

THE REVELATION

THE ANALYSIS

(Condensed)

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THE EXPOSITION

Paragraphs 1-40

1

The first and chief purpose of the Book of the Revelation is to reveal Jesus Christ, particularly as the One who was, who is and who is to come. This is stated in the divinely given title (1:1), in the two declarations made by John and Christ (1:4, 8) and in the explanation concerning prophecy given to John (19:10). To miss, in studying the book, this chief purpose, however much one may gain otherwise, is to lose that which is essential; not to miss it, is to make the great discovery and to secure the supreme blessing (1:1-3; 22:5-9).

2

The second purpose of the Revelation is to reveal certain major things which concern eternity. This is done in two portions of the book; at the beginning (1:1-8), and at the end (22:6-21). In these parts Christ is shown to be the Lord God, the Almighty, the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end (1:8; 22:13); and the saints are seen to be co-heirs with Him in His exaltation and glory (1:4-6; 22:11-14). The object of this part of the Revelation is to give to the saints an eternity-consciousness, in order that they may be lifted above the things of time, space and sense and so be prepared to endure and overcome through what remains of time-experience (1:3; 22:7, 12).

3

The third and last purpose of the Revelation is to reveal, both from a heavenly and earthly standpoint, the events which are connected with the rise, progress, fall and judgment of the Antichrist, together with those things which grow out of the relationship which Jewish and Gentile saints have therewith. This portion of human experience was touched upon in the Old Testament (Dan. 9:26, 27; 11:21-45), and was more fully dwelt upon in the earlier parts of the New (Matt. 24; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:20-37; 21:5-33; 2 Thess. 2:1-10). But God chose to give the full revelation, by Christ and through John, in this last book of the Bible (1:1, 4). The importance of the subject is found in the fact that God has ordained that the major portion of this most important book--from the beginning of chapter 6 to the end of chapter 19--should be given up to this one theme; and it is further found in its very nature, the whole period being God's supreme earthly test of man's faith in Christ and also man's supreme earthly opportunity of declaring his love and devotion to Him.

4

The Revelation is divided into three sections (see the Analysis); the first section contains the general introduction (1:1-8); the second, the seven periods

(1:9 to 22:5); and the third, the general conclusion (22:6-21).

5

The first and last sections, containing the general introduction and general conclusion (see the Analysis), are related to the book as a whole and are made up of explanations (1:1, 7; 22:6, 16), exhortations (1:3; 22:7-12), promises (1:7; 22:7, 12, 16, 20, 21) and benedictions (1:3; 22:21).

6

The middle section, containing the seven periods (see the Analysis), is divided into seven parts, the first five of these being named in the Revelation and the last two, while not named, being made clearly manifest. These parts are seven time-periods. The first covers the whole seven years of the reign of the Antichrist; the following, the successive years which lie within the seven years; and the last, the final time, which merges into eternity. The five intermediate periods as recorded are chronological, progressive and climactic. The themes of the time-period section are the gradual decadence of the professing church, the increase and final heading up of iniquity under the Antichrist, the coming of Christ for and with His saints, and God's preliminary and final judgments, the righteous being rewarded and the unrighteous being punished.

7

The seven time-periods of the middle section, separately considered, have in two instances neither an introduction nor conclusion; in five, have an introduction; and in one, have both an introduction and conclusion (see the Analysis). Where, in this section, there is either an introduction or conclusion, it is specially related to the time-period with which it is connected. In each case also it is explanatory of the period, it being the divine portrayal from a heavenly and spiritual standpoint of its events. The purpose of the five introductions and one conclusion is to comfort and hearten the saints by revealing God as above and superior to earth's occurrences, however untoward and threatening these may be; first, by showing that He is watching over and caring for His saints on earth and that He has a glorious heritage and rewarding for them in heaven; and then, by manifesting the fact that no matter how highly evil may exalt itself, it will finally and forever be overthrown and destroyed.

8

The first of the seven periods, namely, that of the seven letters to the seven churches (see the Analysis), describes both the inward and outward history of the professing church on earth. These letters are to be regarded as presenting three different views; first, the historic, the seven portraying actually seven Asiatic churches which had existence in apostolic times, and thus representatively the whole church of the apostolic period; second, the prophetic, the seven portraying the church as it will be found in the seven-year period of the Antichrist, in Asia and elsewhere; and third, the progressive, the seven portraying the course of the church in both of the above periods, from the beginning to the end, the first

letter representing the commencement of the church in those periods and the last one its conclusion. Many interpreters also see in the seven letters a portrayal of the course of the church from Pentecost to the second advent. But such a deduction must be regarded not as an interpretation but rather as an application and parallelism. In this last aspect, the whole period may be divided somewhat as follows: the letter to Ephesus, from Pentecost to the end of the apostolic age (33-100 A.D.); the letter to Smyrna, from the beginning of the post-apostolic age to Constantine (100-311); the letter to Pergamum, from Constantine to Pope Gregory (311-590); the letter to Thyatira, from Pope Gregory to the Reformation (590-1517); the letter to Sardis, from the Reformation to modern missions (1517-1812); the letter to Philadelphia, from modern missions to the Antichrist (1812-date unrevealed); and the letter to Laodicea, from the Antichrist to the second advent (seven years; dates unrevealed).

9

The last of the seven periods, namely, that of the seven new-things (see the Analysis), describes the things which end and then succeed earthly time, and which thus lie finally within eternity (21:1-5). These are related to the new heaven and new earth (21:1), when God is making all things new (21:5). It is to be noted in this connection that what the first man Adam lost in the garden of Eden (Gen. 3:22-24), the last Adam secures in the paradise of God (2:7; 21:22, 23); and what Eve was denied in the garden (Gen. 3:6, 16), the wife fully and forever obtains in heaven (19:7, 9; 22:3-5). This period is that of the "ages of the ages," where each age enfolds the one which is coming and unfolds the one which is past. It is here that the divine trinity is merged into the divine unity, and God "is all in all" (1 Cor. 15:24-28). And it is here that the church enters into, not only infinite glory, but also infinite activity, as kingly co-heirs with the eternally regnant Christ (22:5).

10

The remaining five of the seven periods, lying between the first one and the last (see the Analysis), have to do with time-events. They are all connected--the historic aspect having been fulfilled and the prophetic alone remaining to be fulfilled--with the seven years which immediately precede the second advent, and thus with the person of the Antichrist. This last is the Man of Sin, who exalts himself above all that is called God (2 Thess. 2:3, 4; Rev. 13:1-6), who is the persecutor and destroyer of the saints (Dan. 9:26; Matt. 24:15-21; Rev. 12:15-17; 13:5-7), and who is that destroyer who himself is finally destroyed (Dan. 9:27; Rev. 19:19, 20). The five periods, being connected with the Antichrist, have a Palestinian and Roman-world setting--like similar prophecies of Christ spoken in the days of His flesh (Matt. 24:15-20; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:20-37; 21:5-38)--their scenes being either within or around the Holy Land (7:4; 10:5; 11:1, 2; 13:1; 16:16; 17:9; 18:1, 2). They gather their particular significance and importance from the fact that they involve the final, earthly destiny of the church as represented by the Jewish and Gentile Christians referred to in the record.

11

In the original manuscript of the Revelation, so far as anyone knows, no title stood at the head of the book. But one was incorporated by the Holy Spirit in the text, this being given in the first words written (1:1). This title reveals at once both the theme and purpose of the book, each being connected with the person of Christ, the theme having to do with Him as the ever existing One, and therefore as the One who was, is and is to come (1:4, 7, 8), and the purpose having to do with our beholding this highly exalted One in His relationship to the righteous and wicked, to earth and heaven, and to time and eternity (1:5-8, 11). In respect to this divinely given title, several things are to be noted: first, it has no definite article preceding it, as the Authorized Version and even the Revised would lead us to understand; nor is such to be supplied, for the book is not *The Revelation*, as if there were no other, but *A Revelation*, it being one among many; second, the word revelation is in the Greek *apokalupsis*, which means an uncovering or unveiling, and in this sense, a revelation; and lastly, the uncovering is not primarily of things but of a person, which signifies, whatever things may appear in the revelation, that these are to be regarded through and in relationship with this person's personality. This last is an important matter, both in respect to the interpretation of the book and in regard to putting its precepts into practice, as the angel makes clear to John when, confusedly, he bows at his feet (19:10).

12

The Greek word *tachos* ("shortly") which is found at the beginning of the book (1:1), which occurs in it together with another cognate word, *tachu*, in many places (2:5, 16; 3:11; 11:14; 22:6, 7, 12, 20), and which appears in the form *tachu* finally and most importantly in the last chapter (22:20), does not signify "shortly" or "quickly" in the sense of an immediate time, but rather, the one or the other, whenever the event prophesied shall take place, in the sense of haste or speed. In other words, it does not appear that the Spirit, by the use of the two words noted, intended to teach that the events of the Revelation, inclusive of the return of Christ, might take place in a day, a week, a month, a year or any immediate time (it is to be remembered that nearly two thousand years have passed since the book was written), but instead that they should come to pass, whenever they should occur, with great rapidity. This is the sense in which the Greek words are used elsewhere in the Scripture (Luke 18:8; Acts 12:7; 22:18; Matt. 28:7, 8; Mark 16:8; John 11:29; 20:4), and the only sense in which they may be made accordant with the historical facts in the case, namely, Christ's long delay and the equally long postponement of the events which are connected with His return. For these reasons it has seemed best, in translating the Greek words to which reference has been made, to use not the usual words "shortly" and "quickly," but instead, "with speed" and "speedily," thus signifying the haste and rapidity with which the events described will finally be accomplished.

13

While the second and future coming of the Lord is divided into two parts, the coming for the saints (2 Thess. 2:1; 1 Thess. 4:13-17) and the coming with them (1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 1:10), it is not to be concluded that a long period of time is divinely set between these two portions, for if it were, there would be two future comings instead of one, which idea is contrary to the Scripture (Matt. 24:29, 30; John 14:2, 3; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52; Heb. 9:28; Rev. 1:7). The Word states that there is but one coming in the future, namely, "the second" (John 14:3; Heb.

9:28), and hence it implies that the process of it is not to be a divided and separate but a united and continuous one. For the same reason, the coming cannot be, as some teach, both premillennial and postmillennial, that is, first a premillennial coming in the person of the Holy Spirit and for the purposes of salvation and sanctification, and second a postmillennial coming in the person of Christ for the purpose of resurrection, rapture, judgment and the bringing in of things eternal; for in this case the premillennial advent would be the second one and the postmillennial a third one, which again is contrary to the Scripture (John 14:3; Acts 1:11; Heb. 9:28). In other words, whatever one's prophetic view may be it must have this scriptural characteristic, that it will be found in accordance with the Spirit's declaration to the effect that there are but two advents, the first in the past and the second in the future; and also it must have this further scriptural characteristic, that it will present the thought, in respect to the second coming, of its being instantaneous in time and continuous in process (Matt. 24:27-30; 1 Cor. 15:51, 52).

14

The answer which is commonly made to the above reasoning is to the effect that distinctly different words are used in the Greek to signify Christ's coming for His saints and His coming with them, these words being, first, *parousia*, and second, *apokalupsis* and *epiphaneia*. It is declared that *parousia*, which means presence, implies the coming for, and that *apokalupsis*, which means disclosure, and *epiphaneia*, which means manifestation, signify the coming with. It is probable that such an etymological and scriptural distinction is to be recognized, the first word applying to the beginning of the advent and the other two words to the ending of it. But the teaching which is based upon this distinction, to the effect that a considerable space of time must necessarily lie between the two events because they are described by different words, would be difficult to maintain. Indeed, the testimony of Scripture, in passages where the words occur, seem to point definitely in an opposite direction; for it is a fact that the same descriptive statements are made concerning each of the three words, as follows: *parousia*, Matt. 24:3, 27, 37, 39; 1 Cor. 15:23; 1 Thess. 2:19; 3:13; 4:15; 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:1, 8; Jas. 5:7, 8; 2 Pet. 1:16; 3:4, 12; 1 John 3:28; *apokalupsis*, Rom. 8:19; 1 Cor. 1:7; Gal. 1:12; 2 Thess. 1:7; 1 Pet. 1:7; 13:4, 13; Rev. 1:1; and *epiphaneia*, 2 Thess. 2:8; 1 Tim. 6:14; 2 Tim. 1:10; 4:1, 8; Titus 2:13. This is a case, therefore, where we may conclude that the well known mathematical axiom, namely, that "things which are equal to the same thing are equal to one another," has a scriptural application; for, if two similar and connected events in Scripture are described by the same language, then we must conclude that the two are essentially one. The criticism noted, therefore, does not appear to fulfill its claim. Indeed, its opposite seems to be true, namely, that the words used indicate that the coming of Christ and His appearing are inseparably united in time. (See the Greek of 2 Thess. 2:8 where *epiphaneia* and *parousia* are identified, both in time and event).

15

The above conclusions seem to forbid the thought held and presented by many premillennial teachers that the rapture of the saints at the coming of Christ will be a secret one. Such teachers say that the Lord, when He returns, will silently and unobservantly convey His people out of the world and into heaven, and that this will be done in such a hidden manner that persons on earth will not know that

any remarkable event has occurred, except as they may surmise this through the absence of those who have been called away; they further declare that affairs on earth will go on then much as usual except for the increase of iniquity, and this for at least the seven years of the Antichrist until, at last, Christ returns with those whom before He took away, this portion of the coming to be visible and known to all the world. There is, of course, no objection to such a prophetic scheme provided it has the support of Scripture. But this does not appear to be the case. For in each passage where a description is given of the events connected with the coming of Christ for and with His saints, there are details presented which suggest openness and not secrecy, manifestation and not concealment. In Matt. 24:27 the coming is likened to a lightning flash "which cometh out of the east and shineth even unto the west." In 1 Cor. 15:52 the advent is said to take place at the sounding of "the last trump." In 1 Thess. 4:16 it is stated that the Lord, when He comes, will descend from heaven "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And here in Rev. 1:7 it is declared, in connection with our being made kings and priests unto God and the Father, that Christ will come "with clouds," and that "every eye shall see him." There is no intimation in such phraseology that the advent is to take place in an unseen and unknown manner. The intimation, on the contrary, is that of visibility and publicity.

16

It is stated in the first chapter that the Revelation was given by Christ to John upon "the Lord's day" (1:10); and it is generally taken for granted that this phrase signifies that John's experience took place upon the first day of the week. But it is doubtful if this was what the Spirit meant to imply by the use of the phrase. It is grammatically manifest that the words, the Lord's day, are only another form of the words, the day of the Lord, the chief difference between the two phrases in the Greek being one of verbal emphasis. It is evident, therefore, that the one phrase, scripturally speaking, is the equivalent of the other. Since this is the case, it follows that the meaning conveyed by the words "the Lord's day" is to be found by considering the meaning which the Spirit has attached to the more frequently occurring words, "the day of the Lord." Approaching the subject from this standpoint, we find that that day is to be one of judgment (Isa. 2:10-22; Zeph. 1:7, 8), destruction (Isa. 13:6-11; Joel 1:15; 1 Thess. 5:1-3), vengeance (Jer. 46:10), wrath (Ezek. 7:12-19), battle (Ezek 30:1-4), darkness (Joel 2:1-11; Amos 5:18-20), roaring (Joel 3:11-16), distress (Zeph. 1:14-18), captivity (Zech. 14:1, 2), apostasy (2 Thess. 2:2-4), and burning (2 Pet. 3:10-13). When now one comes to consider the setting of these passages, one discovers that the day of the Lord, and thus also the Lord's day, is the day of God's vengeance upon sinful men preparatory to His establishing millennial blessedness, and finally, the new heavens and earth. This brings us to the conclusion that Revelation 1:10 signifies that John was brought into the Spirit in order that he might see, through visions and revelations, judgment-scenes which were to characterize the day of the Lord, and hence, in order, subsequently, that he might portray to the church the events of that period. The prophetic portion of the Revelation, therefore, has to do preeminently with the yet future Lord's day period of time, this period beginning with the revelation of the Antichrist (6:1-8) and reaching its climax and end with his destruction (19:11-21). In other words, the revelation first made, largely in the Old Testament and somewhat in the New, was to the effect that the day of vengeance would be the day of *Jehovah*; and the revelation now made, in this place alone, is to the effect that this day is *the day*, that is, one which above all others is important in respect to the

interests and destinies of men. The Germans, unconsciously, anticipated prophetic truth and named their day of long planned battle against the nations and their anticipated conquest over them "*Der Tag*." But, in the real sense, The Day lies in the future; and it is none other than the day of God Almighty (Joel 3:9-17; 2 Pet. 3:10-13). If the above reasoning concerning the "Lord's Day" is correct, it is to be noted that the historical view of prophecy--which makes the prophecies of the Revelation a progressive description of the events of the present dispensation--while it establishes interesting parallelisms, may not be recognized as a true interpretation, for in the case mentioned the Lord's day period is entirely a future one, namely, the seven years of the Antichrist.

17

The introduction to the first time period, namely, that of the seven letters, begins in the first chapter at the ninth verse and ends in the same chapter at the twentieth verse (1:9-20; see the Analysis). A glance at this passage will reveal the fact that it contains and presents a vision of the ascended and glorified Christ (1:12-16). It was a wonderful expression of divine compassion for this vision to be granted at this particular place. The Revelation contains many a long, dark and fearsome passage of prophesied earthly experience. But before these are seen, this unveiling of the heavenly, regnant Christ is given to us. Nothing could have been more comforting and heartening than this. To see Him who is invisible, under any circumstances, is to receive strength for endurance; and this is particularly true when the soul is hard pressed and great issues are at stake (Heb. 11:27). It is to be kept in mind that the days in view will demand strength of a particular kind and in a special measure. Hence, the Lord makes much of the quality of endurance in His prophetic utterances (Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13); and the Spirit does likewise in the letters to the seven churches (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21), and at the close of the Revelation (21:7). Here in this first chapter, therefore, Christ anticipates the need of the saints and seeks to fortify them against fear, discouragement and declension; and He does this in the most effective way possible by portraying Himself in all His beauty and majesty as Son of Man and Son of God. Through the revelation given, He shows Himself to His saints as the One who is the High Priest of His people, who abides in the holiest place and who stands in the midst of the golden lampstands (1:18-20); and by doing this He gives to them strong assurance, whatever may take place, that He will never cease His tender watch and care over their lives. It is such a Christ as this who is over and in and through the whole of the Revelation. It is plain, then, that all that any saint will have to do in order to obtain victory when the tribulation has come and its sorrow threaten to overwhelm is to look up and "see Jesus," even as He is here revealed.

18

The second chapter begins the first time-period, namely, that of the seven letters; (see the Analysis). This period in its future aspect covers, as we believe, the time of the Antichrist, and presents certain peculiar features which will characterize that time. Among these features, it is to be noted that the salvation spoken of in the letters to the seven churches (2:1 to 3:22), as is the case in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew and the thirteenth of Mark, is set forth as being made dependent upon works. The promise in Matthew and Mark is given to the one who endures (Matt. 24:13; Mark 13:13); and the promises in the seven letters to those who overcome (2:7, 11, 17, 26; 3:5, 12, 21). We may be

sure that this fact does not imply that here work displaces faith, but rather that it is supplementary to it and is the outward manifestation of it. Nevertheless, the spiritual teaching expressed by the emphasis which is thus laid upon work is most suggestive and important. The time in view is one of stress and strain, wherein men's souls will be tried as never in the past (Matt. 24:21, 22). False Christs will arise, claiming the worship of each and all, and false prophets will stand forth, pointing to paths of easy life and service in escape from tribulation and suffering (Matt. 24:24; Rev. 13:1-18). Thus the time will be one wherein great issues will hang in the balance in respect to what men will choose and do. Under these conditions, works will suddenly become all-important. Hence, it will come to pass that endurance and overcoming will be the efficient cause of "salvation," that is, spiritual deliverance from earthly evil. All this gives point to the word which occurs later in the Revelation: "They overcame him by blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death" (12:11).

19

If it is true that the seven letters to the seven churches (2:1-3; 22) are to be regarded, in one aspect of the prophetic view, as setting forth the progressive history of the church on earth during the days of the Antichrist (see Paragraph 8), then it is a fact that all of the seven letters, when they will be in process of fulfillment, will have to run their full course before the Lord may come. It is necessarily the case, therefore, that the saints who will then be living will look for His return through the unfolding of the events of which the letters speak. It follows from this that the saints of these times will not be able to look momentarily for the return of Christ until the major portion of the prophecies of the letters has been fulfilled. These saints may regard the coming, during the whole of the period, as ever impending and rapidly nearing; but, manifestly, there is no possibility of their conceiving of it as an event which may take place at any instant until the time of the last of the seven letters, namely, the Laodicean, has been reached. At that time Christians will know that there is no other church period to follow, the Laodicean being the last; and thus in that era they may look expectantly, confidently, and finally, momentarily for the appearing (2:10, 16, 25; 3:11, 20; Matt. 24:32, 33; Luke 21:28-32).

20

This view of the seven letters brings them into harmony with all other portions of Scripture which deal with the same subject; and, apparently, it is the only one which does. This is especially true of the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, which may be considered as both the divine mold and explanation of all prophetic utterances. In this chapter, be it noted, Christ was speaking not simply to Jews but also to Christian Jews, that is, to those who were then believers and who, a little later at Pentecost, were to be baptized into the body of Christ, and who, as such, represented such Christians as should in the last days succeed and be like them; and it was to these that He said that they should see the abomination of desolation stand in the holy place (Matt. 24:15); that they should experience "tribulation" and "great tribulation" (Matt. 24:9, 21); that they should hear of false Christs (Matt. 24:25); that they should see the sun darkened, the moon not giving its light and the stars falling from heaven (Matt. 24:29); and finally, that they were to know, when they saw all these things, that Christ was at the doors (Matt. 24:33). And it was to such disciples, who would have already seen

such signs, and only to such, that He gave the command to watch momentarily (Matt. 24:42-44; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 2:34-36). In other words, the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew makes it plain--as do the thirteenth of Mark, the seventeenth of Luke, the twenty-first of Luke and the major portion of the book of the Revelation--that momentary watching may only become true when the prophesied events of Antichrist, tribulation and heavenly portents have been fulfilled. Up to that time, as set forth by Christ, Peter, James and Paul, the saints are exhorted constantly, but *patiently* to look upward and forward, waiting for the completion of God's purposes and through this, for the presence and appearing of the Lord (Luke 21:19, 25-28; 2 Pet. 3:8-15; 1 Thess. 1:2, 3; Heb. 10:23-25, 36, 37; Jas. 5:7, 8). It is to be observed, in this connection, that there is not an exhortation in Paul's Epistles to look for Christ's advent as an event to be momentarily expected. Such exhortations are only found in the Gospels (Matt. 24:42; Mark 13:32-37; Luke 21:36) and in the Revelation (16:15); and in these places their application is one that is subsequent to the fulfillment of prophesied signs (Matt. 24:29, 30; Mark 13:26-29; Luke 21:25-31; Rev. 16:7-14).

21

In the light of the above statements, it is clear that the attitude of the New Testament saints in respect to the second coming of Christ is exactly what that of the Old Testament saints was in respect to the first. In the Old Testament period the following things were true: first, the time of the coming was known to God; second, its moment of fulfillment was predetermined by Him; third, this time, being unrevealed, was not known to men; fourth, certain events, from time to time, were revealed which had to be brought to pass, and which, as they took place, became signs that the advent was drawing near; fifth, each generation of saints, in view of no revelation to the contrary, could hope that these prophesied events would occur in its time; sixth, there came a generation, at last, which could confidently believe because of recognized signs that all intermediate events had been fulfilled, and hence, this generation could momentarily look for the advent; and finally, in the time known unto God from the beginning--what Paul calls the "fulness of time" (Gal. 4:4)--the coming took place. And, statement by statement, it appears true that such is and will be the experience of the church as related to the second advent. It follows from this--the time of the coming being predetermined and fixed by God--that we may not, as is so often said in sermon and prayer, "hasten the coming of the Lord." We may hasten toward it, but not it toward us (2 Pet. 3:12 R.V.). Our attitude then is to be this: we are to occupy till Christ comes (Luke 19:13), being assured that the "times and seasons" are in the authority of the Father (Acts 1:7) and being certain that He will, "in his own times," show who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords (1 Tim. 6:15). It is instructive to note, in connection with these thoughts, that the expression frequently used by premillennialists, namely, "If the Lord tarries," is not to be found in the Scripture. The scriptural phrase is, "If the Lord will" (Jas. 4:13-15), which is a broader term and does not suggest immediacy in time.

22

It is to be kept in mind that the seven churches (2:1 to 3:21), while having a historical fulfillment, represent Christendom as it is to be during the last years of this dispensation, that is, during the seven year period of the Antichrist. With this in view, and also with their progressive feature in mind, we may see

from the descriptions which the Holy Spirit gives that the development which will then take place will have two aspects, the outward and inward, and that these will be diametrically opposite to each other. Outwardly, the church will begin in poverty (2:2, 9) and will end in wealth (3:17); inwardly, it will begin in fidelity (2:2) and end in apostasy (3:15-18). All through, it is evident, there is a remnant of faithful and devoted souls who love and will not deny their Lord (2:2, 3; 3:19-21). But the spiritual declension, in spite of carnal prosperity, is steady, and at last it becomes complete. The final scene is pathetic beyond description: the Lord, who was seen in the first church walking within it and rejoicing over the works, labor and patience of His people (2:1-3), is seen in the last church standing without, knocking upon the door, seeking entrance, calling, not to the church at large but to some given individual in it, and promising, if permitted, to come in and have fellowship with that "man," whoever he may be (3:20). Those who have anointed eyes (3:18) will not fail to discern that the course of the professing church, in present times, is setting in such a direction as is thus described. Wealth and intellectualism are doing their deadly work, and modernism is fast bringing to pass a condition of things where, in a sad repetition of spiritual history, the children of God will be called upon to behold a temple magnificent, but with the Son of God standing without and saying, "Behold, *your* house is left unto you desolate" (Matt. 23:38).

23

As an indication that the seven churches of the apostolic time did not altogether fulfill the prophecies of the letters addressed to them, and hence, that other churches of a future time--and this time immediately preceding Christ's coming--must do this, the following facts are to be noted: First, there is no historical evidence that there was in the past a church at Thyatira, Tertullianus (160-230 A.D.) and Epiphanius (310-403 A.D.) affirming that there was none; which, if it is true, means that this particular church must yet be established in order that the prophecy spoken of it may be brought to pass. Second, there is no proof either in the Scripture or in the patristic writings to the effect that all of the prophecies concerning the six remaining churches were fulfilled, that is, literally and in detail; which implies that the experiences prophesied in the letters to those churches are to have another and more exact fulfillment in the days to come. And third, it is manifest that certain divine warnings given in the letters to the churches, which were to me made effective if certain spiritual conditions were to remain, were never, in spite of the continuance of these conditions, brought to pass; which undoubtedly indicates that the warnings were given to the apostolic churches in a representative manner, that is, to them as representing other churches like them which should have existence at a later time, and in such conditions as would make possible the bringing to pass of every warning which had been uttered. As an illustration of this last, the verses 2:5, 16, 25; 3:3, 11 may be cited. In these utterances the churches were urged to hold fast what they had till Christ should come; were exhorted to repent lest He should come; and were warned, if they did not repent and hold fast, that He would come speedily and in punishment against them. The churches did not repent and hold fast, but declined steadily and utterly. And yet Christ did not come and His judgments did not fall. There can be but one explanation of these facts. It is not that Christ's warnings meant nothing; nor that He proved faithless to His word; it is this rather, that He was looking forward--as was the case when He uttered the prophecy of Matthew twenty-four--to a future time when similar conditions should exist and His warnings and pledged word would be wholly and exactly fulfilled.

The implication of the above is--and we do not shrink from this understanding of our words--that there is likely to be a readjustment in the Near East which will reestablish old-time conditions in Asia Minor, both physically and ecclesiastically. If one had said this from a prophetic standpoint--as one did say it--twenty or even ten years ago, there would have been little evidence of such a thing being brought to pass. But within the last five years the prophetic and historical lines have been rapidly converging so that it is easier to believe now, than it was before, that great developments in the historic places of the Near East may yet take place. With the Turks largely driven back into Asia; with the Grecians pushing eastward; with the British holding open the water courses between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea; and with both the British and Americans, equipped with their limitless wealth and proverbial capability and activity, entering into all of these places for commercial purposes, it is not difficult to imagine that the old world is destined to become a new one. Ancient cities in Asia Minor may thus spring up, as it were, in a day and night; and instead of Smyrna being the only existing one of the seven cities spoken of in the Scripture, we may suddenly see the six others rebuilt and revitalized and with a greatness which the past never knew. In such a case, there may once more be within these cities seven churches, with the whole number fulfilling at last all that the seven letters prophesied concerning them. It is to be remembered, however, that it is not necessary for these surmises to be brought to pass in order to fulfill what the seven letters foretell. They speak of a church which was as representing a church which is to be; and in such a prophetic utterance the essential part of the matter is not the physical setting but the spiritual content. And whatever the physical outcome, this spiritual element will remain. It may be concluded, therefore, that the seven letters portray with accuracy the spiritual condition of the church in the last days; and also, it may be believed that not only their promises but also their warnings will then, literally and in detail, be accomplished.

The phrase in 3:10, "I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world," is reminiscent of the verse in Luke 21:36. Each refers to the great tribulation; the same portion of it, that is, the close of the latter half; and the same spiritual experience in it, namely, of being kept, not from, but out of--in the sense of out of the midst of--the trials of that time. The word "from" in 3:10 is not *apo* but *ek*; and the thought is that those who will guard the word of Christ's patience, or endurance (see the Literal Translation), will be given strength to overcome in the midst of the persecutions which are then taking place and which are to spread through the whole inhabited earth, this last phrase indicating that the time referred to is when the tribulation is about to reach its utmost intensity and extensity. It will be seen that this view is consistent with the progressive idea contained in the seven letters, which has been more than once referred to, the Philadelphian church being next to the last in the series of churches (3:7-13), the Laodicean being the last (3:14-22), and the periods of the two churches bringing to pass the time when all things foretold will reach their climax (3:10; 11:1-13).

The fourth and fifth chapters constitute the introduction to the second time-period, namely, that of the seven seals (see the Analysis). They are to be read, in spite of the chapter division, as one and are to be thus considered. This introduction presents a foreview of the period with which it is connected, that is, it looks upon and speaks about the things which are to come to pass during the seal period, and this from a distinctly divine and heavenly standpoint. It thus gives us to see not so much earthly movements--these being afterwards described under the successive seals--as those which are above the earth, though corresponding with the events upon the earth which are then taking place. The introduction, therefore, covers the seal period but does not go beyond it. And what is true concerning this introduction as related to its period is true of the other introductions as related to their periods. Thus it will be seen that the scheme of the whole book of the Revelation is one of introduction and then of period; of heavenly view and then of earthly; and largely of the spiritual and then of the physical (see the Analysis).

As was the case with the general introduction (1:1-8), so now it is with this special one (4:1 to 5:14). In the general introduction there was a vision of Christ which related itself to the whole book. In this special one there is a vision of Him as related to this particular period of the book, namely, that of the seven seals (see the Analysis). And the purpose of each vision is the same. In respect to all of the seven periods, the Christian's need is to see a divine Watcher standing in heaven and ruling over earth's events. In respect to the seal period, which describes the rise and progress of the Antichrist, the need is to see this Watcher seated upon His throne, receiving the adoration of all the heavenly host, and possessing the measureless power of deity (4:2-11; 5:9-14). As related to the seal period, it is to be kept in mind that the seven seals open the way to the revelation of the Antichrist, his devastating wars, the sufferings which this time will bring upon men, including Christians, and finally, God's preliminary judgments upon the workers of iniquity. The spiritual need of the saints of those days, therefore, will be to have the assurance that God's great High Priest is not only among the golden lampstands and ever keeping their lights burning (1:12, 20), but also is enthroned in power as God over all (4:1-3, 6-11; 5:1-14). The introduction to the seven seals gives this. And because of it the saints on earth, while the nations are being tossed to and fro in their distress like a surging sea, will be able by faith and through this revelation to look up, to see a throne, to discover that it is immovably settled upon a sea of glass, to behold One there who has about His throne a rainbow--betokening a covenanted peace for those who put their trust in Him (4:2-6)--and thus to gaze upon the great Priest-King, blessedly ministrant and triumphantly regnant. What heart-rest in troublous times such a vision will give may be imagined!

Whatever the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders spoken of in the fourth and fifth chapters are, it is clear that they are not mere symbols (4:4-11; 5:8-10). They are, according to the Scripture, created beings who have life, energy and power. As for the four living creatures, the Authorized Version has

led to a misconception by using for them the name "beasts," which word applies to the Antichrist and the false prophet (11:7; 13:1, 11; 16:13; 17:8; 19:19; 20:10), but not to these. The Revised Version has corrected this misnaming by using the words "living creatures," and this term at once indicates the reality and activity of these beings. For other reasons, a similar conclusion may be reached concerning the four and twenty elders. All of these have their separate and individual positions before God; they are above the angels in place and power; and they are the servants of the divine will in many and special particulars. It is to be noticed, however, that the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders are not the same in their standing and relationship. One difference is that the living creatures are in the midst of the throne (4:6), and the four and twenty elders are only about the throne (4:4). In addition to this, the living creatures have larger powers than the four and twenty elders, they being the executors of God's will in a particular and exclusive sense (6:1, 3, 5, 7; 15:7). The two companies, however, are closely united in worship, each joining with the other in adoring God and in ascribing praise to Him and the Lamb (4:6-11; 5:7-10, 14; 11:16-18). It appears, then, that the four living creatures have to do with God's governmental affairs (6:1, 3, 5, 7; 7:11; 14:3; 15:7), and also, that both they and the four and twenty elders represent the redeemed of all times and places (4:9; 5:6-10, 14; 19:4-7). As to this last, some interpreters hold that the four and twenty elders stand for the Old Testament saints and the four living creatures for the New; while others hold that the four and twenty elders represent the church on earth and the four living creatures the church in heaven. As between these two interpretation it is difficult to reach a positive conclusion, though not a little may be said in favor of the latter view.

29

It would seem, both from the standpoint of the Greek word used and from that of the description given, that the word "book," which occurs in 5:7, should be translated and thought of not as a modern volume but as an ancient scroll. The word in the Greek is *biblion*. This is derived from the word *biblos*. This last word is properly the inner bark of the papyrus plant, from which the sheets for writing were made. The word *biblion*, therefore, presents inherently the idea of a papyrus book which anciently was a roll or scroll. In addition, the book was sealed with seven seals (5:1, 2). This suggests a scroll such as, at the time of John, was used in the law courts. It is to be observed that it is probable that the punctuation of the Authorized Version in 5:1 is misleading. It reads there, "A book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals"; which indicates that the writing of the book was within and without, and which does not specify where the seals were. It is likely that the punctuation should be, "A book written within; and on the backside sealed with seven seals"; which indicates that the writing of the book was within and that the seals were placed without. If the ancient custom of sealing was in mind, we may understand that the seven seals were placed equidistantly along the back and length of the roll, thus binding the whole together and hiding all of the writing within, and thus making it possible for the seals to be successively broken. There is much difference of opinion as to what the contents of the scroll were and what the whole scroll symbolized. We judge, however, from what follows in chapters four and five and from parallel passages in the Old Testament, that the scroll contained a record of the forthcoming judgments of God, and that the whole signified, through these judgments, that the sovereignty of Christ and His redeemed saints was about to be established and maintained (4:7-10; 5:1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12). As related to the word "book", it is well to state that there are three Greek words in the Revelation

which are translated by this word. The first of these is *biblos*, which means a scroll and is used in the following places: 3:5; 13:8; 17:8; 20:12, 15; 22:19. The second is *biblion*, which is a diminutive of *biblos*, means a small scroll and is used in the following places: 1:11; 5:1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9; 21:27; 22:7, 9, 10, 18, 19. And the third is *bibliaridion*, which is a diminutive of *biblion*, means a little scroll, and is used in the following places: 10:2, 8, 9, 10.

30

The word "Lamb," which is introduced in the fifth and sixth chapters (5:6, 8, 12; 6:1, 16), is a most interesting one. There are three words in the Greek which signify a lamb; the first *amnos*, the second *aren*, and the third *arnion*. The first of these words is a primitive one, meaning simply a lamb, and is used in the New Testament four times (John 1:29, 36; Acts 8:32; 1 Pet. 1:19); the second means a male lamb and is used once (Luke 10:3); the third is a diminutive of the second meaning a little male lamb, or a lambkin, and is used thirty times (John 21:15; Rev. 5:6, 8, 12, 13; 6:1, 16; 7:9, 10, 14, 17; 12:11; 13:8, 11; 14:1, 4(2), 10; 15:3; 17:14(2); 19:7, 9; 21:9, 14, 22, 23, 27; 22:1, 3). It will be seen by the references last given that this lambkin word, with one exception, is only found in the Revelation; and it will also be seen that in this book no other word for lamb finds place. There is, of course, a reason for this. And it seems to be found in connection with the following considerations. The Revelation sets forth Jesus as the coming One. All through its pages He is manifested as the One who is about to enter into His recompense of glory, when He will be seen by "every eye" (1:7) and will be acknowledged by "every tongue" (Phil. 2:9-11; Rev. 15:3; 17:14; 19:16). This is the joy which was set before Christ (Heb. 12:2), and for which He has waited (1 Cor. 15:25; Heb. 10:13). Above all, it is the supremely anticipated rapture which God, the Father, has had in mind, when He will demonstrate beyond question and for all eternity the infinite fact that His Christ is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings and Lord of lords (Heb. 1:13; 1 Tim. 6:15), and when He will crown Him with the glory and honor which are His most just due (Heb. 2:9; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; Rev. 19:12). With such thoughts in mind the Holy Spirit, in writing the Revelation, evidently seeks for a word which will express what Christ is in the Father's view. And manifestly, He finds it in this diminutive word *arnion*, or male lambkin. For the word signifies that Christ is the destined male head of the flock; that He is spotlessly clean and innocently righteous; that He became the Lion of the tribe of Judah by being the yielding, suffering and dying Lamb of God; and, in consequence, that He is and ever will be the Son of the Father's tender love. All this, and much more, is expressed by God calling Christ in this book of consummation and compensation His precious "lambkin."

31

It is a terrible commentary upon humankind, as evidenced by the fifth chapter, that only one man, the Man Christ Jesus, has ever been found worthy to execute judgment. All other men have been under judgment, and therefore have not been fitted to act as judges. This is the meaning of the word, "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon. And one of the elders saith unto me; 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" (5:4, 5). The Lamb, and He alone then, may break the seven seals of the scroll which contains the judgments of God; and in the vision which follows the above words, He does so, one by one. When we think of Jesus,

the Man, we think of Bethlehem, Galilee, Judea, and the hill outside of Jerusalem, remembering His humility, gentleness, grace and sacrifice, and it is difficult to conceive of Him as otherwise. But "this same Jesus" will yet sit on the throne of judgment; His eyes one day will flash with fire; and the word of the law will, at last, proceed out of His mouth. How surprised arrogant men, who have despised the Nazarene, will be in that day! There is no word in the Scripture more terrible than that which is found in Paul's sermon at Athens: "He hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by the *man* whom he hath ordained" (Acts 17:31). Well did the Psalmist say, "Kiss the son, lest he be angry, and ye perish in the way, for his wrath will soon be kindled. Blessed are all they that take refuge in him" (Ps. 2:12 R.V.).

32

There is a difference, as set forth in chapter four, between the praise given by the four living creatures and that offered by the four and twenty elders. In each case the thanksgiving is presented in the presence of Christ, before the throne, in the spirit of worship, and for the purpose of glorifying the Holy Name (4:8-11). But the four and twenty elders praise God for what He has done (4:11), and the four living creatures for what He is (4:8). This distinction, we may well believe, is not an accident; and, not being this, it is highly significant. It is to be remembered that the four and twenty elders are near and about the throne but not on it (4:4); while the four living creatures are not only about the throne but also in the midst of it (4:6). In other words, however close the four and twenty elder are, the four living creatures are closer; and however high the four and twenty elders are, the four living creatures are higher. We may not know why, but the fact remains that God has given the four living creatures, as compared with the four and twenty elders, a peculiarly near and exalted position. And this, no doubt, is the explanation of the difference in the praise which is offered. It is a great thing to give God thanks for all His works, and thus to ascribe to Him "glory and honor and power" (4:11). But it is a greater thing to offer Him the heart's adoration simply for what He is, and to worship Him in the unadorned and yet infinitely significant words, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come" (4:8). And as a practical lesson from this, may we not discover here the secret why our praises often fail? If we thank God for what he does, the day we do not understand His will and way, our praise is likely to die away. But if we thank Him for what He is, whether or not we understand Him, we shall always praise Him, since He ever is, and his power and love never change. Let us remember, however, that one has to stand, spiritually speaking, not simply before the throne, but actually on it, to voice such unaffected and undying praise as this.

33

The "Hallelujah Chorus," in spite of Handel and great musical festivals, has never yet been sung. But it will be sung, in heaven. And here in the fifth chapter is the description of it, at the close of the introduction to the period of the seven seals (5:8-14). God, according to the record, has announced in heaven that there is One who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose the seven seals thereof; and He has given the hosts in heaven to see a Lamb having seven horns, betokening His perfect strength, and seven eyes, betokening His perfect wisdom; and thus the great discovery has been made that the Lion of the tribe of Judah is none other than the Lamb of Calvary's cross. At this the four living creatures and four and

twenty elders fall down and worship, singing their new song, which is that of redeeming love; whereat myriads of angels take up the praise, the voice of thanksgiving spreading outward until it reaches the farthest ranks of the angelic company; whereupon every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, cry out in the ecstasy of their adoration, ascribing blessing and honor and glory and power to Him who sits upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, forever and ever; at which, the living creatures say Amen and the four and twenty elders fall down and worship Him who lives forever and ever. Besides such a Hallelujah Chorus as this, earth's praise at best has been faint and almost a discord. Nevertheless, it is for the saints to sing even now as sweetly and as adoringly as they can. Having thus *practiced*, they may hope one day to join the chorus which is to be.

34

Most premillennial commentators upon the Revelation put the resurrection of the dead saints and the translation of the living ones at the beginning of the fourth chapter. They base their conclusion principally upon two facts. First, that the voice of the trumpet said to John, "Come up hither" (4:1), this indicating to them that the command was symbolic in meaning, to the effect that John represents the church, past and present, and that his being caught up to heaven was the sign of all the saints, then and there, being taken thither; and second, that from this time onward in the record, as they say, the church entirely disappears from the earthly scene, there being no further mention of her, except as in heaven, to the end of the book. We shall not now speak of the last part of this statement, as we shall do this somewhat later. But we would comment upon the first part of it, pointing out several facts which seem to oppose and contradict it. First, it is to be observed that the phrase "Come up hither" is a small foundation upon which to build so large a superstructure as that of resurrection and rapture. Second, John later in the record is found again on earth (11:1; 13:1; 17:1), again in heaven (10:1, 5), and again on "a great and high mountain" (21:10), which, if he is made the sign of the movements of the sleeping and waking saints, would have these going and coming in a rather bewildering succession of movements. Third, it is strange beyond understanding, if the resurrection and translation of the saints do take place in this fourth chapter, that there is no mention of it, for the event is mighty beyond imagination, and our need of knowledge of it at this point is important beyond description. And lastly, it is a fact that there is no view, subsequent to the command "Come up hither," of the saints in heaven in resurrection form, which, no doubt, would have been the case if such had taken place; but, on the contrary, somewhat later we are given to see the souls of the martyrs beneath the altar crying, "How long" (6:10), this betokening the fact that they--and therefore all others--were still waiting for their resurrection bodies. Indeed, it seems as if we are justified in saying that there is no hint of the coming of Christ and the consequent resurrection and rapture of the saints in this fourth chapter; and hence, we are confident in making the statement that the first intimation of these events taking place is found, not here, but in the fourteenth chapter as a foreview of what is to come (14:1-16), and in the nineteenth as a description of what there actually takes place (19:1-21).

35

The theory, as held by some interpreters, that the saints spoken of in the Revelation from the fourth chapter onward constitute a lower Jewish order which is

not Christian, presents what appear to be insurmountable difficulties. First, the theory calls for a setting aside, as connected with these saints, of all the Christian descriptive phraseology which is contained in the remainder of the book. Second, the theory demands an acceptance of the following facts: a post-advent and pre-tribulation outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the Jews; acceptance of the Messiah by multitudes of these; the establishment by God of a new and peculiar class of saints; a post-tribulation and thus a third coming of Christ; and an additional and separate resurrection and rapture of Jewish disciples at the end of the seven-year rule of the Antichrist; all of which, so far as we can judge, must be derived from the imagination, for such views do not appear to have any scriptural passages to support them. And finally, the theory is positively opposed to the statements of the Revelation from the fourth chapter onward, since these point to a distinct Christian people--verses, for instance, in the twentieth chapter describing the tribulation saints as belonging to the "first resurrection" (20:5), as being "blessed" and "holy," as being "priests of God and of Christ," and as being such as "shall reign with him a thousand years" (20:6). In other words, it would seem as if the conclusion must be reached that all of the saints referred to in the Revelation, not only before but also subsequent to the fourth chapter, are Christian in life, character, testimony, and rewarding, and hence, in a complete sense are members of the body of Christ.

36

The above reasoning is generally controverted by the statement to which reference has been made, namely, that the church is not mentioned as being on earth after the fourth chapter. If it is meant by this that the word church does not occur subsequent to that portion of the book, the statement is a correct one. But if it is meant that Christians are not referred to, the declaration does not seem to be true. In considering the matter, it is to be kept in mind that it is of no great consequence that the word church does not occur in the portion of the book designated, for this is true of other parts of the New Testament, it not being found in two of the epistles of Paul, in one epistle of Peter and in two epistles of John, and yet it being clear that the church is present in all of these scriptures. Far more important then is the fact that Christians are frequently mentioned, provided we may take the use of Christian phraseology as applied to individuals as the evidence of this fact. And this last seems to be the case, as the following passages indicate: "Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads" (7:3); "And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand" (8:4); "And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (12:17); "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man have an ear, let him hear" (13:8, 9); "Here is the patience and the faith of the saints" (13:10); "These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb. And in their mouth was found no guile; for they are without fault before the throne of God" (14:4, 5); "Here is the patience of the saints, here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus" (14:12); "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them" (14:13); "Behold I come as a thief. Blessed is he that

watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame" (16:15); "And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus; and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration" (17:6); "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues" (18:4). Now, who are these whose names have been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb, who have the faith of Jesus, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, who are the martyrs of Jesus, who die in the Lord and who are promised the divine benediction if they are found watching for Christ's appearing? It can, of course, be said that they are post-advent saints. But does this answer explain away their Christian standing? After all, could such language be used by the Holy Spirit of any who were not members of the body of Christ? And, if the answer to this is, No, then do not Christians appear long after the fourth chapter and far into the days of the Antichrist? It would seem as if they did. And this is particularly the case in view of the fact that there is hardly one of the passages quoted which may not be duplicated almost verbatim in those books of the New Testament of whose church aspect there cannot be the slightest doubt.

37

The sixth chapter begins the second time-period, namely, that of the seven seals, and, according to our conviction, it introduces us to the Man of Sin and his earthly reign. For the white horse warrior in the chapter (6:1, 2) is not the Christ, but the Antichrist. The Man of Sin comes on a white horse, for first, he is at the beginning a man of peace, and second, he is the hypocritical anticipator and imitator of the true white horse warrior of the nineteenth chapter (19:11). But he soon reveals himself in his real character, for the white horse is followed by the red, and black, and the pale, and no sooner do these last appear than the earth reeks with blood and is filled with the cries of wounded, starving and dying men (6:3-8). The Antichrist is designedly called by the Spirit, "The Beast." Such he is in extraction (17:7, 8), character (13:2-6), authority (13:4) and activity (13:7, 8); and, at last, God deals with him as such (19:19, 20). Who the Antichrist will be, nationally, is a difficult question, but there is reason to believe that he will be a Greek. The evidence in this direction is as follows: First, if there is no Scripture to the contrary, it may almost be taken for granted that Antichrist will be of Grecian extraction from the fact that he will represent the highest development of human wisdom, for Greece stands for this (1 Cor. 1:18-22). Second, the Antichrist will not be a Jew but a Gentile, the Revised Version of Daniel 11:36, 37--which passage plainly refers to the Man of Sin--correcting the Authorized and making it plain that his "fathers" have been Gentile idolaters, worshipping not God but the gods, and that he himself is like to them. Third, when Antichrist comes he will rule over a "small people," which presumably is Greece (Dan. 11:21-23). Fourth, in the last days and at the time of the Antichrist, the children of Judah and Jerusalem will be sold as slaves to the Grecians, which indicates that this people, at the time, are in political and commercial power (Joel 3:1-6). Fifth, the figure in the Revelation which portrays the Antichrist is a leopard (13:1, 2), and it is plainly stated in Daniel that this beast represents the king and country of Greece (Dan. 7:6; 8:21). Sixth and finally, the most full and detailed account of the Antichrist is found in the eleventh chapter of Daniel, the description there passing from the type to the antitype; and the antitype is the Antichrist and his type is that Grecian general, Antiochus Epiphanes, who followed Alexander the Great and ruled over Syria, inclusive of Palestine (11:1-4, 20-39). This last evidence seems conclusive.

Incidentally, it gives strong indication of the fact that the Antichrist will not be the last pope of Rome, for no Grecian, and particularly, no Grecian general has ever been a pope, and it is inconceivable that any ever will be.

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A careful reading of the Revelation discovers the fact that it is a book not only of joy, but also and especially of sorrow. Its heavenly aspect is always one of joy and its ultimate issue one of transcendent joy. But its earthly scenes are filled with suffering and death, and the cries of pain and heartbreak are heard again and again. The book is made up of twenty-two chapters; and fifteen of these have mostly to do with persecutions from men and judgments from God. From the sixth chapter to the nineteenth inclusive, the Antichrist is on the earthly field of action and it is the day of Satan's unfettered and almost illimitable power. Whatever the divine motive in allowing such a state of things, it is manifestly the fact that the last days of this age will largely be given up to the enemy of God and men, and that he will be allowed to rage and destroy almost without limitation. Even when God begins to take issue with him and thus to bring deliverance to persecuted saints, He does so in stages and by slowly increasing judgments, delaying His final inhibitions, first, through seven long, weary years (20:1-3), and finally, to the end of the thousand years (20:7-10). "Great is the mystery of godliness" (1 Tim. 3:16). But possibly it is nowhere greater than in God's sovereign choice to permit evil and to allow it to take its full and steady course to its long-drawn-out end. Nevertheless, there is an end; and one day it will be reached. In the meantime, it is for those on earth to learn from those in heaven to say with unfaltering trust and patience, "O Lord, the God, the Almighty; just and true are thy ways, the king of the nations" (15:3).

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It is generally conceded, as evidenced by the prophecy in Dan. 9:24-27, that the "seventy weeks" there spoken of (9:24) are weeks of years, which are to be multiplied by the numeral 7, and hence, which number in all 490 years. This conclusion is reached in the following manner: The Hebrew word which the Authorized and Revised Versions translate "week" is one which signifies an indefinite portion of time which has been sevened. That is, the word does not indicate the length of the period in mind, whether shorter or longer, but simply that the space of time, whatever it is, has been divided into seven parts. In studying the Daniel passage and seeking to determine what these parts represent, it is to be noticed that there is a starting point, the *terminus a quo*, and an ending one, the *terminus ad quem*. The first is "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem" (9:25); and the second is "until the Messiah, the Prince," (9:25); and the interim time is said to be "seven weeks and threescore and two weeks" (9:25). The objective point is further described, in the words, "after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself" (9:26). All of this makes it clear that the reach of the passage is from the time Artaxerxes gave the edict to restore Jerusalem (Neh. 2:1-8) to that which marked the crucifixion of Christ, that is, A.D. 29. Artaxerxes began to reign in 474 B.C. He put forth his edict in the twentieth year of his reign (Neh. 2:1), which was 454 B.C. If we add "seven weeks," or 49 years (9:25) to "threescore and two weeks," or 434 years (9:25), we have a total of 483 years. This brings the time to A.D. 29. Thus the ultimate of the prophecy is reached, namely, the crucifixion of Christ. This seems like correct reasoning. In case it

is, we see that each of the prophetic "weeks" in the Daniel passage expresses its etymological meaning by being sevens, and thus, that each "week" represents seven years. This brings us to the important conclusion that the final "week"--the one which succeeds the sixty-nine "weeks," makes up the "seventy weeks," and is yet to be fulfilled (9:26, 27)--is, like all of the other "weeks," to be multiplied by seven and thought of in terms of years. This then makes the last "week" (9:26, 27) one of seven years. As this last "week" is the one in which the Antichrist will live and reign, it follows that the period in which the Man of Sin will be on the scene of his deceiving and destroying activities will be one of exactly seven years.

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In further development of the above, it is to be observed that there were four commandments or decrees which were put forth and which are referred to by Daniel. These were, Cyrus to Ezra, B.C. 536 (Ezra 1:1-4); Darius to Ezra, B.C. 519 (Ezra 6:1-12); Artaxerxes to Ezra, B.C. 468 (Ezra 7:11-26); and Artaxerxes to Nehemiah, B.C. 454 (Neh. 2:1-8). The first decree was related to the building of the temple; the second was also related to the building of the temple; the third was related to the return of the Jews to Jerusalem and the carrying to that city certain materials for the temple; and the fourth was related to the building of the city of Jerusalem, the temple having been constructed between the third and fourth decrees. This last decree, as it is the only one which refers to the restoration and building of Jerusalem, must be the one which is referred to in Dan. 9:25, for this verse distinctly states that the starting point of reckoning is "from the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem." It is stated in Dan. 9:26 that the ending point of the "seven weeks," namely, 49 years, plus the "threescore and two weeks," namely, 434 years--in other words, sixty-nine weeks, namely, 483 years--was to be the cutting off of the Messiah, which is the crucifixion of Christ, and this event--making allowance for the four years of incorrect chronology--took place at A.D. 29. Summing up then, we have the following: The full time prophesied in Dan. 9:25, 26, is 49 years plus 434 years, which is a total of 483 years. Artaxerxes' decree to rebuild Jerusalem went forth in the twentieth year of his reign (Neh. 2:1), that is, in 454 B.C. Adding the 29 years to this number, it gives the total mentioned above, namely, 483 years. It seems just to conclude, therefore, that the decree referred to in Dan. 9:25 is that issued by Artaxerxes to Nehemiah as recorded in Neh. 2:1-8.