed by a great variety of influences - commerce, trade, industry of a thousand kinds, legislation, education - all these things go to make society; but at the bottom of them all is religion. Religion always has been the foundation of society, and it always will be. Thoughts of religion are founded upon doctrines; and according to the nature of that religion, so will be the character of everything else which is built upon it. It is precisely as when we throw a stone into a pond there will first be the central circle, and then the next, and the next, and the motion will be taken right to the circumference.

This is a conception of immense importance, both generally and individually. A man is a many-coated being; he has manifold powers, many circles of existence. It is with his soul as it is with his body.

In the body you have several classes of powers and forms distinct, although connected. There is the framework of the body, the skeleton a firm and goodly structure from head to foot. There is then the muscular system, which has to clothe this skeleton framework, which compasses every limb, and firmly bolts and straps the whole, keeping them ready for life and motion.

The circulatory system comes next, and it permeates and penetrates into every part of the muscular system, and sustains and renews it. Then, within all, is the nervous system, quite distinct, yet penetrating, quickening, energizing the whole.

If a man is to be in health, every one of these must be doing its work properly; but most of all, the brain and nervous system. These are the centers of feeling and perception. As these are healthy or unhealthy, perfect or imperfect, so is their action beneficial or otherwise in the whole system, from top to toe.

Now religion is to our spiritual being precisely what the brain and nervous system are to our bodily existence. As it is with the human being, so it is with a society or nation. As its religion is, so is its spiritual, moral, and even its material progress. Upon that, more than anything else, depends the sound working and the happy condition of the whole mass of human beings.

The old nations were simply embodied religions. If you go back to the Eastern nations, and learn their condition, you will find their life was full of their religion. Their whole existence was more or less true as they were more or less close to the highest teachings of the Fountain of Truth.

In Greece, there was a religion which profoundly regarded beauty as a man's highest idea in everything,—the beauty of goodness, the beauty of truth, the beauty of form, the beauty of arrangement - and hence come all those beautiful things which now adorn our principal museums. They covered their land with beauty.

In early Rome, it was the religion of law and duty. They were taught from the earliest time to be faithful to commands.

The great thing with them was to carry out duty and law. What a man was commanded to do, at all risks he must perform. And this religion they carried out, and it made them a great nation, and communicated through them vast benefits to the whole world. They laid the foundations of this great city of ours, and of modern society.

And now allow me to bring this truth home to each individual present. I rejoice to see from time to time so many young men, as we have here, and I want to impress this great truth upon every one of them.

Every young soul is a noble being, the outbirth of the Infinite and Divine. God made this glorious creature with a thousand excellences, in His own image and likeness. What a pity it is he should ever spoil himself. He has all the powers for passing a happy life on earth, and becoming a happy angel in heaven; but whether he will or not - and this is the great truth that should be brought home to every youth in the land - depends upon his foundation principles. You cannot build a good house on a bad



foundation. It will fall sooner or later. The only way to be noble is to have a noble foundation. That noble foundation can only be got in an inward faith in God our Savior, and a constant daily effort to do right by power from Him.

It is this sublime truth in its results which was represented in the grand scene which John saw now in heaven. For two or three chapters immediately preceding an account of the continual decay and disasters are figured. Monstrous systems are described by monstrous forms. Now there is a representation of a new and better state of things. It begins by this representation of a new and pure religion. This is what is meant by the woman clothed with the sun. A Church is always typified by a woman. This is done for several reasons, mainly because it is not the knowledge of religion, although that is important, which makes a man religious. It is the love of it. The Creator intended woman to be a vessel and an emblem of Divine love. All good things flow from God into creation. They flow from Him as a combined stream of love and wisdom together. They then form separate beings in creation. Man is created to be the embodiment of wisdom; woman to be the embodiment of love. Ultimately, when both are moved and cultured rightly, the two yearn to come together again, just as life left the Creator. It left the Creator in the combination of love and wisdom. It comes to take hold of those grand parts of creation, and then to bring them together, and form them one in happy marriage, so that there is union produced again.

Hence it is that woman is always represented in Scripture as the type of the Lords Church. In the real Church, love is the principal thing.

When a person receives, first, the knowledge of religion, and then the understanding of religion, he has made progress.

The Lord says to him now, as He said in the beginning, Let there be light. God says to every soul: Let there be light upon your mind, and let truth come in, the knowledge of great and grand things. If you have light, you are on the way to religion - but it is not religion.

Ponder over the truth, and advance by rightly understanding it. You will then get a rational conception of what religion is. But this is not religion. It is a step nearer towards it. It is only when you get the love of the truth which leads you to the Savior, so as to bring it into practice, that you really become religious. There are those three virtues - Faith, Hope, and Charity; but the greatest of these is Charity. That is the soul of religion. Love is the very thing itself. When love permeates the character, and induces a person to live a life noble and good in every way, then that person has really got religion. Above all things, therefore, says the Apostle, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness (Colossians 3:14). Charity or love it is which makes us really religious. Such is the chief reason why the Church is treated as a woman.

The Divine Word constantly represents the Church as a female, because we only enter into it, and become part of it, when we receive love. Woman was intended mainly to be the special embodiment in the world of grace and beauty - Gods glorious vase, into which to pour His own sacred gentleness and affection. He fills it, that its sacred fragrance may permeate society wherever woman goes.

The true character of woman is to be a spirit of happiness, a spirit of genuine affection and peace. The Church, then, is to be what a woman is to home - a true woman heart. That is to say, be filled with love

and gentleness; and so she is constantly represented in Scripture. Take, for instance, Isaiah liv. I, where you will see the Lord addresses the Church as if she were a woman: Sing, O barren, thou that didst bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child: for more are the children of the desolate than the children of the married wife, saith the Lord.

There had been a long period in Judaism during which no genuine converts were made, and but little brought forth. The Church of God was a mere barren thing. There had been a spirit of formalism, the making the commandments of God things of none effect.

The real life of the Church had been wanting, and so the Lord says: Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear. The representative character of woman appears in the 5th verse: For thy Maker is thine husband. The Church is the Lords wife, by means of which sons and daughters are to be born in the world that can be made into angels, real members of the Church. Thy Maker is thine husband, the Lord of Hosts is His name; and thy Redeemer the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall He be called.

When the Redeemer came into the world, He appeared precisely in the same character. There is a recognition of this in St. John 3:29. The people came to John, to inquire whether he was the Christ. John said: He that hath the bride is the bridegroom; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegrooms voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled. And then, to explain that this bridegroom was God Himself, he adds, in the 31st verse: He that cometh from above is above all.

Manifestly he describes the Lord Jesus coming first as a bridegroom to form a Church, His bride, and then to turn the bride into a wife. It was no other than God Himself Who was doing this, for He that cometh from above is above all. It was God Who was forming His Church. He that cometh from above is above all.

The Apostle speaks of the Lords union with His Church in the same way. I dare say you remember that remarkable chapter in the Epistle to the Ephesians - the 5th chapter. I mean where, under the representation of the wife and the husband, the Apostle makes some important remarks. In the 31st and 32nd verses he says: For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the Church. He was thoroughly aware of this representation of the Church by a woman.

There are several other portions of this Book of Revelation in which we have a similar representation of woman. John describes a figure of the Church under the form of a golden city, as coming down from God out of heaven. He says the angel said to him: Come, and I will shew thee the bride, the Lambs wife, as a bride adorned for her husband. And he saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven.

Here the meaning is precisely the same. The golden principles of love, the clear and sacred illustrations of truth, are represented by the city being golden and clear as crystal. They descend upon earth, and were seen by John. They would be seen and understood by persons of the like character with John - those who were animated by loving-kindness themselves ; they would be able to see this golden city as it came down from heaven.

First they become the bride. Those who feel a virgin-hearted love of truth, desire conjunction with the Lord; and then the bride is formed into a wife, when the Lord Jesus Christ is their all in all, having the testimony of Jesus, and keeping the commandments of God.

This, then, is the reason why this marvelous scene (for that is the word which would best designate what we find in the original language here) is described respecting what was seen in heaven.

After the representation of a series of catastrophes and miseries, there is a commencement of a better state of things, represented by this grand vision of the virgin becoming a wife - a woman clothed with the sun.

The sun is the symbol, in Scripture, of Gods infinite love - that is, the sun of all that is wise and good.

Sun of my soul, Thou Savior dear,

It is not night, if Thou art near.

The sun of heaven, or Gods infinite affection, pours love and wisdom alike over all the societies of the happy. The Divine influence descends to human hearts, and is called the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world.

Again and again do you find this sun as the symbol of the Lord. In Psalm lxxxiv. 11 we read: For the Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly. But unto you that fear My name, it is said by the Prophet Malachi (iv. 2), shall the sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings.

Now it is this sun of the soul, the holy love of the Lord Jesus, embosoming and blessing His Church, which is represented by the sun with which the woman is clothed.

Filled and surrounded by His love,

The saved all live in Him.

The moon is said to be under her feet, because, by the moon, is represented the light of Scripture which is seen by faith. It is the light of faith, which comes out and shines when the splendor of love has become dim. The soul has its changes, its nights and days; and when it has no longer the gladsome happiness of walking in the sunlight then comes the time in which faith supplies the place of what was felt to be all serenity before, and soothes, and comforts, and induces the soul to walk on, notwithstanding it is rather dark. When the moon shines, it is a proof that the sun is still shining, for all the moons light is but reflected sunlight; and though it seems as if the Lord had left us, the light of the heavenly moon proves that the Lord cares for us. The moon still gives her friendly rays, and tells us patiently to wait a little, and the sun will arise again. The Divine dealings with us are quite right. The moon, therefore, is here represented as supporting the Church, her feet standing on the moon.

And upon her head a crown of twelve stars. All the lesser lights of heavenly knowledge are stars, and all knowledge comes from the Lord. The star which led the wise men to Jerusalem, and then to Bethlehem, was a light in the soul, not a star of our sky. Each ray of heavenly teaching in each

particular verse in the Bible is like a star, when you can see the spirit shining through it. Such is the day-star and day-dawn of which the Apostle speaks as arising in the heart (2 Peter 1:19). The whole Bible, when, we can see its spiritual beauty, in verse after verse, becomes a continual display of glorious stars. The light which guides to the Savior is by Him called the morning star. The number twelve here, as elsewhere, is a representation in spiritual language of all.

There were twelve disciples for the Lords Church in its first beginning; there were twelve tribes of Israel; and so twelve, when it is employed, in Scripture, is always the representation that it is full and complete. There were twelve foundations of the New Jerusalem, twelve gates by which to enter, and so on.

Here the twelve stars represent heavenly knowledge on all subjects, and those who compose the Lords Church are those who earnestly seek and rejoice in these disclosures of heavenly light. They make a crown of it, and place it round their heads. It is a sad time in the Church when you find persons professing to be religious, who will say, when speaking of Divine things, Oh, those are matters we care nothing at all about. We mean somehow to get into heaven. Only let us get behind the door some time or other, and we shall be quite content. These are not they whom the Lord calls His true disciples. Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but not to them that are without.

These rejoice in each new disclosure of the Church, as it were a new star. They are like merchantmen seeking goodly pearls. They consider that each truth which gladdens and elevates the mind, and makes us from time to time interested in the Divine character of the Lords everlasting kingdom, is a gem of the first water, a star.

That is represented when it is said that the woman has twelve stars for a diadem. She wears them, and adorns her head with them. She likes to know more about them; she enters more and more fully into Divine things, as if she were searching for the richest jewels of life. They are her glory, her diadem, her pride. She has twelve stars round her head. Those are stars that will not only enlighten and bless here, but they will glow more brightly when we take them into our everlasting home. The Lords Church has a diadem of twelve stars.

It is next said: And she being with child, cried travailing in birth; and pained to be delivered; and a little lower down (v. 5), and she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron; and her child was caught up unto God, and to His throne. The man child, which was brought forth by the Lords Church, means a manly system of true doctrine - a Divine plan of love and life.

The slightest possible opening of Divine truth would be quite enough, according to the notion entertained by some of religion. It is requiring a person to say that he believes the Doctrine of Atonement turned wrong side up. If he believes this statement, he will go straight to heaven; and if he does not believe it, he is certain to go in a very different direction.

True religion, however, sets forth a real manly system of doctrine - a doctrine that applies itself to every duty of human society, and that teaches us what to love, think, and do, in all the relations of life. It must be a man child, and afford a model to sanctify and ennoble every part of man. It must respond to the sublime utterance in Micah: He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God?

True religion would infuse justice and light over the legislature, over commerce, trade, and every department of life, right down into the workshop and the streets. Every department of society should be filled with goodness and truth, brought into act everywhere. The world would then become a happier world.

As we see it at present, the world is a grand world. Never was there a greater libel than that God curses His world. God curses nothing. It is sin and ignorance which spoils everything. The world, in its present state, is a grand platform for training men to be holy and happy. What is wanted is, that we should all be trained up rightly to use the world - to bring the world into true order. But this depends upon combining our exertions with the Lords love and wisdom, to bring out what is intended everywhere, to make everywhere a happy land, and to form this world into a great school in which to raise angels. To produce a genuine system for accomplishing this, is meant by bringing forth the man-child. A noble man-like system first, and then a noble practice. With the help of heaven, and being faithful, we may all become real men, children of God, and ultimately real angels of the Lords kingdom.

It is said of the Church that she cried, being pained to be delivered. What hindrances there are to human improvement! Selfishness, apathy, and stupidity in the world, make progress to be very difficult. She cried, travailing, pained to be delivered. This is the case with relation to every improvement.

A new era has evidently begun in the world; but what throes, what struggles, what hindrances there are in its being accomplished!

In the last hundred years there has been such a change in almost every part of society, that manifestly we live in a considerable installment of a new age.

How beautiful that NEW AGE is, we see described by THE WOMAN clothed with the sun.

The old dark age is described by the other woman mentioned in this book, the Mother of Abominations (chap. 17:5). Yet such is the ignorance, the obstinacy, the self-will of great numbers of people, that there is not a new road (to say nothing of railroads), not a new method of doing anything, however salutary, however much connected with beneficence to the world, but what there has been the greatest difficulty in having it accomplished.

The worlds benefactors have been paid with scorn, with difficulty, with opposition, until they may be said to have been crucified like their Lord. I remember, not fifty years ago, again and again, in the north of England, when new machines were invented which were to double, treble, and quadruple the comforts of all around, the inventors were placed in the utmost danger from this stupid, reckless determination not to be thrown out of old ways, if possible.

So has it been in relation to religion. It might be that people had been in the most blessed states of happiness in past times, and that consequently things had been so good, that it is the utmost folly to think of making them any better. But everyone, if only slightly acquainted with history, knows that the very reverse of this is true.

Wars, animosities, persecutions, jealousies, were the constant condition of the nations of Christendom. Slavery, and slavish laws, keeping in the meanest subjection the of the people, were universal. The

wonder is that the people have lived on at all. They had such bad habitations, with such frequent pestilences and famines - they were so cruel to each other, and the laws were so terribly wrong - that, as I have said before, the wonder is that mankind have lived on at all. Yet ignorant people talk of the good old times; and when the Lord is revealing better things, extreme opposition and difficulty come. The woman cries in pain to be delivered, amidst apathy and aversion to changes fraught with blessing.

There stands selfishness, the great serpent which has deceived the whole world, ready to oppose. It is called a dragon, that is, a serpent with wings. That is selfishness professing religion - setting forth aims, lofty, noble and grand, seeking the glory of God and the salvation of men; but in practice seizing at power and pelf, more keenly even than the veriest worldling.

Religious in appearance, but ignoring or trampling upon charity, justice and kindness, which real religion requires. This is represented by the dragon ready to devour the man-child as soon as he was born.

The Lord, however, protects the woman and her child, for she fled into the wilderness for a time, and times, and half a time, or, what is called in an earlier part, twelve hundred and sixty days, but meaning the same thing - three years and a half. Those mysterious terms represent the end of an old system, signified by the three, and the beginning of a new one by the half. The Lord will protect the new truths by their apparent insignificance, until they have acquired some degree of strength, and can go on their beneficial work of blessing the world.

The earth helped the woman (Revelation 12:6). By the earth helping the woman is meant the well-disposed in the Church - those who have fairness and good sense will assist in the renovation of religion. Many of these have been repelled by what has been taught and done in the name of religion; but when they see a religion pure and practical, they will help the woman. They can see that to make religion acceptable, justice must be the principal thing; they see that religion consists in being and doing good; that to make a religion that is rational as well as spiritual, and which is in harmony with all good sense, as well as in harmony with all Gods attributes, must be the right thing, and the earth helps the woman.

Sorrow, trouble, and opposition will be experienced, but Divine help gives time for the spiritual growth to take place, and enables a society, which otherwise would have been repelled and crushed at the beginning, to have progress, power, and growth. This dispensation will so increase that from land to land, from age to age, the great principles of truth and righteousness, of wisdom and eternal good, will go on growing and growing until, in the language of the 13th chapter of this book, The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

To Him be glory and dominion, world without end. Amen.

## **No. 9. April 4, 1878. THE DRAGON, THE BEAST WHOSE DEADLY WOUND WAS HEALED; AND THE BEAST WHICH DID WONDERS, AND MADE FIRE COME DOWN FROM HEAVEN.**

And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast (Revelation 13:2, 3).

IN our previous discourse we dwelt with reverential delight on the sublime scene of the woman clothed with the sun, the glorious symbol of the true Church of God. The office of the Church to be a mother, by whom heavenly sons and daughters arise, born again, to be nursed, fed, trained, and strengthened, is full of interest and importance. Jerusalem, said the Apostle, which is above, is free, which is the mother of us all (Galatians 4:26).

How tender should the Church be to be worthy of this appellation, mother. Her holy enterprise in the world is to announce to all the children of men: Ye must be born again. Ye have in you angelic seed. You are intended for heaven. Become babes in Christ; feed on the sincere milk of the Word, until you can take strong meat, and grow to the full stature of a man - likenesses of the Divine Man, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The seed of this woman, all born of her, are described in the last verse of the 12th chapter as those Who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the 14th chapter, 12th verse, there is a similar description: Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

It is the sacred duty of the Church to teach gently to young souls that the commandments of God are not grievous. They are the ways of pleasantness, the paths of peace. To sustain the weak, to cheer the weary, to encourage the brave; to be a light to all, to sustain righteousness in the various walks of human life, to hold up a model of life that will bring out all that is noblest and best in man, that will instruct him, make him a man - that is, an angel, and throw a radiance over life's end, which will illuminate the pathway to heaven, these are the functions of this wife of the Lamb - the woman clothed with the sun.

The dragon stood opposed to the woman, ready to devour her man-child as soon as he was born, and therefore he represents a system opposed to keeping the commandments of God as necessary to salvation - opposed to THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS, as given in this Divine Book - that is, to be adored as the All in all - King of kings and Lord of Lords (Revelation 19:16).

The description of the seed of the woman, as represented to be those who keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus, is the definition of the essentials of true religion.

To have in heart and mind the testimony of Jesus, and to keep the commandments of God, are the substance of all that is necessary for happiness and for heaven. How simple this is, and how complete.

True Christians are always the same. They have the testimony of Jesus, and keep the commandments of God. But what is the testimony of Jesus? It is elsewhere called the faith of Jesus. It may be understood as the testimony concerning Jesus, and thus be in harmony with the saying of the angel: The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy (chap. 19:10). Or it may be understood as the testimony of Jesus to the truth respecting Himself.

Faith is the gift of God to earnest hearts who seek it. He who obtains the inward testimony of Jesus will have the right testimony. He who obtains the faith of Jesus from Jesus will have the right faith.

Sincere inquirers will come, like the Greeks who addressed Philip, and say, Sir, we would see Jesus. Earnest souls seek God in such wise that they can comprehend with the mind, and love Him with the whole heart.

The seed of the woman, the sons of the kingdom, have the testimony of Jesus, which is the spirit of prophecy. What is, then, the spirit of prophecy? It is that Jehovah, our Redeemer would come into the world for mans deliverance. As for our Redeemer, Jehovah of Hosts is His name, the God of the whole earth shall He be called (Isaiah 54:6). Thou, O Jehovah, art our Father, our Redeemer, Thy name is from everlasting (Isaiah 43:11). I, even I, am Jehovah, and beside Me there is no Savior (Isaiah 43:11). I am the Lord thy God from the land of Egypt, and thou shalt know no God but Me; for there is no Savior beside Me (Hosea 13:4). I will ransom them from the power of the grave (hell). I will redeem them from death (v. 14).

This is the testimony of Jesus. He is the all-sufficient and only sufficient Savior. He is the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning; and the End, the First and the Last: Who is, Who was, and Who is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).

But if the testimony of Jesus is that He is the only God, All in all, then it follows that every Divine blessing will come to the soul that prays to Him, cleaves to Him, and abides in Him.

The delicious rapture that enters the heart which thus trusts, is expressed in the tender words of Bernard:

O hope of every contrite heart!

O joy of all the meek!

To those who fall, how kind Thou art--

How good to those who seek!

But what to those who find? Ah, this

No tongue nor pen can shew:

The love of Jesus, what it is,



NONE BUT THE LOVED ONES KNOW.

When the Church became wealthy and proud, its spirit was entirely altered, and became the spirit of pre-eminence, of bigotry, quarrel, persecution, war, and desolation.

Who should be greatest was the ambitious desire of these nominal Christians; not who should be least, who should be most obedient, humblest, and best. Such Christianity became, and such far too largely it still remains.

This is the spirit of the dragon, that old serpent, the Devil and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world. The serpent means the spirit of selfishness, the desire to be greatest, self-seeking - the universal curse.

In a single individual, it is his serpent, and it is what our Savior desires to give us power to subdue. I give you power, He said, to tread upon the serpents and scorpions, and all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall by any means hurt you (Luke 10:18). The Pharisees were marked and obstinate instances of self-seeking, and the Lord Jesus denounced them in the awful words: Ye serpents, how can ye escape the damnation of hell (Matthew 23:33). The old serpent, the Devil and Satan, means selfishness in the mass, as it has troubled the whole world in every age, taking sometimes one form, and sometimes another, but always the enemy of the kingdom of God. The head of the serpent is the collection of the selfish in the inner universe, called hell, whose power the Savior came to crush (Genesis 3:15).

The dragon, which stood ready to oppose and persecute the woman and her child, represents a system of religion opposed to the supreme Divinity of the Lord Jesus, and the life of keeping Gods commandments.

It is a system essentially selfish, hard, and bitter - dragon-like, It is very clever in its own esteem. It has seven heads, and much power, from familiarity with Divine truth; ten hems, and seven crowns upon its heads; much Divine wisdom, to give it plausibility and attract success.

It means a system apparently religious, but so warped that people are led to believe they can be saved, and go to heaven without change of heart, and without a virtuous life.

It makes three Gods, but calls them three persons, instead of the One God, the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. It makes the work of redemption a transaction amongst these persons. The First Divine Person, according to it, is infinitely wrathful, denouncing the most horrible and everlasting miseries for the slightest offence; the Second, infinitely merciful, and ready to suffer the most terrible punishments to save the meanest sinner from the wrath of the First. Religion is made, in substance, to consist in learning the terrors of the First Divine Person, and believing in the mercy of the Second;

thus, in a change in God, not a change in man - God being pacified, and the sinner escaping punishment.

Thus the unity of God in the person of the Lord Jesus, in Whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily, is opposed in the dragon system, by the declaration that in God there are Three Divine Persons, each of whom is God and Lord by Himself. One of these is a grim, awful, and vindictive Judge; the other is Mercy itself, the Infinite Sufferer.

The keeping of the commandments of God is opposed by the declaration that no one can keep the commandments; that they were never intended to be kept; and that a person who has broken persistently every one until his life's end can enter heaven triumphantly, if he will believe what he is told to believe.

The death of the Lord Jesus, the manifestation of His love for every man - for Christ tasted death for every man - God was in Christ reconciling us to Himself, to redeem us from dead works, and enable us to live in Him - is opposed by the assurance that Christ died to redeem us from the wrath of God; and being saved from that wrath, we are quite right without any works at all - saved by that faith ALONE.

A third part of the bright sayings of the Bible - those stars for the heart of which St. Peter speaks, the stars of heaven that shine over us with bright radiance, to teach us the life of goodness, are cast down by the dragon's tail (verse 4) and condemned as wholly needless; faith alone - faith, without any works - being all-sufficient. Others of the dragon class maintain that not only are good works not necessary for salvation, but even faith is unessential too, for the Divine Persons settled among them, before the foundation of the world, infallibly who should be saved, without any reference to character at all; occasioning Burns to write

O Thou, who in the heavens dost dwell,

Who, as it pleases best Thyself,

Sends one to heaven, and ten to hell,

A for Thy glory,

And not for any good or ill

They've done afore Thee.

The dragon casting out of his mouth water as a flood, indicates that it means a system sending out torrents of false persuasions, the floods of ungodly men (Psalms 18:4), to oppose and destroy the true Church, the bride and wife of the Lamb.

The dragon is an old symbol, representing a specious system of intellectual falsity, a serpent with wings, its essence being selfishness, but soaring up, and professing to be sacred and elevated; having a name that it lived, but being dead; intelligence and learning, but no heavenly love, or real virtue in life.

Egypt stood in this respect in the time of the prophet Ezekiel. Hence we read, I am against thee, Pharaoh, king of Egypt, the great DRAGON, that lieth in the midst of his rivers, which hath said, My river is my own, and I have made it for myself (xxix. 3).

The tendency to this self-derived intelligence, and neglect of the all-important virtues of meekness, love and goodness, is in every man; hence the indispensable duty of the genuine Christian is to subdue the DRAGON in himself. Thou shalt tread upon the lion and the adder (the asp); the young lion and the DRAGON thou shalt trample under foot. Because he hath set his love upon Me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known My name (Psalms xci. 13, 14).

The dragon system was manifest in the Pharisee state which the Lord came into the world to condemn and to change. Hence it is written: When God shall come, the parched ground shall become a pool, and the thirsty land, springs of water: in the HABITATIONS OF DRAGONS, where each lay, shall be grass, with reeds and rushes. And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it (Isaiah 35:7, 8).

The dragon system views with grim complacency the multitudes of the lost which there must be, if its little shibboleth is really the Divine test for heaven. The hundreds of millions of Roman Catholics, the hundreds of millions of Mahommedans, the still more numerous hundreds of millions of China and India, have no chance of salvation, if none go to heaven but those who believe that the death of our Lord was the penalty of wrath, exacted by another Divine Person, and not the suffering of LOVE, to bear and to bless.

The dragon is sure that none can go to heaven but those who enter by his little back-door.

All others, including all little children, who cannot have this faith, must without doubt perish everlastingly. How can such a libel on the God of unchangeable love be true?

But another strange form is brought to view, in the beast to whom the dragon gave his power, his seat, and his authority.

The dragon represents the system in its theoretical or doctrinal form. This other beast portrays the society it produces, in its practical character.

This beast, was like a leopard, with feet as the, feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed; and all the world wondered after the beast.

Can anything, more accurately describe the condition of society, as it has too long existed, under a religion of salvation by faith only - not a religion of an imperative good life - than the resemblance to a spotted beast? The leopard is a fair-looking animal, with a dangerous and malignant temper.

It is not the Papal state of the Church that is described by this beast, but the state produced by the Reformation, when the Word was set free indeed; but was again paralyzed by salvation being lade to depend upon believing one false dogma, instead of believing in surrendering heart and life to carry out the blessed will of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Hear how Wesley describes this condition of the Church:What is the condition of the Reformed Churches? It is certain that they were reformed in their opinions, as well as their modes of worship. But is not this all? Were either their tempers or lives reformed? Not at all.... Without this, how exquisitely trifling was the reformation of opinions, and rites, and ceremonies! Now, let anyone survey the state of Christianity in the reformed parts of Switzerland - in Germany, or France - in Sweden, Denmark, Holland - in Great Britain and Ireland. How little are any of these reformed countries better than heathen nations! Oh no, we must confess, with sorrow and shame, that we are far beneath them.

We are better now than when he wrote; but even now, look at society as it is!

How fair is life, especially early life! What cheerful, bright and happy ways are all around us! What wondrous gifts and faculties the goodness of the Divine Maker has implanted in the human family! The germs of heavenly dispositions, which form the groundwork of all that is amiable, and the amenities of education and polite society.

How agreeable and how beautiful is a polished home, with the society of intelligent and affectionate friends!

What a piece of work is man! How noble in reason, how infinite in faculty! In form and moving, how express and admirable! In action, how like an angel! In apprehension, how like a god!--the beauty of the world.

Amidst the elegances of society, how attractive and charming is modern life! If, however, true and genuine religion be not present, it is spotted and checkered like the skin of the leopard; nor is it wanting in the malignant temper of that beautiful and dangerous beast.

They have corrupted themselves, their spot is not the spot of His children; they are a perverse and crooked generation (Deuteronomy 32:5).

The good manners of the worldling are not pure white, but only the lighter part of the leopards skin, while there are plenty of black spots in the errors and follies even of respectable life. And then, the malignancy of scandal, the readiness with which characters are made to suffer, the delight with which envy pours out its gall, and the domestic evils of social life - what are they but the bitter inflictions of the leopards bite?

How true of modern worldly society, not of the world of God, is Moores description:

The world is all a fleeting show,

For mans illusion given;

The smiles of joy, the tears of woe,

Deceitful shine, deceitful flow:

Theres nothing true but heaven.

The leopard, then, describes the condition of society in which religion has no more redeeming power than that of salvation by faith alone.

Notice the curious circumstance that the CROWNS are on the heads of the dragon, but they are on the horns of the beast (verse 1).

With the inventors of this dogma, the crowns are placed on the head. They deem the scheme of salvation involved in their plan in all its parts profoundly wise. Granting the foundation that God is an infinitely selfish being, and cares only for His own glory, the rest follows. He would be infinitely wrathful against the least deviation from His command, dreadful in His punishment. Selfish people easily coincide with these views.

They think that God is such a one as themselves, and what they would do if they were all-powerful, they believe God has done. The falsity is in the base. God is not selfish. God is love. The foundations being all wrong, seven heads are a mass of folly, thinking itself wise.

The people, however, whose instincts, implanted by Divine love, lead them often to most unselfish and generous efforts for others, and where the love of fathers and mothers give intimations of Divine love, tenderness, and mercy, do not readily admit the authority of the system of faith alone. Only by Scripture, largely used, are they led to adopt it. Texts in abundance are supplied, but all with a warp, and the people attribute authority and sovereignty to these. They put the crowns on the horns, and they wonder, and are content with this checkered and spotted system, though they are amazed that it is not a greater blessing than it is.

Then, the feet are a bears feet. The bear is a clumsy brute, and enjoys the dimness of gloomy forests and the obscurity of caves. He represents persons who are occupied only with the shades of earth-life, and grub, and scrape, and toil for the gains of earthly pelf and power. Every work of a man ought to be something useful, from a heavenly motive. He should act from justice and judgment alike in the halls of legislation and in the workshop of the mechanic. Whether ye eat or whether ye drink, says an Apostle, do it all for the glory of God.

The feet of society are what it stands upon - the daily duties of life; and when these are performed from heavenly principles, the feet are human feet. Man, by creation, is man as to his feet. They are beautifully arched, that he may look up, around, and adore. But when there is no concern for anything but earth and time, hugging inordinate gains for sensual ends, the feet are bears feet - poor paws, that can perform no noble work.

What is a man,

If his chief good and market of his time

Be but to sleep and feed? A beast, no more.

Society, when there is no religion of life, is justly described by this leopard with bears feet.

In boasting, however, it has a mouth like the mouth of a lion. We talk of our Christianity, of our civilization, of our philosophy, of our wondrous advancement;

yet when we look at the frauds that abound, at our too general domestic miseries, at the numerous inmates of our prisons, at the victims of intemperance, how much there is to blush at and lament!

Yet the mouth is the mouth of a lion challenging attention, and boasting that it is the pink of perfection, and the glory of the world. Protestantism may rightfully claim thousands of distinguished men and women, the very salt of the earth. It may claim also its marked position as the student of the Bible, the reverent guardian and diffuser of the Word of God; but how is it that the proportion of criminality and vice is as great as in non-Protestant and heathen lands?

Has not that fatal doctrine of salvation without works something to do with it? Is not this the head that has a deadly wound? What can be more contradictory to Scripture than that a man has nothing to do

in working out his salvation. The Scriptures are literally full, from Genesis to Revelation, of the necessity of working righteousness and doing good. If thou doest well, it was said to Cain, shalt thou not be accepted, and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at thy door (Genesis 4:7). Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things that I say? (Luke 6:46).

The enormous mistake of supposing that because Paul taught that works done as Jews then did them were not wanted in Christianity; that therefore REAL GOOD WORKS are not required, ESSENTIAL AND INDISPENSABLE, by religion, has inflicted a deadly wound. Paul, in preaching the righteousness of faith, is really at one with James, who states so distinctly that faith without works is dead (James 2:20). Show me thy faith without thy works, and I will show thee my faith by my works (v. 18).

The palpable opposition of the doctrine of justification by faith only, to this constant demand for true obedience to God by a life of good works, has been felt by good men always. That head was wounded to death.

Religious men have been led, however, to wonder after the beast; but far better is it become part of the seed of the woman, even while she is in the wilderness of rejection among the few. God nourishes her there with His inward blessings, feeds her, and guards her, saying, as in days of old, Fear not, little Rock, it is your Fathers good pleasure to give you the kingdom.

Lord, let me with Truths banner be,

Whereer it is unfurled:

Better be right with two or three,

Than wrong with all the world.

The mouth speaking great things, blasphemies against God, His name, and His tabernacle, are the sad misrepresentations of God and His commandments - often unconscious of their mischievous character - which are the result of the system of salvation by faith alone. These we need not particularize. In the meantime, the, Divine laws go on. Causes produce their effects. They who mentally captivate others to falsity, make themselves slaves also. They who lead others to sin by evil maxims, become themselves victims also (Revelation 13:10). The patience and faith of the saints are often sorely tried, but they wait and work, and all that is good comes round at last.

The other beast that came to the support of the beast whose deadly wound was healed, and caused the earth to worship the first beast, represents the clergy who support and give popularity to the system. They are elsewhere called false prophets (Revelation 16:13). Their power in relation to God and man is represented by their two horns, and their pious belief that they are magnifying the Savior. When they are teaching that man has nothing to do, is expressed by their being like a lamb. The image means the DOCTRINE thus taught.

Their great zeal and earnestness are meant by making fire come down out of heaven, and their success by the great wonders he performed. Their causing to be killed such as would not worship the beast means their condemnation to spiritual death of those who do not admit their system.

Its prevalence in the Church is expressed by the mark made upon all, small and great, rich and poor, and bond and free, so that no one should take part in the business of the Church unless he was under the influence of the system, consciously having the mark, or at least acting in the spirit, having the name and being aware of the quality of this system of salvation, without reference to the life of keeping Gods commandments. The complete threefold falsity of making good works of no avail in religion is expressed by three sixes - six hundred and sixty-six.

Six, or three multiplied by two, in the spiritual meaning of numbers, signifies what is completely true, represented by three, united to what is good; signified by two. The six days of labor, the six water-pots, according to the purification of the Jews, in which water was turned into wine, and the six leaves of shew-bread on each side of the sacred table, represent such completeness. Here it is completeness in the opposite respect, completely false conjoined to what is evil, because it is of a system striving to destroy the woman clothed with the sun and her seed.

Its occurring three times means that to make obedience to the Divine commandments of no account is completely false and evil in relation to LOVE, to FAITH, and to WORKS; or to the WILL, the INTELLECT, and the LIFE. Without a man does the works of religion, he cannot love God or his neighbor, he cannot believe God, who commands them, and he cannot be doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with his God.

They have no rest day nor night who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name (Revelation 14:11).

Is not unrest the plague of the present day? When will men feel that a religion that leaves self-love rankling in the heart cannot give rest? Not building on the only true foundation, there is the unrest of ambition and discontent in the present - unrest from unfitness for and ignorance of the future. Only from contentedness in the Lord Jesus, the God of love and wisdom, can rest and peace come. In Me, He said, ye shall have peace.

Let us have full FAITH that following Him in the regeneration will subdue everything draconic and beastly, and make us FIT TO LIVE, possessing a present heaven, and therefore fit to die.

Here is the patience of the saints; here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the FAITH of Jesus.

O precious boon! O gift divine!

Beyond all earthly bliss;

My soul, this treasure may be thine

The Lord will give His peace.

# **No. 10. April 11, 1878. THE HEAVENLY HARPERS WHO WERE AS IT WERE ON A SEA OF GLASS MINGLED WITH FIRE; AND THE SEVEN ANGELS HAVING THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES.**

And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his image, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God (Revelation 15:2).

IT must have been a great relief to the Apostle John to gaze upon the sublime scene he here describes after the sad close of the preceding chapter. He had been horrified by a stream of blood, the symbol of truths of all kinds entirely violated and corrupted, so that the mental horses, the understandings of men, could not drink.

Now he beholds a sunny sea, bright with the radiance of heaven, and angelic forms glorifying the Lord, singing the songs of the blessed, accompanied by the harps of God. One of the loveliest scenes on the earth is a calm, bright sea, glittering in the sunshine. It sparkles with beauty, and it reflects the sky.

The sea is symbolic in Scripture. On a grand scale, it means the vast world of knowledge and thought.

Out of it, raised by the sun, come the waters which form rains, rivers, and fountains, which fertilize and beautify the land. Hence such declarations as that the knowledge of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea (Isaiah 11:9). The Lord described the preaching of the Gospel as a net cast into the sea, which gathered fish of every kind (Matthew 13:47). In one mind, its collection of external thought is its sea. Hence we read, Let the floods clap their hands (Psalms xcvi. 8).

The sea of human thought has its tides, its flows and ebbs, its advances and retrogressions, and sometimes it is lashed into fury. Wild tempests rage there, and many a ship goes down. The wicked, says the prophet, are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked (Isaiah 57:19, 20). The new Divine truth brought into the world by the Lord, in the dispensation of the Gospel, was as a river of righteousness flowing into the sea, which being brought into the sea, the waters shall be healed (Ezekiel 47:8).

What a beautiful representation does the sea give of the mental state of the angels - their thoughts clear, pellucid, calm, bright, and happy. No dark enigmas or perplexing mysteries now; no puzzling difficulties or unintelligible dogmas - the sea is clear as crystal. It is transparent. Divine light shines through. All is bright, serene, and lovely. Nor are there storms there. They had been troubled on earth. They had trembled sometimes lest their bark, so tossed and toiling, should be wrecked; but infinite mercy had brought them safely through, and they had reached the desired haven. Now all was peaceful, calm, and blessed. They stood as it were on a sea of glass.



The sea was, however, mingled with fire. They had been baptized with the Holy Spirit and with fire. In heaven there are no cold thoughts, no clearness like the keen glare of a bright wintry day. The truth is blended with love, the crystal is mingled with fire. Their land is married (Isaiah 62:4). All things in heaven are in harmony and union. Here we sometimes get judgment without gentleness, cleverness without principle, and without loving kindness; but it is not so above. Their bright and beautiful thoughts are all mingled with the fire of holy love.

Tranquil as the angelic life appeared to John, it had not been always so. The blessed ones had encountered their trials in the world, and had gotten their victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name.

The spotted beast like a leopard, with the bears feet, the emblem of worldly society with a superficial religion, must in every one be overcome. What is a man profited if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

How vain are all things here below,

How false, and yet how fair;

Each pleasure has its poison too,

And every sweet a snare.

Beautiful as are earths sons and daughters, fair as are the accomplishments which education evolves from our wondrous gifts, the endowments of our benign Creator, the trail of the serpent is over them all.

Look at our skilled artisans, the clever, busy workmen whose wondrous talents mould our engines, make our railroads, construct our ships, and make our handiwork known and prized in every quarter of the globe; yet see these same men, if their hearts are not touched by the sacred principles of living religion, in their haunts of pleasure and in their domestic circles, gradually, as life advances, becoming coarser and coarser, until their unbridled appetites and brutal selfishness lands them in hideous helplessness or deplorable idiocy.

They have not overcome their sins, and their sins have overcome them.

Just so with our commercial men. Unrivalled for their talent and energy, they explore every nation, open up the riches of every portion of the earth. But if earth is their all, if they are contented with the world, and its pleasures, how hollow, how stupid their life becomes. Often the overbalanced mind flies to the drunkards cup, to escape monotony, and the morbid millionaire becomes a helpless set. He did not overcome in the battle of life, but slunk into the ignoble sloth of luxurious glut, with morbid self-indulgence, and he obtained its foul reward.

If we look higher, where the leaders of society ought to be, how few are they who fight the good fight of faith, and get the victory over the beast.

Al cannot bear adversity, but still fewer are they who can nobly bear prosperity. Reared in the lap of

plenty, not trained to self-control and Godlike, virtuous industry, betrayed by flatterers to fancy that Gods laws will be suspended for them, they oft become the prey of sharpers, the slaves of vice, marred, enfeebled, and broken in mind and body, ere life has half finished its course - rotten before they are ripe. Yet, oh, how glorious, when, through faithful struggle, we get the victory over the beast.

There are times in which the struggle to live the life of virtue is painful and trying; but as a rule, the Saviors yoke is easy, and His burden is light.

Troubles come to all, the virtuous as well as the vicious; but to the virtuous they are disciplinary, they are blessings in disguise. To the vicious they have no saving result, they are only the premonitory signs of deeper plagues and deadlier disease.

Why not, then, enter upon the battle with the beastly part of your nature, and gain the victory? Fight faithfully, and you are sure to win, again and again, and every time you get a blessing.

To him that overcometh,

O promise of our God,

Thou art a glorious helper

Along our pilgrim road.

How can we be discouraged,

How can we faint and fall;

Behold our God has promised

We shall inherit all.

The old man of our nature, though covered up by the refinement of society, and the training of education, is underneath now, as ever - earthly, sensual, devilish; a hell in miniature. Why not be up and doing, that the crooked may be made straight and the rough places plain?

Do not imagine for a moment that believing any dogma as a substitute for righteous living will effect any good. Doing right is believing;

but thinking which does not lead to faithful practice, is a delusion and a snare.

Don't let the beast suggest to you that to conquer him is impossible, that a man cannot change his nature. Such fancies are pitiful. Every one is constantly changing his nature; the good are daily becoming better, and the bad worse. Ye must be born again, said the God of nature and grace, and shall we contradict him?

See what labor will be given by the merchant or the warrior for an earthly triumph, a temporal reward - what training, what education, what persevering toil - and for what short-lived enjoyment! Cannot we labor to attain a PRESENT and an ETERNAL blessedness with a faithfulness as true and lasting?

See what labor some men will give to make friends of themselves! How perseveringly they will go on, sin after sin! The slave of his appetite will glutonize and drink, though merciful headaches, stomach aches, and pains of various kinds, warn him away from his curse times without number; yet he perseveres in his self-created sorrows until the last blow comes, and his house falls, and great is the fall thereof. Had he served his God as he had served his sin, he would have gotten the victory, become a beautiful angel, and had a harp of God.

Do not for a moment listen to the image of the beast, or the doctrine that we cannot live the life of heaven upon the earth.

In the hands of skilful reasoners it looks plausible sometimes; and when urged with zeal, it seems to speak as if it were the essence of piety, and carries away the superficial; but it is for all that a deadly enemy of the Savior, whose whole aim is to transform man into a likeness to Himself.

Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect, is no idle precept, but a blessed encouragement.

We are to be perfect as Christians in our degree as our Heavenly Father is perfect infinitely in His degree.

A thoughtful mind will easily get the victory over this image, or this doctrine. Attend to the Divine Teacher.

Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in NO CASE enter into the kingdom of heaven. Surely He, who is the King of Heaven, knows.

The Christian is not expected to become perfect in love all at once. But let patience, said James, have her perfect work, that ye may be made perfect and entire, wanting nothing (James 1:4). Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect (James 2:22). Press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of GOD IN CHRIST JESUS. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded (Phill. Iii. 14, 15).

How plainly does John, the beloved disciple, speak: And hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments He that saith I know Him, and KEEPETH NOT HIS COMMANDMENTS, is a liar, and the truth is not in him. But whoso keepeth His word, in Him verily is the love of God PERFECTED. Hereby know we that we are in Him (1 John 2:3-5).

The Lord does not require more from any man than he can perform. He must begin the heavenly life as a babe learning to walk, and be fed with the sincere milk of the Word, that he may grow thereby. Should he stumble from weakness in his early religious career, he will not be treated as though he sinned from wickedness, but with mercy and wise consideration. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in His way. Though he fall he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand (Psalms 37:23, 24.)

The genuine student of the Holy Word, therefore, will easily get the victory over the false doctrine, which is the image of the beast. He must also be victorious over his mark.

Christianity soon made its mark in the world. Ye are our epistles, said the Apostle, known and read of

all men (2 Cor. iii.2). To be a Christian in early days was to be a good man. Pliny said to Trajan, as recorded in his 97th letter: The Christians meet on a certain stated day, before it is light, and address themselves in prayer to Christ as God, binding themselves by a solemn oath never to commit any fraud, theft, or adultery, never to falsify their word, or deny a trust, when called to deliver it up. See how these Christians love one another, was the language of observers then.

The mark of the beast is described by Wesley in his time, and is a very different mark from that of the early Christians: Are there not Christians in Canterbury, in London, in Westminster? No, no more than there are angels. None are Christians but they that have the mind that was in Christ, and walk as He walked. Why, if these only are Christians, said an eminent wit, I never saw a Christian yet. I believe it; you never did... Though they are called Christians, the name does not imply the thing. They are as far from this as hell from heaven. (Mystery of Iniquity.)

Regard the condition of the nations of Christendom now - with civilized life brilliant beyond all former example, but armed to the teeth. Attractive with delicacies and elegancies, glittering with the splendors of fashion and art, smooth as the idle leopards paw, but with millions of armed men ready to spring forth as the claws of the leopard, and inflict desolation and ruin. Is not this the mark of the beast, that says believing that everything has been done for you is the only requirement - not practice, nor self-subjugation?

Overcome this mark, and let the mark you make in the world be the mark of a just and heavenly life; let the atmosphere of your home be that of love and peace. Then you will have overcome the mark and the whole number of the beast, false in affection, false in thought, and false in life. You will then get a harp of God - that is, a mind thrilling with praise.

The harps of God suggest music in heaven, and doubtless there will be music there, for it is the land of harmony. Music is an universal gift; it is the language of the affections. Sweet music is responded to by good and loving feelings. Exquisitely tender music awakens the deepest enjoyment of rapturous delight; hence we find in Scripture so often such expressions as I will praise Thee upon the harp. Sing aloud unto God our strength; make a joyful noise unto the God of Jacob. Take a psalm, and bring hither the timbrel, the pleasant harp with the psaltery.

Praise Him with every tuneful string,

Praise Him with musics heavenly art,

And with the power of music bring

The music of the heart.

The music of the heart is the true and universal harp of God. Every angel has it. Why should not we have it?

Its golden frame is the holy affection of grateful love, desiring to confess and to adore the goodness of the Lord.

The confession of His loving-kindness in creation is the first string, the rapturous exclamation when

we survey the world around, the firmament above, the innumerable mercies of this outer temporal life, My Father made them all. The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works. The second string is the grateful acknowledgment of our redemption. While surveying mans degradation, helplessness, and ruin, and the Divine mercy which led our Heavenly Father in his love and in His pity to redeem us, the grateful heart exclaims

O for a seraphs golden lyre,  
With chords of light and tones of fire,  
To sing Jehovah's love;  
To tell Redemptions wondrous plan,  
How God descended down to man,  
That man might rise above.

And so with the other great themes of praise, the wonders of Divine Providence, the work of regeneration, the glories of heaven, the unfoldings of Divine Wisdom in the Holy Word. These all form themes of thanksgiving, of gratitude, and love. The mind, as a harp of God, strung with the truths of heaven, is alluded to, when it is said, I will also praise Thee with the psaltery, even Thy truth, O my God; unto Thee will I sing with the harp, O Thou Holy One of Israel (Psalms lxxi. 22).

We should oftener make use of this harp than we do. If we praised more, and complained less, we should enjoy more both of peace and blessing.

Did we the sighs we vainly spend  
To heaven in supplication send,  
Our cheerful song would oftener be,  
Hear what the Lord. has done for me.

Remember the episode of Sauls moody melancholy when the evil spirit was upon him. He was miserable to himself and dangerous to others. But David was brought in and played upon his harp, and as the sweet strains melted the king, the evil spirit left him, and he was refreshed and was well.

Let the harps of God, the confessions of Divine goodness from grateful and glad hearts, be often active with us, and we shall taste some of the raptures of the angels that stood upon the sea as it were of glass.

But it is written: They sang the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb.

They delight in the Divine commandments, and sing of them. Moses means the law, and the essence of the law is the Ten Commandments, the essence of these being supreme LOVE TO GOD and LOVE TO MAN.

The longest Psalm in the Bible, the 119th, an eight-fold alphabetic psalm, is entirely taken up with the praises of the Commandments. Blessed ARE the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. Blessed are they that keep His testimonies, and that seek Him with the whole heart (v. 1, 2). The law of Thy mouth is better unto me than thousands of gold and silver (v. 72). O how love I Thy law: it is my meditation all the day. Thou through Thy commandments hast made me wiser than mine enemies (v. 97). I have more understanding than all my teachers; for Thy testimonies are my meditation. I understand more than the ancients, because I keep Thy precepts (v. 98, 99).

The psalmist sung the song of Moses; but the law is our school-master to bring us to Christ. When from weakness we totter, we go to Him and find help, strength, and blessing, and then, like the angels, we sing the song of the Lamb. How happy they are now! They behold now, from first to last, the wonders of Eternal Goodness, and they exclaim, Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty.

Often, in life, they were puzzled, baffled, and perplexed at apparent unnecessary trials and hardships; but now hear them: Just and true are Thy ways, O King of Saints. He had led them by the right way. Their troubles had been blessings in disguise - trainings for richer triumphs and everlasting victories. Just and true are Thy ways, O King of Saints.

Who shall not fear Thee, O Lord, and glorify Thy name? for Thou only art holy for all nations shall come and worship before Thee; for Thy judgments are made manifest (Revelation 15:4).

And now another marvelous scene was beheld, a final testing of the condition of those who unhappily had the mark of the beast, an evil life, from the persuasion that faith only in their own dogma was necessary, and had worshiped that doctrine as the all in all of religion.

Seven angels make their appearance, the representatives of all heaven. They were clothed in pure white linen, the bright raiment of pure and heavenly sentiments, having their breasts girdled with love, the fine gold of heaven.

But how strange that they should have plagues - the seven last plagues - with them. These plagues are said to be poured out of vials. Yet truth and goodness always plague those who hate them. When the prophet Elijah met the wicked king Ahab, the latter said, Hast thou found me, O my enemy? The prophet was not his enemy, but his best friend.

We have known men so depraved that they could not bear a baby, not even their own, but have repelled it with horror, as a little fiend. So light plagues the owl, so purity plagues the polluted. The Lord Himself plagued the Pharisees, until they smote, scourged, and crucified Him.

By the pouring out of the vials is meant the influence of heaven on a thoroughly corrupt state of the world. Every attempt of heaven produces the opposite.

The wrath of God means the pain felt by the obstinately depraved, when heavenly influences are brought to bear upon them. Sweet they call bitter; good they call bad; light they call darkness; falsity they call truth. The pain they experience they call the wrath of God, although there is no wrath in God, Who is love itself, and Who says Himself: Fury is not in Me (Isaiah 27:4).

The eye inflamed with disease cannot bear the light of the sun, and the person exclaims that the sun

hurts him.

So influx after influx is poured out upon the hardened wicked, and the effect is to induce painful opposition, like ulcered sores (Revelation 16:2); polluted views, like blood instead of water (v. 3, 4); heated passions scorching the mind, and resisting to the utmost (v. 9); false reasoning, like the croaking of frogs (v. 13); and such astounding falsities at last, that they are like great hailstones (v. 21). But thus does the Heavenly Judge make such a system condemn itself.

In the meantime the heavenly work of good goes on quietly, unobserved almost. The Lord comes as a thief, in secret ways, not, however, to take away anything good, but to remove sin, sorrow, shame, and misery, false old opinions, rags and tatters. Whoever is attentive to a heavenly life will hear Him saying: Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments (v. 15).

Oh that men would enter upon the work of genuine repentance; and then, when the first heavenly vial is poured out, the only thought would be, Lord, help me to come to Thee. The ulcered heart would begin to heal, and the blessed result would be, My son who was dead is alive again, and who was lost is found. When the second vial is poured out, it would be felt as the spirit of the Lord Jesus giving the blood of a living man, circulating, quickening, healing, and cleansing from all sin.

When the third vial is poured out, it would open up new fountains of living water, from which the soul could draw new comforts and consolations, and new rivers of righteousness would enrich and fertilize the mind, so that the desert would become like Eden, and the wilderness like the garden of God. When the fourth vial is poured out, the light of the moon would become as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun of Gods love, as seen in the glorified Jesus, as the light of seven days. When the fifth vial is poured out, more light will be diffused, and peace will spread like a river, the peace that passes all understanding. When the angel pours out his vial, there shall be no croaking or false reasoning from mental frogs, but a sweet assent of the whole mind that all the Divine ways are wisdom, and all His works are done in truth. And when the seventh vial is poured out, a sacred fullness of state will be experienced, even to the perfect day. No heavy hailstones of cold and withering atheism will fall then, but there will be showers of blessing.

Let us take, then, our mental harp, and looking back over past mercies from the Divine patience and long suffering, looking forward with faith and hope, let love strike the sacred strings, and say, O give thanks unto the God of Heaven, for His mercy endureth for ever.

High over all, the blessed ones, combining with their Lord, may be seen on the bright sea which is clear as crystal, rejoicing over His merciful operations, while the old is giving place to the new, having the harps of God, and still singing the song of Moses and the Lamb: Great and marvelous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty: just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints.

# **No. 11. April 18, 1878. THE WOMAN SEATED ON THE SCARLET BEAST, THAT WAS, AND IS NOT, AND YET IS MYSTERYBABYLON THE GREAT.**

And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is (Revelation 17:7, 8).

HOW beautiful is the character and how divine is the office of true religion! The soul needs its purities, its strengths and its peace; and when true to its own noble and sacred nature, none could resist its claims to obedience or its rationality. As the Scriptures state in the combined pages of the Old and New Testaments, what can be more simple or more sublime?

In the Old Testament, both in the Law, the Psalms, and the Prophets, nothing can be grander than its utterances.

And the Lord passed by before him and proclaimed: The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth.

Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty. The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works (Psalms cxlv. 9). O that thou hadst hearkened to My commandments; then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea (Isaiah 48:18). He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with thy God (Micah 6:8).

Who can decry or resist the principles of religion as thus presented? In the New Testament, when they are re-stated, the elements are really the same. Applied to man in circumstances more deplorable, they are adapted more tenderly to his condition. The Lord is still the One Great Sustainer; but now a Shepherd seeking and succoring His strayed and perishing sheep; a Savior of all men, the Universal Friend, Who says: Whosoever will come unto Me, I will in no wise cast him out.

The life required is the same. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

How tenderly do the Apostles unfold the same great and gracious principles. Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this: To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep, himself unspotted from the world (James 1:27).



This is the true ideal of religion, and accompanied by the truths through which men are to be reformed, transformed, and regenerated, until front a spirit of love they will carry out the Christian life. Who can do otherwise than admit the sacred worth of religion?

Religion, what treasures untold

Reside in that beautiful word;

More precious than silver and gold,

Or all that this world can afford.

Why, then, do we find so great a number of objectors and antagonists? Evil-minded persons of course we might expect would resist, because they do not wish to obey.

But no candid mind that such is the description of all those who stand aloof and declare they do so because they do not discern those virtues in the adherents or religion which they have a right to expect.

The history of the Church is undoubtedly delineated prophetically in this Book of Revelation. Come up hither, it said to John, and I will shew thee things that shall be hereafter (Revelation 4:1).

What was shewn has been only dimly understood, because interpreters have too much regarded the disclosures as applicable to external things - the rise and fall of monarchies, and changes in the political condition of mankind.

We should, however, keep steadily in mind the Saviors words: My kingdom is not of this world. The Church of God is the object of especial Divine care, and can co-exist and flourish under any form of earthly government.

The scenes beheld by the Apostle John were spiritual scenes, beheld in the spiritual world. The rule for understanding these is laid down by the Apostle Paul: Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth: comparing spiritual things with spiritual (1 Corinthians 2:13).

The things seen were spiritual, and they are to be compared with spiritual things, with the changes and the conditions of the Church, as thereafter they would be.

Two great and monstrous forms were beheld. Firstly, the great red dragon, and the two beasts which obtained authority and power from him.

Secondly, an enormous woman, gaudily attired, obtaining power over the kings of the earth, ostentatiously parading her admiration for mystery, drunken with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus, and called Babylon the Great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.

We have already seen that the dragon and his beasts represent that unhappy form of religion, in which much is made of faith and dogma, but in which much is made of faith and dogma, but in which the heart and life are unchanged. Selfishness is there still. It is only a serpent with wings; and because love and charity are almost overlooked, society remains a spotted and checkered mixture, fair enough in

many respects, but liable to dangerous and terrible out-breaks of violence and malignancy, spotted like a leopard, and with a leopards malignant humor.

It is that dangerous form of the Protestant religion of which Wesley wrote: We may learn hence how great watchfulness they need who desire to be real Christians, considering what a state the world is in. May not each of them well say:

Into a world of ruffians sent,

I walk on hostile ground;

Wild human bears, on slaughter bent,

And ravening wolves surround. The woman will represent another department of the Church, and the prostitution of religion by the lust of power and gain.

The very center of religious progress is humility. The very soul of all evil, the master-passion, is unchecked self-love. Without subduing this, and installing a spirit of lowliness in its place, there can be no saving religion. Hence, the Lord commenced His teaching with Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. How carefully the Lord inculcated this in every form. When James and John, from outraged pride, were for calling down fire from heaven to burn the village that would not receive them, Ye know not, He said, what spirit ye are of.

When the twelve disputed among themselves which should be greatest, how tenderly, but yet how emphatically, He earned them against the spirit of domination.

Jesus called them unto Him, and said: Ye know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you; but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant: even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many (Matthew 20:25, 26).

He placed Himself, the King of Saints, as their model, as the One Who was meek and lowly in heart.

While the Church was in its days of early purity, genuine Christians were meek and humble men, patterns of whatsoever things, as the Apostle Paul said, are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report (Phill. 4:8).

When, however, political importance was granted to the Church, and earthly prosperity was attained, vile self crept in. The spirit of Him Who made Himself poor that He might save the world was altogether forgotten, and ambition broke out in every direction. History records the sad change of spirit which troubled the Church, and turned those who pushed themselves forward, amongst the meek followers of the crucified Redeemer, into turbulent self-seekers, quarrelsome creed-makers, and grandiose claimants of pompous and profane titles.

According to the Savior, the Christians who are humblest and most childlike are the greatest - that is, the best. But it is not so now. Who shall be greatest, the clergy or the people? This was soon settled.

Every real Christian, according to apostolic teaching, is a Church in miniature - he is a king and a priest. A few in a house formed a larger Church, and every minister was a bishop or overseer to guide the flock. But ambition soon determined, whatever the number of heavenly-minded disciples, there was no church, where there was no bishop.

Who shall be greatest came up again. Were all bishops equal, or was not the bishop of the Emperors city a much greater man than the rest. Worldly time-servers decided that he was, and so a certain extra greatness was claimed for the Bishop of Rome; and when the Emperor removed to Constantinople, the bishop of that city claimed to be the greatest - the universal bishop.

The storm of self-seeking commenced again. They denounced each other, they excommunicated each other and so from century to century the dreadful swelling of the lust of power continued, until the professed Church of the Lord Jesus, with its dissensions, persecutions, wars, and cruelties, became rather an image of the lower kingdom than the peaceful fold of a heavenly flock.

The shocking spectacle became common of Pope excommunicating Pope, two or three Popes at a time. Council condemned Council. Pope against Council, and Council against Pope. Bishops and archbishops going out to war. Popes appointed from among the worst of men, appointed by the lowliest of women. Desolation reigning everywhere. The words of the prophet were realized again: How is the faithful city become a harlot!

It was full of judgment; righteousness lodged in it; but now murderers (Isaiah 1:21).

This had been the career of Babylon of old. In its early and purer days it had enjoyed heavenly states, divine gifts, and was a great light-bearer (Lucifer), son of the morning.

But Babylon became infatuated by the lust of power. They said in their heart: I will ascend into heaven. I will exalt my throne above the stars of God.... I will ascend above the heights of the clouds: I will be like the Most High (Isaiah 14:12-14). They said, I shall be a lady for ever. I am, and there is none else beside me; I shall not sit as a widow: neither shall I know the loss of children (Isaiah 47:7, 8).

This was Babylon of ancient time, and John was shewn that there would again be a Babylon in Christendom History shows how thoroughly it has been realized.

The same vaunting of itself as the Eternal City has distinguished Papal Rome. The same incessant craving for dominion, the same opposition to the spirit of true religion, and to the cultivation and spread of truth, especially of truth spiritual and divine.

Light is the glorious claim of true religion - light, truth, and freedom for every man. I am the Light of the World; he that followeth Me shall not walk in darkness. Let thine eye be single, and thy whole body shall be full of light. Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon thee. Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

But mystery is the mark of Babylon; Mystery is on her forehead. The people must bow down their

reason to the mysteries of the Church.

The Scriptures teach that God is light; but Babylon teaches that He is an incomprehensible and inscrutable mystery. It is clear that He is three persons, each of whom is God and Lord BY HIMSELF, but a great mystery how He is one.

The Scriptures are full of mysteries, and the people must not read them. At some former periods this was forbidden on pain of death. The worship of God is a mystery, and must be done in an unknown tongue.

It is a great mystery how a little wafer, after a few words of a priest, while every chemical property it had before remains, and it would as soon be devoured by a mouse as before, is still no longer bread, but the body, blood, and Divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

It is a vast mystery how a sinful man, who can no more see into the heart of his professed penitent than the penitent can see into his, can yet forgive him his sins, and pretend to admit him into heaven.

The true term for these, and crowds of other enigmas of Babylon, is not mysteries, but falsities.

Such mystery tends to keep the mind in bondage, and has been sustained for that purpose by all who believe that ignorance is the mother of devotion. But the Word of the blessed Savior teaches: If the truth shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

From the commencement of these sad declensions, after charity had waxed cold and iniquity had abounded, in the Nicene age, in the fourth century, by successive increase of the lust of power, Christian simplicity, virtue and truth decayed, until every abomination became familiar and general among the highest dignitaries of the Church of Rome.

Constant frauds were practised and connived at to obtain increased power. Forgeries, such as the forged decretals of Isodore; continuous wars against the emperors and against each other; persecutions such as those in the Netherlands against the Waldenses, Albigenses, and in France and Germany; the constant villanies of the Inquisition, and the impure lives of the chiefs of the Church, proclaimed and described by Romish writers themselves, show that there was no longer a Church the wife of the Lamb, but the Mother of Abominations. There were, says Archbishop Genebrard, of Aix, in 150 years, fifty popes so dissolute, that they ought rather to be called apostates than apostolic.

Of these times, another Roman author, in the Annals of Buronius, exclaims: How horrible was the aspect of the Roman Church during the domination of the most infamous courtesans, who disposed of the Holy See at their pleasure, made bishops, and, what is still more horrible and wicked, placed their lovers in the chair of St. Peter.

Perhaps its worst period was just before the Reformation, when the vile Spaniard, Borgia, became Pope Alexander VI. in 1492. He has been depicted by many writers as probably the worst and most polluted man of his time, and he caused Savonarola, one of the best, to be burnt alive, not being able to bear the pure and noble faithfulness of the preacher.

This Pope was called by the Cardinals themselves, as recorded by Sismondi, the simoniacal, incestuous,

and poisoning Pope.

Doubtless in the Romish Church there have been myriads of excellent men and women, sincere worshipers of God, and self-denying benefactors of men, souls whom nothing could pervert; and so there are at the present day. These nurse the few truths they have, and cultivate in themselves the spirit of goodness and heartfelt devotion. These doubtless will be welcomed in heaven, for they are heavenly.

But the Romish system, as developed for a thousand years, and as it exists, though crippled and decaying, at the present day, no just and well-informed mind can doubt answers exactly to the religion of mystery, the mother of false doctrines (harlots), and of the abominations of the earth. What other system has committed fornication as she has with the kings of the earth, promising to keep their subjects obsequious to their rule, good or bad?

What system has arrayed itself as she has with purple and scarlet color, decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication?

To reign over all the kings of the earth (v. 18) has been the avowed and grand aim of the Papal system. To gratify her craving for power over the souls, and thence over the bodies of men, she has mixed paganism, lying, legends, superstitious mummary, and allowances for guilt of every kind, with immense talent and cunning, surrounding the whole with a thin veil of Christian names and perverted quotations, but totally overlooking the indispensable Christian duty, Ye must be born again. Ye must, above all things, put on charity, which rejoices in the truth, and is the bond of perfectness.

While John looked with astonishment and horror at this amazing product of a prostituted Christianity, the angel said: I will tell thee the mystery of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten hems. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not, and shall ascend out of the abyss (bottomless pit), and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the Book of Life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast THAT WAS, and IS NOT, and YET IS.

It has often, and justly, been urged that it is an evidence of the imperishable divinity of religion, that it has survived all its perversions and all the crimes that have been committed in its name.

So it is with the Word of God. It has been garbled, perverted by tradition, made the instrument of a thousand wrongs, tortures and torments, made to bear systems utterly repugnant to its nature, a fierce Calvinism and a despotic Popedom. It has been rejected and despised, and yet it exists and comes forth to overthrow what is repugnant to it, to triumph and restore. In Psalms 45:4, as properly translated, it is written, Ride prosperously on the Word of Truth. It was represented by the beast made to carry this monstrous woman.

The Word of God, in the early ages of Christianity, was the universal teacher. It was read, and owned and loved as the holy seed - the divine armor - the food of the soul - the means of regeneration - the inspired Scripture, which furnished the man of God thoroughly for every good work.

Out of it the few texts were taken which laid the foundation of the Papal system: Thou art Peter, and

upon this rock (petra, not Peter) I will build My Church; and a few others, but twisted and perverted against the whole tenour of the Scriptures, which would be seen if the Divine Book remained familiar with the people. So it was gradually withdrawn, and became unknown. To them, IT WAS NOT. Hidden away in the libraries of a few monasteries, shackled, and forbidden to be read, there was no power, it was thought, that could shake a system in which man was put in the place of God, mystery in the place of truth, and ceremony and ritual instead of enlightened worship.

But the Word was not really destroyed; it was only hidden. They durst not destroy it, for their few passages were their only prop.

Luther found the Word in the library of his monastery, and saw how contrary its teaching was to the dark corruptions everywhere prevailing, the indulgences for sin, and the mummeries called the Church. His appeals to righteousness and truth woke up other learned and sympathetic souls, and the Word was translated for the people, never to be lost again. IT YET IS. Its re-appearance was like morning light over the world.

The animal upon which the woman sat is said to be full of names of blasphemy, not because the Word is really so, but while this impious woman, the lust of spiritual power, rides upon it, every part is perverted, and is made to speak the very opposite of what it really teaches.

It blasphemates against God and against His kingdom, against man, and his most glorious powers and progress. When brought out, and restored to its proper use, it will destroy the harlot (see 5:16). The ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and burn her with fire.

The seven mountains represented by the seven heads of the animal are all the holy affections which the Word develops. Mountain, in a good sense, corresponding to exalted heavenly love, and seven to what is sacred and complete, as in the case of the seven candlesticks (Revelation 1:13); the seven stars (Revelation 2:1); the seven lamps of fire before the throne (Revelation 4:5); the seven seals (Revelation 5:1); the seven horns, and the seven eyes of the Lamb (Revelation 5:6).

The seven kings represent the governing truths of religion connected with the exalted affections represented by the seven mountains. Five are fallen, means that the greater part are rejected; one signifies that Jesus is still acknowledged; and when they are shown that He is Jehovah as a glorified Divine Man, they will look at it with favor at first, but soon reject it. The other is not yet come, and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

The ten horns mean the powers of the Word when its truths are known. Thus the Psalmist: I said unto the fools Deal not foolishly, and to the wicked Lift not up the horn (lxxv. 4). All the horns of the wicked shall be cut off; but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted (v. 5.) The Lamb is said to have seven horns, meaning that He is perfect in the Divine powers which can advance truth and goodness in the Church, and among men.

The beast that was, and is not, is declared to be the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition, means that the Word; which is full of Divine goodness, though rejected by the old Papal system, as no longer necessary, the Pope being infallible, will yet make a new beginning. To the lovers of Papal

extravagances and superstition the Word will be more and more rejected, until they have entirely renounced it. What can they want with the Divine Word, when they have a living infallible oracle, whom they can work at pleasure? Yet if they speak not according to this WORD, it is because there is no light in them (Isaiah 8:20). IT YET IS. Seven completes one range of progress, and then begins afresh.

It will be the eighth, and was the very life of the former seven. The stone cut out without hands will become a great mountain (of goodness), and fill on the whole earth (Daniel 2:35).

The Word of the Lord shall cover the earth as the waters cover the sea, and none shall hurt nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain (Isaiah 11:9).

Oh, yes. IT YET IS, and the Word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword (Hebrews 4:12). Superstition, darkness, and despotism are yet to fly before it.

The powers of the Word, the ten horns, which have been little regarded, will become accepted, and they will make men earnest. Their possessors will at first oppose the full sovereignty of the Lord Jesus, the Divine Lamb, but He will overcome them, and they will acknowledge Him as King of kings and Lord of lords. And they who then gather round Him will be called, and chosen and faithful (v. 14).

Then spurious systems of superstition will disappear. Light and love will reign. The Word YET IS, and our Bible Societies are sending it forth in one hundred and sixty languages and millions of copies to do its glorious work. The religion of being good and doing good will advance, spreading glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men. No child shall lack its education or its training; no feeble one shall fail of help. Love to God and love to man shall be carried into every office and into every work, and righteous USE be the universal law.

Those who have not been men of love that is, whose minds have been external and carnal, and who therefore have not been written in THE BOOK OF LIFE (OR LOVE), have wondered at the strange use that has been made of the Word of God, its having been owned and denied, used and abused, its having been made to bear a system so contrary to its own nature, and yet rising again to overthrow the very system that has juggled and sought its own ends with it. It is marvelous, and at first perplexing, even confounding. Yet men of love and humility can understand it.

They have no doubt that Divine Providence, which is infinite love and wisdom working out the most gracious ends, and Whose tender mercies are over all His works, could not have reclaimed so vast a multitude of His intelligent creatures as now constitute Christendom from their dense and dark idolatry and barbarism, but by suffering a system in which their ambitions would have play to some extent, and their multiplied idolatries would be much restricted, though altogether to abolish it was more than their imperfect states would bear.

By these Divine permissions, the northern myriads of rough, bold, hardy nations were brought nearer the light - were made familiar with as much of the Gospel as they could bear, and, united with Christendom, would form a great and powerful center, prepared in due time to receive higher disclosures of heavenly wisdom, and spread them over all the world.

The Lord said, in the days of His flesh: I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. And again: The time cometh when I will chew you plainly of the Father.

In the days of dim and imperfect Christianity, great principles were largely diffused, and immense progress was made. Slavery was continually diminished, woman raised and respected as the help meet and equal of man. Manners were constantly softened and purified, and war made less brutal and sanguinary. Human rights were increasingly respected, and the arts and the literary tastes which embellish and improve the mind were preserved, strengthened and diffused, so as to prepare the way at last for a grander diffusion everywhere of the Divine graces of love, justice, wisdom and peace among all people.

That time is now dawning among mankind, and it is opening from the Divine Word, that YET IS. For this schools are spreading in all nations, that all may read, and learn and love the things of heaven. For this sciences are opened, multiplied and spread with unparalleled abundance, and ere long will all be seen to concentrate in the science of being good and true - angel-like.

For this, roads and communications of every kind are constantly being made more easy and perfect between the different countries of the earth, that the good of each and the blessings of each may become the possessions of all, and the people of all nations may learn to banish jealousy, and know, esteem, and respect each other.

There shall be one King over all the earth (Jesus, the Divine King). In that day there shall be one Lord, and His name One (Zechariah 14:9).

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## **No. 12. April 25, 1878. THE MILLENNIUM, THE JUDGMENT, AND THE OPENING OF THE BOOKS.**

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their words (Revelation 20:12).

WE have frequently, in former discourses, shewn that the great subjects of the Divine Book of Revelation are not to be interpreted of political changes or literal circumstances, but of spiritual things, and the states and circumstances of the Church. It is the Revelation of Jesus Christ unto the Churches concerning the Churches, and how it would be hereafter with His Church universal.

The scenes were spiritual, and, as the Apostle said, the Holy Spirit teacheth to compare spiritual things with spiritual. It is quite palpable to the thoughtful mind that here, more than elsewhere, It is the spirit that giveth life (2 Corinthians 3:6). Here, surely, the Saviors saying must be applied, My words, they are spirit and they are life (John 6:63).

Yet great numbers of pious and excellent people have perplexed themselves by taking the descriptions of this chapter in a most strangely literal way. They have supposed two bodily resurrections to be taught, and a thousand years, or, as some say, three hundred and sixty-five thousand years between them.

During this intermediate time the devil shall be bound with a great literal chain, and sealed up that he could deceive the nations no more; but yet at the end of the time he should go forth, and find nations in number like the sand of the sea, whom he could bring up to destroy the camp of the saints, and which must therefore be evil nations.

A whole library of books has been written on these and kindred subjects by those who have indulged in this literalizing and sensualizing the Divine scenes which are intended to give us Divine disclosures of spiritual and eternal things.

We ought always to remember that judgment takes place in the eternal world after death, not in the outer world at all. It is appointed to men once to die, said the Apostle, but after this (death) the Judgment (Hebrews 9:27).

A THOUSAND, in spiritual things, is a number that only expresses fullness and completeness, rounding off, as it were, the subject. To the Lord a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years.

Hence, in this book, we have the tribes which were sealed, each one twelve thousand (Revelation vii.); the one hundred and forty-four thousand who stood on Mount Zion with the Lamb (Rev xiv.); the measure of the New Jerusalem, each way twelve thousand furlongs.

Surely, it is not difficult to perceive that thousands in these cases do not specify exact literal numbers, but express the fullness and completeness of the numbers of the saved, and of the fullness and completeness of the truths which form the walls of the Holy City, the Church. Instead of the Scriptures teaching two separate bodily resurrections with a very long time between, they do most positively teach that earthly bodies are no part whatever of mans resurrection. It is the soul, the real man, that rises, not in any case the material body. The body thou sowest is not the body that shall be (1 Corinthians 15:37). Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:50). There is a natural body, and there, is a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44). It is raised a spiritual body (1 Corinthians 15:44).

In perfect harmony with this St. John says, I saw the souls of them that were beheaded (literally; smitten with the axe) for the witness of Jesus, and for the Word of God.

It was the souls of these people, not their bodies, which the Apostle says he saw, and who constituted the: FIRST RESURRECTION.

The Divine Judge was, in fact, preparing in the World of Spirits for one of those great judgments by which one age or dispensation is closed, and another begun.

When a Church has, through ambition and worldliness, corrupted the grand simple principles of Divine Truth, and set up their own traditions, pious, humble, devout people, come to embrace and obstinately cling to these traditions, however puerile and mischievous, as if they were eternal truths.

The Fakeers of India, who become stiff with standing on one leg, in honor of their god; the religious of the middle ages, whose macerations, self-torments, and endless repetitions of prayer, and whose dirt, they supposed were most pleasing to the Divine Being; the rigidly righteous of the present day, who regard with bitterness such as do not think of Gods anger as they do, and who seek to become regenerate by the Lords help, while they keep the commandments of God, are not fit for heaven. Vast numbers of these are inwardly good, but they have been misled by their education, and surrounding circumstances.

For hundreds of years, when a Church is declining, multitudes pass into the world of spirits, and cannot enter heaven, until they are instructed, and their fallacies, which they have been taught and devoutly cherished, have thus been removed. Some are very tender and heavenly-minded in their ends and purposes, and when Judgment is preparing they are elevated first. Theirs is the First Resurrection.

These heavenly-minded ones, detained by cherished errors, are those who are mentioned in chap. 6:9-11: I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the Word of God, and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth. And white robes (pure truths) were given unto every one of them, and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season; that is, until judgment could be fully entered upon, and a new dispensation commenced.

The evil ones who had to some extent infested them, because of the errors and fallacies still remaining with them, and who are called the devil and satan, are, by the power of Divine Providence; represented by a chain removed and cast down, until they were safely and triumphantly raised to

heaven.

The same thing was done at the Lords first advent. Now is the judgment of this world; now shall the Prince of this world be cast out (John 12:31). Again, I beheld Satan like lightning fall from heaven (Luke 10:18). When He ascended up on high He led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Now that He (Christ) ascended, what is it but that He also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that He might fill all things (Ephesians 4:8-10).

This complete protection and raising of the truly spiritually minded, who had endured persecution in the world, may be physical, or may be spiritual, or both, is the first resurrection in the inner world. Their enemies cannot come near. They are bound completely, and for them for ever, for a thousand years.

These heavenly-minded ones are raised and freed for ever, for them also for a thousand years.

But when these have been fully provided for, and are externally safe, blessed, and holy, in the first, the BEST resurrection, they live in love, and reign with the Lord Jesus, governing every thought, feeling, and desire in the little kingdom of their own souls (1 Corinthians 4:8, Revelation 1:6), never fearing the second death, there are others whose states are to be investigated.

The rest of the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened.

The rest of the dead are those who are not the interiorly spiritually-minded, but external men, and yet they are not all alike.

They are not sons of God, but some of them can be hired servants in the kingdom of our Father.

Some are very dead. To be carnally-minded is death (Romans 8:6). The books must be opened, but what are these books?

Human minds are wonderfully endowed, and men are created upon earth that they may all be engaged in writing books. What is written in these books is absolutely accurate as a sun-written photograph, and according as the character written is heavenly or the reverse, so the minds are fit for heaven, or unhappily are unfitted for entering there.

That human minds thus are books, and that they are books of the most perfect and extraordinary kind, a very little reflection on our own experience will enable us to understand.

Every one knows that his memory is a record; and this is not only the teaching of human experience, but is also constantly recognized in Holy Writ. We have said that human minds are books, and that the Divine intelligence and wisdom are exhibited in their construction. Their arrangement is immeasurably above all human manufactured books, as Gods works in all other respects are superior to human doings.

For, in the first place, if we think for a moment upon the perfection in which those books are written, as compared with all human volumes, we cannot fail to be astonished. Books were originally made by

the slow process of writing. Many very beautiful things were done in this way, and in ancient times no doubt people found that books of this construction were most wonderful and remarkable advantages and helps to human progress - and so they were.

After a while, about the time of the Reformation, we know that a great march was made in the construction of books, and printing came to the worlds help. By its means not only were books multiplied and cheapened, but in every way a most admirable advancement was made. Very lately, when we had the three hundredth anniversary of the discovery of printing, you probably recollect the remarkable performance was announced of manufacturing a book in the Oxford Press, in the most beautiful style, in twenty-four hours, reckoning from the time when the first types were placed up to the time when the volume in question was exhibited - within twenty-four hours beautifully bound, and a most beautiful specimen of printing. This was indeed a remarkable thing. And then came the manufacturing of books by photography. This is still more astonishing, the sun being the printer, and instantaneous and exact impressions being made. This would seem almost to be the last step of perfection in human production in relation to books. But this last is in reality the way in which the impressions on those wonderful books, HUMAN MINDS, have always been produced. The book of the human mind is being fitted up by knowledge, and by heavenly principles, from the very first. The work begins when the babe is lying upon its mothers lap.

Its dawning mind is impressed by the different changes of the mothers countenance. Each smile and each tender aspect of the mothers love affects the child's little learning heart. These impressions have been taking place ever since there was a little child - and all done, you perceive, by the most perfect photography.

How Divine skill surpasses human science is illustrated by this first operation of baby life, and what has to be carried out by the photographer now. What a pity it would be if a little baby had to commence by having an outward photographic chamber, and be required to manage all the chemicals and all the rest of the paraphernalia which in a round-about way are used by photographers to take their wonderful pictures. And not only so: but these books do what all the photographers in the world cannot accomplish to this moment - they take colors, and they at once so seize them as to retain them. They get impressions through the ears as well as through the eyes. The whole person takes impressions by the five senses, and is storing them up in the wonderful library called the memory.

The whole world is thus made to minister to the formation of the human book, and not the outer world alone, but the inner world of emotion, of imagination, and rational and irrational thoughts. The wonderful book of the human mind is obtaining a grand store of instruction every day.

We can form but little conception how much a child learns to know, unless we reflect upon all the small details of human life.

But not only so. There are laws in connection with those wonders in the formation of the books of human character that are of a most remarkable kind. How wonderfully is the knowledge stored; how orderly is it arranged. How aptly it comes when we want it. Each soul is his own book-keeper, and that unerringly, and without trouble. Here again we observe how Divine skill infinitely surpasses human ingenuity. If an impression has been taken by a photographer, he has to go back into a dark chamber, and there be engaged for some time in endeavoring to fix the impression, and make it so that it will not

pass off.

The mind has got all the appliances, and they are carried about without any difficulty; and it is not only a book that is being completed - it is a library.

The mind of a child has been said to be like a sheet of black paper; but it is not so. Ordinary philosophers have said that the human mind is like a sheet of white paper, with nothing at all on it. It is a mistake. It is like a sheet of colored paper, some colored in one way and some in another; but there is a certain hereditary character and tendency which form the basis of the human mind, and upon which the after impressions have to be made. It is not simply a book, it is a library - a library of such wonderful arrangement, that it is amazing not only in quantity but in quality. It is most astonishing to think of its faculties in every way.

The more knowledge is stored up in the mind, the more room there is.

Life is short, but art is long. See how any art or science opens out to one who cultivates it; but no one is ever oppressed, by the increased extent of his knowledge.

Then there is the reproductive power of thought by reflection. All that exists in society around us, from the stick to the steam-engine; houses, palaces, ships, all are formed first in the mind, and then are produced in outside life. These thoughts are formed, and stored, and carried, without the least difficulty. Here, again, we pause to notice the superiority of Divine works over human skill. If all our information were written in outward volumes, only got down when they were wanted, what an obstruction it would be! Where these thoughts and words go to, what becomes of them, how they are arranged in the human system, is one of the wonders of Divine Wisdom. No one can thoroughly and clearly understand it; but that it is so, every one knows. And not only so, but there are plenty of persons who, in knowing one of the copious languages, know forty thousand words, besides the immense number of things they know, and these are carried with ease; they are no burden.

Some persons can arrange twenty languages in their minds quite well, and carry them without the least trouble. These are some of the wonders of the human books of Divine arrangement in the mind and character of man. How can we do otherwise than say: The Lord is infinite in wisdom. The perfection of His Divine Majesty is beyond all thought. Not only are there all these arrangements for an abundant supply of the matters out of which thought and progression are to be formed, but there are the godlike faculties of free thought and free determination, so as to use all the knowledge we possess into a thousand different forms of manly service.

Although no one can explain precisely how or where the treasures of human intelligence are exactly arranged, they are so possessed that when they are wanted they appear. What a magnificent thing it would be if, in the library of the British Museum, when a person went in order to elaborate and illustrate his particular views, and to get a clear apprehension of his subject, the books came down from one shelf and down from another, without any trouble, and without any people to fetch the volumes. This is the character of the mental library. These are the books spoken of in our text.

There is another important particular I will mention. Not only do we take full notice of the impressions which are thus afforded us in every way, but secret things are the plainest and most distinct. The more

schemingly any work is set about, the more palpably does it make its impressions on the human character. The character also is being built up, the book is being written, as much from within as from without - our reasonings and resolutions, our purposes, aims, and determinations. Our daily efforts, feeble or strong, our mental conquests or defeats, our deeds, and words - for words also are deeds - these are constantly writing our book, unerringly, and we ARE THE BOOK-KEEPERS.

In building up a mans character it is essential that he should be free, or it would not be his character. Hence we live in a world of coverings. Everything in this stage of being is covered up. The corn is in its sheath, the pea in its pod, the tree in its bark, man in his body, and his inner mind in his outer mind.

If it were not so, a human being would always live as if under the eye of a policeman, or of thousands of policemen, and never be himself. Hence to exercise the godlike quality of freedom, the very center of humanity and progress, each man must have the shelter of keeping himself from inspection as to his real character, as long as he desires it, for the protection of his liberty of thought, feeling, and action.

People thus have, and must have, a sort of every-day countenance, and often a fair and polite expression. This is often very different from the inward purposes of the heart and soul, and therefore it is that these books are covered up; and hence the necessity of having them opened in the eternal world.

The great multitude of human beings are some more and some less of this class, concealed by a smooth and agreeable exterior.

There are two extremes which are in a different category - the extremely bad and the extremely good. There are souls so full of malice, cunning, and shamelessness, they do not care to pretend to be good. There are also rough, bad, bold souls, who daringly defy both God and man. They proclaim their own judgment, and at death these go direct to the infernal kingdom. There needs no hesitation about them they judge themselves. These had hell within them. They were hells in miniature. There are others again of whom the Apostle remarks that their good works go beforehand. Those are persons of such genuine sincerity of character, of such real heavenly goodness, of such inner conjunction with the Lord Jesus Christ in the regenerate life, that they too are judged already. They are angels in the house. They are known by the works they love, and the virtues of a heavenly discipleship. Their good works go beforehand.

They were clothed with the white raiment of a virtuous life long before they passed from the world. They are such as are described when the Apostle says, as you will find in Phill. 4:3, Whose names are written in the Book of Life. The manifestation of such is of heavenly love shown in a heavenly life. These belong to the other book which was opened, and which is THE BOOK OF LIFE. The Book of Life means the BOOK OF LOVE. I have frequently pointed out that love and life are interchangeable in Scripture. Life does not mean mere existence. To be spiritually-minded, says the Apostle, is life and peace. Hence, because our Lord is love itself, He is said to be life itself. I am the resurrection and the life. God is love, and God is life. Ye will not come unto Me, the Lord Jesus says, that ye may have life, because the love of God is not in you.

It is said of certain persons that their names are written in the Lambs Book of Life, which means their nature is written therein. Theirs is a spirit of heavenly life. If a person, from love to the Lord Jesus

Christ, will turn against all that is selfish, unholy, and base, keeping the Lords commandments, he is entering more and more into life.

He that overcometh, says the Lord Jesus, in the 5th verse of the third chapter of this Book, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the Book of Life, but I will confess his name before My Father, and before His angels. The more the disciple of the Lord Jesus overcomes, the more life comes into him. The Lord Jesus is the tree of life. His kingdom is the kingdom of life, and as we receive His nature into ours, as we eat His flesh, and drink His blood, we Have ETERNAL LIFE; that is, eternal love. All heaven is a grand Book of Life. Each angel there is a WORD in that Book, and all heaven testifies that the spirit of the Book is, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men. That is the great Book of Life. The other books that are spoken of here are the books written by each being for himself. Whosoever is not live with love for the Lord Jesus Christ is forming a book of death. The other books were opened, because, as we said, the vast mass of human beings are not what they seem. They are books that must needs be opened. They have spent their lives of moderation and conformity to the demands of order and the demands of the world, by means of which they keep themselves without blame it may be, or without any very serious blame in human life. But what is their inner spirit? Do they know themselves?

There are others that march about with an air of sanctimonious hypocrisy, with a pretentious exhibition of the sacred character - whited sepulchers, beautiful without, perhaps standing in very high places, but alas! far different within. Many strange exhibitions of this kind have seen presented in history, in which there have been souls belted with fold upon fold of hypocrisy; pretending to be all on fire for patriotism when it meant self, all on fire for religion when it meant greed - men of order, decency, and propriety in appearance, but inwardly prompted by nothing but their own selfishness. This is the class, those who are externally decent and orderly, whose books have to be opened, so that it may be seen what the inward heart, mind, and life are, that they may be arranged for eternity, in the grand humanity of the universe. Bear well in mind that this world is not the world of judgment. It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment (Hebrews 9:27). And I saw (in the world of spirits) the dead, small and great, stand before God.

There have been plenty of persons in the dark ages who, having no idea of the real age of the world, or the thousands of millions who have inhabited it, supposed the little valley of Jehoshaphat to be the assize court of judgment to hold everybody who had been in the world. The millions of each generation were all to be crammed in there, which would not contain all the people of London, and the judgment was to take effect at that spot. But this arose from the grossest ignorance in relation to judgment, spiritual existence, and everything of the kind That He may clear away the clouds of falsity, and enable man to see the way of life, the Lord effects a judgment at the end of every dispensation, which is called the end of the world. Now is the judgment of this world, He said; now shall the Prince of this world be cast out (St. John 12:31). This was at the end of the Jewish world. At the end of every dispensation there is a great judgment held in the inner sphere of things, providing for a new dispensation being commenced.

Daniel says (7 chap. 9-10), I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of Days did sit, whose garment was white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool; his throne was like the fiery flame, and his wheels as burning fire. A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him;

thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him; the judgment was set, and the books were opened. The fiery stream is the Divine spirit, flowing from the Lord, and opening out the characters of those who have not been altogether pure and good, and of those outwardly good and inwardly bad, so that every one may see their ruling love, their master passion, their real character.

These are they upon whom judgment takes place. Their minds are the books which are opened, when the Divine stream of love and wisdom flowing touches them from God, before Whom they are judged. For we must all appear before the judgment-seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad (2 Corinthians 5:10). In Daniel, the Judge is said to be the Ancient of Days; in the New Testament Christ, because Jehovah of the Old Testament is Jesus of the New. It is not only whether we have done good things or bad things, but it is whether the things that we did were really good, or the things which appear bad are really bad things. This is what the judgment has to ascertain, and it ascertains it.

We often see, as life goes on, certain propensities of character acquire such overwhelming influence in the soul, that the least opposition excites a storm of rage. A word, a look, construed to be against the darling object, when the feelings are in this agonized tension, and the most fiery rage is excited.

This will help us to conceive the operation of the Spirit of the Lord on such as are not written in the Book of Life.

They whose names were not written in the Lambs Book of Life were cast into a name of fire; and whosoever was not written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire. That is to say, they were brought into such states of horror, of hatred, that their whole spirits were full of rage and displeasure - a fierce hatred takes possession of them.

Just as the owl flies from the sunlight, wicked souls cannot bear upon them the operation of the Divine stream.

God never desires the pain or suffering of a single human soul. Our Lord Himself describes the abode of the unhappy as where the fire is not quenched, and their worm dieth not. It is their worm and their fire, not His, but it is sure to kindle sooner or later. Behold all ye that kindle a fire, saith the Lord, and compass yourselves in the sparks thereof, ye shall lie down in sorrow; (Isaiah 2:11). The whole soul of a person who has been living in opposition to God becomes a furnace of infernal love and passion; and when such thoroughly defeated and exposed, they become a living hell, fiery with indignation, fury, and hate.

O then, let us co-operate with Him, so that when our books appear there will only be lines of the Book of Life, so that we may with loving trust say, like the celebrated Franklin, on his epitaph--

THE WORK ITSELF SHALL NOT BE LOST, FOR IT WILL, AS HE BELIEVED, APPEAR ONCE MORE IN A NEW AND MORE BEAUTIFUL EDITION, CORRECTED AND AMENDED BY THE AUTHOR.



## No. 13. May 2, 1878. THE SEA, AND DEATH AND HELL, GIVING UP THEIR DEAD.

And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works (Revelation 20:13).

IN considering the Divine lesson of the previous verse, you will remember that on Sunday last the subject of our investigation was especially the Divine fact that is described as the books being opened, and we pointed out the wonderful character of those books. We said men were born into the world endowed with capability of an astonishing kind to write these books, and that they were constantly doing it every day, whether willing or not. Each man is a spiritual book-keeper, and is implanting in his mind and memory all the things which occur in his life, according to fixed and definite laws. This book, when written, is each man's character, and fits him either for a home amongst the happy, or unhappily unfits him for the kingdom of heaven.

Out of these, as out of the pictures of a magic lantern, will the surroundings of the soul come in the eternal world.

We ought, as far as possible, to describe the wonderful means, the astonishing facilities both of observation, of the memory, and the recollection of internal impressions in all the ways by which these marvelous books are constructed; and we wish now to carry our attention a little further.

We are happy that the opportunity has fallen upon this remarkable portion of the year, its last Sunday evening, the time when people usually take stock of their affairs in other respects. We would wish to turn attention to the importance of taking stock in this respect, seeing how these books, of ours give an account of our condition for the year that has passed, and how we stand for enduring the opening of the books described in our text, and which assuredly will come to pass when we quit this outer world, which may be soon, and is undoubtedly certain.

Tis greatly wise to talk with our past hours,

And ask them what report they bore to heaven.

We pointed out, in passing, that judgment takes place in the spiritual world in that region of it into which we enter immediately after death, and therefore you perceive it is said, I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God. It was a mistake in the dark ages, when they fancied that judgment would take place in this outer world. This is the world of work, the world of preparation, of growth. The eternal is the world of judgment. We cited the Apostles words, that some men's good works go beforehand, and they are judged of themselves. They evidently are heavenly men, and go at once to heaven. They carry heaven with them. They lived in heaven while they were here upon the earth, and took their own heaven in their own minds to join the grand heaven - the good, the true, and the happy in their eternal home.

These, we pointed out, are meant by those who written in the Lambs Book of Life, mentioned in the previous verse. That is to say, they form part of the grand boot of love. Love and life are

interchangeable and synonymous in the Divine Word. God is love and God is life. Every real follower of the Savior HATH everlasting life. The Lord says: I am come that ye may have life, and that ye may have it more abundantly. Mans spiritual life is at first that of a babe in Christ, and he goes on increasing his life until it fills the whole man, and forms a living world in Gods glorious Book of Life. Ye are our epistles, said the Apostle, seen and read of all men.

But besides the Book of Life, there are those other books where, alas! each man has been writing selfishness in his heart, where each has been writing carnal states, defiled pleasures, impressions of envy, covetousness, greediness.

You remember our Lord drew attention to these states. In fact, it is called, both in the Old Testament and the New, man writing himself in the earth. All that forsake Me, says the Lord in Jeremiah shall be written in the earth. When our Lord sought to display the earthly, selfish, and sensual character of the persons who wished to magnify their own virtue by bringing the poor unfortunate woman before the Lord to be condemned, as if to intimate how far they were above this poor creature, the Lord, who knew their hearts, sat down and wrote upon the earth an indication to them which they felt, that they were moved only by earthly, sensual, sanctimonious feelings. They retired one after the other, and then the Lord shewed His mode of treating the unfortunate by saying Neither do I condemn thee. Go and sin more. This was the spirit of heaven - that the spirit of earth.

Now it is in this way that Divine lessons of the highest interest are unfolded, as we see in this description of writing books.

And allow me now to ask you to attend while we carry the subject a little further, while we inquire whence the dead are said to come, and whither they are said to go. In the dark ages people took it for granted that dead bodies would be wanted in heaven and hell some time, and that therefore, when people came up to judgment, they would rise from the earth, and there would be previously a great coming together of bones and dust, filling the air in all directions.

Yet there is nothing of this in Scripture. The earthly body is our house, made of atoms, changing with every breath, with constant perspiration every hour. We have many bodies in a long life, but they serve for this world only, and are dissolved at death. He that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more (Job 9). When our earthly tabernacle is dissolved we have another house, our spiritual body, in which we can live eternal in the heavens (2 Corinthians 5:1).

To such it was a great perplexity to find that there is no account here of the dead coming from the earth. It is said the sea gave up its dead; but comparatively few bodies sink into the sea. If earthly bodies were to rise, it would be a very perplexing thing that the text should speak of the dead coming up out of the sea, and not a word be said about dead bodies coming out of the earth.

These had overlooked the apostolic teaching that flesh and blood do not inherit the kingdom of God, and that corruption doth not inherit incorruption (1 Corinthians 15:50).

Death and hell also delivered up the dead which were in them. Here, again, those who have not thought a little deeper than the surface have been greatly puzzled to know what dead could come out of death. Hell gave up the dead which were in it. Could it be dead bodies which were in hell? How

could dead bodies come out of hell, and what became of them?

These questions have very sorely puzzled those who have taken a superficial view of Divine words, and are not acquainted with the real nature of eternal things.

Sea and land in Scripture are used as symbols of spiritual things. Land represents the mind as to its capabilities for producing good affections and good works, the good fruits of the soul. Sea represents the world of knowledge and thought. Just as in nature we can travel by two general modes, by land or by sea, so in spiritual things we can advance in the way of thought, and this is like travelling on the sea; and in the advancement of virtue and good, this journeying by land. We can pass from thought to thought as fish move about in the water, and we can pass from one state of good things to another. This is life traveling on the land. The Israelitish journey from Egypt to Canaan, as is well known, represents the pilgrimage of spiritual life. The sea is a grand symbol of the world of thought, both good and bad. The world of good thought is frequently represented in Scripture by this sublime and most magnificent of all grand images. Who can stand on the coast of the sea, and not behold mirrored there the vast canopy above, with its clouds and stars, and vast and varied life, and say with the poet,

Roll on, thou great and grand wide ocean, roll,

Ten thousand fleets pass over thee in vain.

That the world of human thought is mirrored in its ordinary and peaceable modes by the sea in calm, and the way in which Almighty Wisdom governs it by the movement of the tides. But when great catastrophes and trials come, and there are storms in the ocean of mind, just as troubled as the tumults in the ocean of matter, you can remember the words in Isaiah 57:20:

The wicked are like the troubled sea when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. It is on this account that you find the sea used as representing this general mass of thought.

Ideas and sentiments floating about, as it were, from thought to thought, from view to view, are in the Scripture represented as fishes. Some, keen and crafty, are like sharks in the sea; others are like the gold and silver fishes.

Our Lord Himself says, in Matthew 13:47, The kingdom of heaven is like unto the net that was cast into the sea. He said His disciples, I will make you fishers of men; that is, they should take men out of mere earthly knowledge and worldly turmoil, into the peaceable ways of the Gospel. Being entirely taken up with worldly affairs is a very poor life compared with real heavenly life - the grand life of higher aims and hopes. It is the life of a fish, instead of the life of a man. A man thus incessantly engaged in temporal concerns can as little enter into the spiritual abodes of heaven as a fish would enter into repose in the atmosphere and enjoy it. A man who never gets a yearning and an appetite for heavenly things here, can never enjoy them in the other life. He would gasp in the atmosphere of heaven, like a fish out of water. Hence, it is important to lay this grand symbol to heart.

Just let us for a moment think. Are we going to be fish, or do we mean to be men? The thought that lifts a person up to celestial things is described by the flight of a bird; They that wait upon the Lord shall mount upon wings like eagles; they shall renew their strength; they shall run, and not be weary; they shall walk, and never faint. To soar into the region of intellectual thought, is to have a higher life than

that of a fish; but a person who rarely concerns himself about anything but simply earthly objects, and the concerns of this world, merely for the gratification of the love of wealth, and power, and fame amongst men, and so on, is just swimming about, realizing a low, external condition like the state of a fish, compared with that of a bird, or a man.

The flowing of Gospel truth amongst such is described by the sacred river descending into the sea. Then said he unto me, These waters issue out towards the east country, and go down into the desert, and go into the sea, which being brought forth into the sea, the waters shall be healed (Ezekiel 47:8).

Of the same sea it is written: Wast thou wrath against the sea, that thou didst ride upon thy horses and thy chariot of salvation?

This common mass of humanity must be tested. All of these are not alike. All are external, but all are not evil. Many are in low forms of good. They can become hired servants in their Fathers household, although they will not be sons and daughters. These are they who are meant by the words, And the sea gave up the dead which were in it. There is a very large class of those that are in the sea. They have made no great demonstration either for or against religion. They have gone on in the ordinary way, attending to the usual duties of their class, paying their way, minding their business, yet who never endeavored to rise up to real heavenly states of mind and feeling. Their number is vast, but they are not all alike; therefore, they have to be judged. There are those who never enter very definitely into heavenly states, because unhappily they have been brought up in families where training for heaven was unknown. Many of these, when opportunity is offered, can be led to higher and better states of mind.

There are those who were kept from religion because they were led to believe it inconsistent with a good business character - a thing to be left to sickness and old age.

There are those who have been deterred from religion because they have been told its doctrines were all mysterious, and there could be neither satisfaction nor delight in their study.

There are those who have been repelled from religion by unhappy cases of hypocrisy, religious dissensions, and sectarian bitterness in some of its professors.

There are those who have shunned religion because they were told it condemned even the innocent pleasures of life, and was morbid and melancholy.

There are those who have done evils, and lived in professions unworthy of them and injurious to society, but partly from ignorance, partly from custom, partly from circumstances, they have been little awakened to the real nature of their habits of life.

There are those who sin unto death, and those who sin not unto death, but they all so belong to the sea of mere external thought, that they have seldom aimed at anything higher.

Many of these have much in them that is truly excellent in many of the relations of life; much of humanity, of public spirit, of self-sacrifice, of devotion to the good of others. Many of these can have their ignorance removed, their failings removed. They are such as are spoken of when it is said the rest of the dead live not until the thousand years are finished. Some of such dead can be brought into

spiritual and heavenly life, though not of an exalted nature. The Lord will make the best of them.

We all shall be tried by our motives and ends,

And judgment be passed by the greatest of friends.

Yet they are not a high class of minds that are much governed by circumstances. Many persons who are born and brought up under the most unfavorable circumstances present the most notable, the most glorious instances of heavenly characters known amongst men. A noble mind creates circumstances.

All, however, have not great strength, and fervor, and determination. If there be deep and earnest real life in a person, although he has much to hamper him, he will persevere, remove his difficulties, and triumph over every obstacle to success. We must not expect this in every one.

Strange disclosures and changes of position will doubtless take place. Many poor creatures who have been looked down upon here, but who have fed the hungry, clothed the naked, visited the Sick, stinted themselves to feed their children or help a neighbor, will be owned by Him Who looks on the heart when the proud priest is abased and condemned. I remember once, in a time of great distress in the country, visiting a range of cottages of very poor people, who made little profession of religion, but who were helping each other. I found two families had adopted the orphan children of deceased poor friends. They had denied themselves in many respects to bring up those children, educate them, and preserve them in states of comfort until they could provide for themselves. Those things will not be forgotten in the eternal world. The Lord looks upon the heart, and many who have professed little, but had done much without profession, will come out in the eternal world far higher than those who have cried Believe! believe! but have not done the duties and charities required by the Lord. A little faith, if united to charity, justice, and self-denial - the grain of mustard seed - has really heaven in it, and will bring the dead right out of the sea, and plant them in the Better land.

To one of these abodes of rest,

O Lord, my longing spirit lead;

The lowest mansions of the blest

Will all desert of mine exceed.

It is not being in darkness that constitutes condemnation, but loving it. Bad men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil.

In the sea-state there are both good and bad, but only death and hell are cast into the lake of fire. What, then, is death? It is described in many ways. It is not death in the sense of non-existence, it is death in the sense of opposition to heavenly life.

Death in Scripture seldom means cessation of existence, even in this world, for in reality nothing dies at what we commonly call death. The soul does not die, it leaves the body to enter upon a fuller existence. The body does not die, it never lived, it only appeared to live, by being closely associated

with the living man, the soul.

What then, is death? The Apostle answers, To be carnally minded is death (Romans 8:6).

To be so absorbed in selfishness, as to be heedless of all the nobler affections. This is death.

To be dead to generosity, humanity, truth, justice, virtue, pity, sympathy, the love of country, the love of God and the love of man. This is death.

All the lower passions unbridled, vivid and intensified, all the nobler sentiments repelled or crushed out. This is death.

This terrible condition is the hereditary state, of every one to a certain extent; but with a divine germ of a better life, and divine truths by revelation, to raise the spiritually dead to life.

Just think, what a strange phenomenon a body would be if its nervous system were so paralyzed that it could only see ugly objects, only hear coarse and hideous sounds, only walk in defiled and loathsome places; was dead to sweet odors, entrancing sounds, lovely scenes, and all noble, manly, beautiful, useful and benevolent operations. This living death of the body would be universally lamented; and if there were just faint means of medical cure, no money would be spared by loving parents to rescue their children from such a hideous curse.

This precisely illustrates what is meant in Scripture, and thoughtful experience, by the DEATH OF THE SOUL. It is its living death.

The first time dying is mentioned in the Bible, it is this death that is meant. In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die (or dying - thou wilt die) (Genesis 2:17). Man ate, but he did not cease to exist. He died, however, to goodness and to God. I call heaven and earth to record this day against you, that I have set before you life and death, blessing and cursing; therefore, choose life, that both thou and thy seed may live; that thou mayest love the Lord thy God, that thou mayest obey His voice, and cleave unto Him (Deuteronomy 30:19).

Again, Jehovah says by the prophet, Why will ye die, O house of Israel? (Ezekiel 18:31).

Our Lord and His Apostles constantly use death in this sense.

The hour cometh, and now is, when the death shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live (John 5:25). My son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found (Luke 15:24).

The Apostle says, Thou hath He quickened, who were DEAD in trespasses and sins (Ephesians 2:1). Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the DEAD, and Christ shall give thee light (Ephesians 5:14). She that liveth in pleasure is DEAD while she liveth (1 Timothy 5:6).

Death, then, the death of the soul, is the lower nature, in which selfishness is Lord, so strengthened, brutalized, and fixed in sin, that the voice of truth is hushed, conscience is seared, and the soul settled firmly in the insanity of acting upon the principle of Evil, be thou my good.

Such are the dead, of whom the text says, Death gave up the dead. that were in it.

Hell gave up the dead that were in it.

Death, as we have seen, means a state of fixed and triumphant self-love. Hell means the false, self-satisfied, infernal ideas, by which the unhappy possessor of such a state supports, defends, and confirms his miserable delusions.

Death in the will, makes hell in the intellect. It is death perverting and polluting all the grand faculties of the intellect, to carry itself out, and confirm its foul phantasies.

In the human breast there dwell

Warring passions, fierce and dark,

Making of their home a hell--

Of the soul, a driving bark.

Hell first exists in the soul, and then spreads itself around. When the Psalmist is expressing the good mans gratitude for his salvation, he says, Great is Thy mercy towards me; and Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell (Psalms lxxxvi. 13).

When a man is delivered, by repentance and faith in the Lord, from hell in this life, there is no danger for him in the next.

It has been well said by an American clergyman, The great thing is not to keep the people out of hell, but to keep hell out of the people.

Not those who were in the sea were cast into the lake of fire, but only such of them as were in death and hell, or, in other words, had death and hell in them.

Many of these had displayed in the world names that they lived, but were found to be dead. They were judged not by their profession, much less by their creed; they were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

They had kept the account themselves, they were their own book-keepers, and according as their works really were, such was their lot.

This was universal - they were judged every man according to his works.

The works stamp a man either for good or for evil. It is not mere sentiment, nor is it simply outside works. Works have two sides. There is the outside, that appertains to those who are concerned with the work. The good works must be good works - works that are useful, that are conformable to what is right and proper in society; in fact, the upright and rightful discharge of mans duty, in the sphere of life in which the Lord has placed him, and doing it according to Gods commandments.

Good works may in this respect be very good to society; but a work depends upon the inner motive, whether it is really good or not. To do good works, a man must believe in God, and believe that He requires them to be done.

Good works are right in themselves, and it is right they should be done; but they are only good in the Divine sight when done from good motives, from heartfelt love to God and man.

One person will do kind things simply because he desires to appear amiable in the sight of others, and thus gratify one of the forms of selfishness. Good works of this kind are good, but, although good as to their objects and their recipients, are not good as to their real character.

Good works must flow from the Spirit of God. Hypocrites do good works to attain reputation, to carry out their selfish ends; and more extensive damage is done to society, in very many cases, by them, than from any of the crimes of downright rejectors of religion.

Good works are charity in feeling, and real faith, carried out in a virtuous life. Charity and faith are mere sentimentalities, not carried out in life. Charity, says the Apostle, rejoices in the truth, and carries out the truth into work. Charity, thus active, makes every work done under its influence a truly good work. It is good in the sight of God, and good in the sight of man, and according to those works it is that every man will be judged. You see at the end of this verse, and at the end of the previous one, the same language is repeated, and it is the doctrine of the whole Bible.

Many in the world just now go about promising salvation, by which they mean entrance into heaven, if a man only believes that Christ has paid his debts, whatever his works may have been. It is sad to declare that this error of good men is the denial of the whole Bible.

The Lord will receive a man now, whatever his life may have been, if he will repent and work out his salvation. He will enjoy the blessing of the Lord from the very beginning; he is in the right road, and if he continues in that from a loving motive, he is sure to go to heaven. He will be saved from his sins, because he rejects them. Salvation is deliverance from sin. He will receive heaven into himself, and he will enter heaven because he is prepared for it.

Religions path they never trod,

Who equity condemn;

Nor ever is he just to God

Who proves unjust to men.

A man may flatter himself that he believes a great many things, but he really does not believe them unless he does them. Belief of the heart goes into practice. Every true man, like St. James, shows his faith by his works. Works, as seen by the Lord from the inmost heart to their outside deed - it is these that determine a mans character either for happiness or misery, and there will be no question in the judgment what a man has believed. They know what he has believed by what he has done.

Let us, then, my beloved friends, this last Sabbath of the year, examine our books. Are they blotted by the sins of the past? Let us pray the adorable Jesus to help us to turn from our wickedness, and walk according to His blessed will. Let us work out our salvation by His holy aid, for He has said of the humble penitent: All his transgressions that he hath committed shall not be mentioned unto him (that book shall be for ever closed); in his righteousness that he hath done shall he live (Ezekiel 18:22). Thus



shall we become angel-minded; and if we have our temptations and trials, the Lord and His angels will help us to overcome them, and we shall sing the gracious song at last:

O grave, where is thy victory? O Death, where is thy sting?

To Jesus, our Lord and our Judge, be glory and dominion, for ever and ever.

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# No. 14. May 9, 1878. THE NEW JERUSALEM.

And I, John, saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (Revelation 21:2).

THE subject for our consideration this evening is the descent of the New Jerusalem. It is a subject, perhaps, that may appear rather trite and commonplace here to be speaking of things that may be considered as very well known. But it is not so. Although the doctrines and principles of the Church that we understand to form a part of the dispensation of the New Jerusalem of these times are exceedingly simple and straightforward, yet we find in this respect, as in many others, those who are completely ignorant of these principles oftentimes pretend to give a full and complete account of what they do not at all understand.

Let me, then, invite your best attention while we endeavor to explain what we conceive the New Jerusalem to be, and the ground upon which we think perhaps we may venture to claim to be part of the Jerusalem from heaven.

And first of all, perhaps, it would be well to remove out of the way an objection that will come from those who have not very closely considered the language of Holy Writ, and the style in which the Bible speaks.

They suppose that the New Jerusalem means a state of things to come into existence when the present universe has passed away. This is supposed to be implied by the information in the verse going before: And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth passed away, and there was no more sea; and I, John, saw the holy city - and so on, and those who have been familiarized with the idea that this universe is to be burnt up and pass away at some time or other, will readily confirm this by the language of the verse I have read. Thoughtful readers will know, however, that the terms heaven and earth in Scripture do not represent the grand universe of Gods heaven and Gods earth, but signify a Dispensation.

They are tolerably equivalent to the Church and the world. The natural universe, Gods heaven and earth, the immense starry systems, the suns and worlds innumerable of which Creation consists, are not to pass away, because Gods work is so completely and divinely perfect that it cannot need to be destroyed, and cannot be improved. The glorious system is destined, according to the whole Scriptures, to abide for ever. Again and again, where the grand universe is described, it is said not only of the entire, but of each single part - sun, moon, stars, earth - will exist for ever and ever. They will never pass away.

I need but remind you of a few instances of this kind, and you will know how direct is this teaching: One generation cometh and another generation goeth, but the earth abideth for ever; He (the Lord) hath built His throne like the high palaces, like the earth which abideth for ever. See the 72nd Psalm: They shall fear Thee as long as the sun and moon endure, THROUGHOUT ALL GENERATIONS (v. 5); His name shall endure for ever; His name shall be continued as long as the sun (v. 17). Take as another instance the 148th Psalm, verse 6, where the sun and moon and stars are called upon to witness to the infinite goodness of the Divine Majesty, and it is said, He hath commanded, and they were created. He

hath established them forever and ever. He hath made a decree which shall not pass.

Not only; so; Holy Scripture contains a continued series of prophecies of the working of Gods providence until the whole earth shall be covered with the knowledge of the Lord, and none shall hurt nor destroy in all Gods holy mountain. There shall be one Lord over all the earth. There shall be one Lord, and His name one.

All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children. The kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever.

We might add scores of other declarations to the same effect. It is a real denial of all these sublime declarations of the Word of God which is made by narrow minds who dwell upon one ill understood passage of St. Peter, and cry out every now and then the world is just going to be on fire, and be dissolved.

It is surely not now that we are to expect any such change of this system of Gods world, so as to stand in the way of the fulfillment of Divine teaching. Notice the words immediately following our text: And I heard a great voice out of heaven, saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God.

The new heaven and the new earth are a new dispensation; to come down from heaven amongst men, making them truly wise and truly happy, and removing all the causes of sorrow and misery, in which God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death.

The death that is especially meant which is not to be in the New Jerusalem is the death of sin. To be carnally minded is death. The death which is selfishness shall not exist in the Lords real Jerusalem, nor shall there be any of the sorrow or the crying which that death brings about, for the former things are passed away.

The former things mean the same as is previously meant by the former heaven and earth. A similar change was effected from the Jewish world to the Christian world. Hence the Apostle Paul said: If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things have passed away. Behold, all things have become new (2 Corinthians 5:17). In this sense the Lords heaven is the Church; the earth means the world. The Church and the world of the former dispensation had for him passed away; he had entered a new heaven and earth; all things had become new.

It is the object and the duty of the Church to introduce and sustain Divine things among men - to make the Lords heaven upon earth.

Gods heaven upon earth is the Lords Church, and from the Church, the state of the world around it. This is called in Scripture forming the heavens and the earth. Take, for instance, Isaiah 2:16 : And I have put My words in thy mouth, and I have covered thee in the shadow of Mine hand, that I may plant the heavens and lay the foundations of the earth, and say unto Zion, Thou art my people. Here you see how the heavens and earth are formed. The Church and the world, in any particular dispensation, are its heaven and earth.

In the education of the world, distinct dispensations have followed each other. There was the Adamic

heaven and earth; then the Noetic heaven and earth; afterwards followed the Jewish heaven and earth. When the Jewish heaven and earth were corrupted by tradition, hypocrisy and guilt to the full, then Christianity was introduced, and the Jewish heaven and earth were virtually extinguished. The Lord said on the Cross, It is finished. Their little world came to its end.

A new heaven and a new earth - the Christian heaven and earth - a glorious dispensation, embracing all nations - not a little shadow of a Church in the Judean hills, but a grand and real Church, having the kingdom of God in the souls of men, and forming of varied nations a new state of nobler principles on the earth.

There was to be a thorough renovation, from new principles, of the whole of society, so that instead of one small nation forming the circumscribed little model or pattern of a Church, there should now be a really grand society, taking in nations and tribes, multitudes and continents, forming a glorious brotherhood, and the Lord Jesus Himself would be the Divine center and Father of the whole. This was the new heaven and the new earth of Christendom.

Christianity, as it was laid down by the simple, Divine lessons of our Savior-God, and constituted in the obedience of man, lasted only a few hundred years. Wealth and power gradually corrupted and changed the simple and noble virtues of the early Church. Myriads of barbarians brought their superstitions more or less into it, and degradation has really taken place in Christendom, until those who would look at religion as in many respects it has been made, and compare it with the simple teachings of our Divine Savior, will see it is at present quite another thing.

As we have endeavored to show, all that was foretold in this Book of the Revelation has taken place.

The dragon and the mother of mystery, and the abominations of the earth, have each had their time, and have now to pass away. Their heaven and earth are to pass away, and a new heaven and a new earth are gradually but certainly taking place. That is to say, a new dispensation has begun.

The Lord commences with restoring the grand old principles which are the center and soul of every Church - that is, Love to God above all things, and to love our neighbor as ourselves. These are the essential things, and the first of every new dispensation is to restore these, and restore them as the grand foundations. Afterwards the Lord gives as much additional wisdom as mankind can bear, just as He said in the Gospel: I have many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now.

Well, then, at this time precisely this change is going on. The Lord is calling our attention to those two grand principles, which are the essence of all religion, so that by a beautiful explanation of our duties in life, and our hopes in the eternal world, a light may illuminate our path for time, and for our everlasting home. The Lord has said again: Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord has arisen upon thee. This is what is meant by the New Jerusalem. We shall see how clearly, how beautifully and simply it comes out when we just thoughtfully consider what the Word teaches.

Jerusalem, you are aware, was the capital of Judea, where all the religious ceremonies of the Jews centered, and where their sacrifices were carried on. The name was indicative of restoration. In very ancient times that place was called Salem. You remember that Melchisedech was the priest of Salem in Abraham's time. It was first Salem, then became Jebus, which means a mocker. It was a restoration of

that name when it was again denominated Jerusalem.

The term Jerusalem means a sight of peace. Salem, and all words derived from it, as Solomon, are forms of the word for peace in Hebrew. Jeru-Salem means the sight of peace. When there could be no real city of peace, but only a representation in ceremonies and types, then the city of the imitation was called Jerusalem.

When our Lord Jesus came into the world, and put an end to the Jewish dispensation, and gave grand principles of thought, of life, love, and virtue, He then said, as you will remember, to the woman of Samaria:

Woman, believe Me the hour cometh when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him.

He thus foretold a spiritual Jerusalem, a city of truth, a real sight of peace.

The Apostles understood it. The Apostle Paul said: He is not a Jew who is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God. And when speaking further upon the subject he states of Christians everywhere: Ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels (Hebrews 12:22). This was the Holy Jerusalem in that Dispensation. The Church there could be a real city of peace. The Lord Jesus Christ was their Head. The Savior-God was the Prince of Peace. They saw the principles that He laid down, and by which the soul could be built up for heaven, and those are the laws of happiness. In Me ye shall have peace. They saw every thing calculated to make a heaven upon earth. The kingdom of God is not lo here, nor lo there, but the kingdom of God is within you. Consequently this new Church of His became the real Jerusalem, the Church of the living God - the city embracing all the good and true amongst men. This is the meaning of Jerusalem.

This was seen and proclaimed, but it was also declared that again the love of many would wax cold, and iniquity would abound. Again darkness would cover the earth, and gross darkness the people. In fact, the middle ages were described as we now know them. They were then to be followed by a New Jerusalem, which would come down from God out of heaven. You will see how simple the interpretation is. We say a New Jerusalem means a new Church. Ally child of six years can see that if Jerusalem means a Church, a New Jerusalem must mean a new Church. It is simple as A, B, C.

Humanity can now say, and we, as part of mankind, rejoice to say:

In every age the Lord was kind,

And to His Church revealed His mind;

But we enjoy a wondrous store

Of blessings never known before.

When speaking of these Divine mercies of love and wisdom now brought within the reach of men, as gifts from the Lord, we have to apologize lest it should appear we are boasting of higher things than others have; but they are not ours - they are the Lords blessings to all who will receive them. We rejoice to say the great truths meant by the New Jerusalem have come. They have descended from heaven. They are here. They can be accepted, loved, followed, and every blessing attributed to them will be found, to the great happiness of the receiver.

This is not any work of ours. Our part is simply having received such blessings as our good Lord has been pleased to give to us, and all men who will receive them can receive them. Whosoever will, let him come and take of the WATER OF LIFE freely. The New Jerusalem has come down from God out of heaven.

This Book of the Revelation teaches that some day or other there must be such a new state of things as is revealed to us in this description of the New Jerusalem. It must be some day. Never mind at present whether it is this day or not. We must believe that, unless we are convinced that the Apostle John had no authority for what he said, and that he was entirely mistaken. Some people have a great dread of anything new in religion. They believe that God was very good in old times, and that He gave people counsels and principles in those days; but since then He has left the world to itself, and He has nothing further to say. Therefore what is old is right; and if there be anything new, it must be wrong. There is a jingling decision we sometimes hear:

If a thing is true, it cannot be new;

And if it is true, it cannot be new.

This is supposed to be a very wise maxim. It has a certain amount of solidity in it. Truth in itself is eternal. What was once right in itself is always right. The great laws of Divine wisdom must be eternal as Divine wisdom itself. In that sense, a thing cannot be both true and new. Yet a precept may be new to us, and yet be true. Our Lord Jesus said: A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another. This was a truth eternal in itself; yet it was new to the Jews of that day. It was always right that men should love one another; but to men of that generation it had ceased to be a command, and therefore the Lord revealed it afresh, and called it a new command. Just so it is in every new dispensation.

I have mentioned that His command is to restore the old essentials of religion to the place which they ought to occupy. The chief central place in religion is in the breast. It is a Divine fact that the truths are eternal truths. But then there is a large amount of intelligence and wisdom which has to be given to clear off the ignorance of mankind, to remove old mistakes and errors of every description.

But that axiom about nothing being good that is new is, perhaps, one of those most completely out of date at the present time; for who is there here that does not know that in almost every part of life there is a complete new state of things. Let anyone present think of his own business, and he will find it entirely changed and improved.

And this is part of this grand diffusion of wisdom which is lighting up the whole mental atmosphere - the Divine light - of which it is said in the Word: Let thine eye be single, and thy whole body shall be

full of light. New truths are surely better than old errors. All good things are spoken of in Scripture as new things - the new heart, the new spirit. These are the preparations for heaven. A new covenant is needed - new wine is to be put into new bottles.

On the other hand, old things are in the Bible but little commended. The old serpent is about the least respectable feature that is mentioned in the whole Bible. The old man, with his lusts, is to be put away. The apathetic man, who has been drinking old wine, doth not straightway desire new. He saith the old is better. But the Lord says: I will drink it new with you in the kingdom of My Father the mountains shall run down with new wine.

The first mark of the New Jerusalem is, that it is a Church which shall acknowledge the Lord Jesus Christ as its only God, in Whom is the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit - the All in all.

It is called the Lambs wife. Of course the HUSBAND is all in all to his wife. One Church and one Lord. The Lords bride and wife can only love her husband. It would be spiritual adultery to share her affections with any one rival, any other Divine persons. Thy Maker is thy husband, the Word says. As for our Redeemer, the God of the whole earth shall He be called. The Lord Jesus Christ would be seen and understood by those who receive the Church's blessings to be the Church's husband, to be the Church's only guide, guard, and protector.

He is Jehovah, who was the husband of the Church in former days, and He is now the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, the Very God who is to wipe away all tears from their eyes.

This idea comes before us in the description of the New Jerusalem in various ways, and in many striking and unexpected combinations. Take, for instance, And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the TEMPLES of it (Revelation 21:22). Mind, not the temples, as if there were two or three, but THE TEMPLE, because the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the inmost life, and the Divine manifestation, of the same ineffable Divine Person - the Everlasting Father, in Him and the Lamb, the Divine Humanity, the door of approach. The Holy of Holies of the temple in the Lord, and His Divine humanity, made one temple before the angels, in which, as the Apostle says, Dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

And then, in the next verse, it is said: And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Or, as in the margin, the Lamb is the lamp thereof; so that the glory of God! and the Lamb are like the lamp and the light. The Lamb is the lamp. The glory of the good Lord shines out of it, to strengthen, guide, and bless the universe.

There is still the same language used: And He shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. Some, when speaking of God in heaven, have made three thrones; but nothing of the sort is intimated here. The throne of God and the Lamb. There is only one throne mentioned, because there is only one Divine person.

And then look at the 3rd verse: And there shall be no more curse; but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it, and His servants (not their servants) shall serve Him; and they shall see His face (not their faces, as if there were three people), and His name shall be in their foreheads. Then you go

on, and in the 13th verse you hear the Lord Himself proclaim: I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; and in the 16th verse: I Jesus, have sent Mine angel to testify unto you these things in the Churches. I am the root and the offspring of David. The root, because He was the Eternal God, the everlasting Father; because He became God with us. The root and offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

I have mentioned that, in explaining these things, there seems to be. such clearness and such blessing, it almost seems as if you were beset with Divine goodness. All that is thus simply taught in Scripture, is just what we teach in doctrine. The doctrine is simplicity itself. It is that God is an infinitely Divine Man, having every excellence infinitely in Him, that man has infinitely in him.

Here, then, we have a clear idea of the Deity and Divine Trinity. Why it is just like the trinity in man. There are three grand things in each person - his soul, his body, his works; and then you have got the whole man.

In God the three grand things are, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Just as the soul is in the body, so the Father was in the Lord. The Father who is in Me, He said, He doeth the works. Whatsoever ye shall ask in My name that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

The second mark of the new Jerusalem is that its principles are all love. The city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass (verse 21). By pure gold is meant pure love. Gold, because it is the best of the metals, the most ductile, beautiful, and enduring, is taken in Scripture to mean the most sacred of principles, love to God, engendering love to man. That is the golden love: I (the Lord) counsel thee to buy of Me fine gold tried in the fire. That is the greatest blessing that we can get from the Lord Jesus Christ, the gift of love to Him, and the love that will help us to love and bless all around us.

Well, this city was to be of pure gold. That is to say, all its principles are themselves love wrought out. They lead to what love requires man to do. The city was of pure gold.

The third noticeable mark is the clearness of its doctrines and principles (verses 18-21). That is, to a thoughtful mind, all its truths will be clear, transparent, heavenly light, shining through like clear glass.

Some have been so trained to obscurity in religion, that the very clearness of the New Jerusalem frightens them. Yet it was to be clear. You make it all so plain, they say, I can understand it as easily as possible. I don't think it can be right. I have been taught that we must believe things we cannot understand, or else there is no merit in believing. I perceive clearly that two and two make four. If I were ordered to believe that two and two made, seven, there would be something then to believe. That would be my idea of faith.

Yes, and it would be a false faith, and could lead to nothing but mischief, like a false multiplication-table. Scripture tells us we must understand first, and believe after. Just hear the words of our Lord: The good seed of the kingdom are they that hear the Word and understand it, and bring forth fruit with patience.

A person never understands what religion is until he brings it into practice; and when he does that, it brings him blessing, peace, and comfort.



The FOURTH mark of the New Jerusalem is that its inhabitants seek and find blessing in keeping the Lords commandments. Blessed are they, it was read in the lesson this evening that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and to enter through the gates into the city. And this is a simple thing - so simple indeed, that one is astonished that anybody can think religion to be otherwise, and that people should say that Gods commandments have nothing to do with it. It is not so in the New Jerusalem. Blessed are they that do His commandments; and we rejoice to say men can do the Lords commandments. This language of the depreciation of the Lords commands pleads a want of study of the Divine Word; for who can think that the Lord would give commands in every part of His Word which could not be carried out? Why call ye Me Lord, Lord, and do not the things I say? If ye will enter into life, KEEP the commandments. And in the New Jerusalem there will be no ground for thinking what especially young people have been led sometimes to think, that religion is a very melancholy thing. A person ought not to go groaning and moaning through the world, and supposing that it is a pleasure to the Lord to see him miserable. Nothing of the kind. Blessed are they that do His commandments, says the Word - not blessed shall they be at some future time; but blessed ARE they.

True religion throws a smile over everything. It gives happiness now, as a warrant for happiness in the future. The love of God is to keep His commandments, and, as St. John said, His commandments are not grievous (1 John 5:3).

When you rise in the morning, think to bless Him who has given you a good nights rest, health, and comfort, Who has poured refreshment into soul and body. Do that, and you will find blessing will descend like a sacred dew from heaven.

Come dorm and mix with your family, and say to yourself, What can I do to make them happy? A kindly word here, a loving smile there, an endeavor to help out some little purpose with one, and give a cheerful hint to another, will make the whole family comfortable and happy.

In business act firmly, in a spirit of integrity. Do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God. This is what the Lords commandments require; and when we enter upon this, we shall find that it is reflected by those about us.

Love produces love. Kindliness brings out kindliness. Blessed are they that do His commandments. The misery of the world comes from not doing His commandments. There is not one commandment that is not absolutely necessary, or which can be done without. Heavenly character is formed by keeping these commandments. By them we enter into life - that is, love. If we follow His blessed commandments by power from Him, we shall find that darkness and sorrow will go, and light and peace will reign in their stead. By a loving obedience in faith to them, our lives will carry out the angelic anthem, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill towards men.

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