

being "Peter." It has a human at its head-the pope. Its doctrines are human pronouncements. Its foundation and superstructure are homogeneous-both human.

But over against this number of incompleteness, God's doings reach seven, the symbol of perfection and completeness. Man never gets, in human achievements, or religious practice, beyond six. He has never attained the seven of perfection.

When God completed the six days of creative acting, the six days were a "finished" work-a perfected work. But God did not stop at six. He went on to completion. God rested on the seventh day.

Yet another thought. Only one other time does the number 666 occur in the Scriptures. It is found once in the New Testament, and once in the Old Testament. The Old Testament reference is Ezra 2:13 and one that has to do with numbering, also:

"The children of Adonikam, six hundred sixty six." The word Adonikam, according to Young's Concordance, means "My Lord has risen." The head of the Roman church called himself, "Rector Ecclesaei" or "Lord of the Church." He rises up to make himself Lord, though only human. How logical that he should be given a number of six thrice repeated, to reveal to us his utter humanness, heading a two beast institution, which is political and papal Rome, speaking like a dragon, or the devil!

## CHAPTER XIV

### PARENTHETICAL VISION OF THE TIME OF THE END

*Text (14:1-20)*

1 And I saw, and behold, the Lamb standing on the mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his name, and the name of his Father, written on their foreheads. 2 And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and the voice which I heard was as the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3 and they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four living creatures and the elders: and no man could learn the song save the hundred and forty and four thousand, even they that had been purchased out of the earth. 4 These are they that were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they that follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were purchased from among men, to be the firstfruits unto God and unto the Lamb. 5 And in their mouth was found no lie: they are without blemish.

6 And I saw another angel flying in mid heaven, having eternal good tidings to proclaim unto them that dwell on the earth, and unto every nation and tribe and tongue and people; 7 and he saith with a

great voice, Fear God, and give him glory; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters.

8 And another, a second angel, followed, saying, Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

9 And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a great voice. If any man worshippeth the beast and his image, and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, 10 he also shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed in the cup of his anger; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: 11 and the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever; and they have no rest day and night, they that worship the beast and his image, and whoso receiveth the mark of his name. 12 Here is the patience of the saints, they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

13 And I heard a voice from heaven saying, Write, Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; for their works follow with them.

14 And I saw, and behold, a white cloud; and on the cloud I saw, one sitting like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle. 15 And another angel came out from the temple, crying with a great voice to him that sat on the cloud, Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. 16 And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped.

17 And another angel came out from the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle. 18 And another angel came out from the altar, he that hath power over fire; and he called with a great voice to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe. 19 And the angel cast his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vintage of the earth, and cast it into the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God. 20 And the winepress was trodden without the city, and there came out blood from the winepress, even unto the bridles of the horses, as far as a thousand and six hundred furlongs.

### *The Vision of the Harvest*

In the thirteenth chapter we studied about the two beasts, namely political and papal Rome. These two agencies were given power for a period of 1260 years to wage war upon the Church of Christ. The weapons used were both temporal and spiritual. The arm of the state and the false, deceitful and miraculous powers of the apostate church worked together as one.

It was a dark picture, well designed to plant fear and despair in the hearts of true Christians.

Therefore, a parenthesis of encouragement is inserted at this point to strengthen the saints. A like parenthesis of consolation was in-

serted between the sixth and seventh seals and the sixth and seventh trumpets. This present parenthesis, the third one, resembles the first parenthesis in character, but harmonizes and coincides with the second in point of time.

So here we witness the history of the two beasts being interrupted at the end of the thirteenth chapter, to be resumed and completed in future visions incorporated in the 15th, 16th, 17th 18th and 19th chapters.

By this definite harmony with the parenthesis between the sixth and seventh trumpets, we are able to get a bench mark reading of our location in respect of time.

Taking a perspective view of the whole chapter, it portrays to us a culmination of all things ending with the judgment. The chapter stands related to the days between the sixth and seventh trumpet in the same manner as the sealing of the 144,000 in the seventh chapter is related to the encouragement of the saints before the seventh seal.

Briefly, this chapter, first, gives encouragement to the saints, reveals a glorious revival of gospel preaching, announces the fall of Babylon, gives a warning against worshipping the beast, then hurdles time and presents the coming of the Son of Man, sitting upon the clouds of heaven and finally describes two reapings in the harvest of the earth, one of the elect and the other of the wicked. Shall we now proceed to a more detailed study of this Chapter:

*vs. 1-5* "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion and with him an hundred forty and four thousand having His fathers name written in their foreheads.

And I heard a voice from heaven as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps.

And they sing as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders, and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth.

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 first fruits unto God, and to the Lamb.

And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God."

What a vivid contrast is this scene to the one of the terrible beasts

of the last chapter! Mount Zion is a symbol of the church. Paul said:

“We are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the Living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, and to the general assembly and church of the first born.” (Heb. 12:22, 23)

And Peter declares Christ to be the chief corner stone in Zion:

“Wherefore also it is contained in the Scriptures, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. (I Pet. 2:6)

So Zion is a symbol of the true church. And these, whom John saw, had His Fathers name upon their foreheads, in contrast to those of the thirteenth chapter, who had the mark of the beast on their foreheads.

This vision, vouchsafed to John, lifts the veil so that the redeemed may see what they could not see with physical eyes.

John heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters. This voice though tremendous, nevertheless, melodiously blends with the singing of the 144,000 redeemed saints. And all sung to the accompaniment of instrumental music—“harpers harping with their harps.”

This scene reminds us of the great Oratorio of Redemption, sung by the solo voices, the four living creatures the four and twenty elders, the myriads of angels and the redeemed of every kindred, and tongue and people and nation, which is described in the fifth chapter of Revelation.

The 144,000 doubtless is symbolical and not intended to represent an exact number. They are the first fruits to God and the Lamb. As, in the Old Testament economy, the first fruits devoted to God were representative of the whole harvest to follow, so these seem to stand forth as symbolical of the whole harvest of souls to follow.

A description of these who were “redeemed from among men,” follows:

First, they are described as those “which were not defiled with women, for they are virgins.” All obedient believers are classed as virgins and are presented to the Lamb of God as such. Said Paul: “For I am jealous over you with godly jealousy: for I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you as a *chaste virgin* to Christ. (II Cor. 11:2)

Second, “they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth.” They are sheep that hear and heed the Shepherd’s voice. Christ, in the

days of His flesh, said, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27)

Third, they are described as "the first fruits unto God and to the Lamb."

They were, as James said of those God had begotten with the word of truth: "Of His own will begat he us with the word of truth that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." (James 1:18)

In the dispensation of the Mosaic law, the firstfruits were that which was set apart as God's portion of the productivity of the earth. So in the dispensation of the gospel these 144,000 are God's portion from the hosts of men. And are representative of the whole harvest.

Fourth, they are described as "those in whose mouths was found no guile, for they are without fault before God."

In contrast to the beast whose mouth spoke great things and was full of blasphemies, the mouths of the saints were without guile, for they spoke the truth. And being baptized in Christ, wherein they came under the blood of Christ, they were made faultless.

They had put on the righteousness of Christ as Paul declared, "But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and *righteousness* and sanctification and redemption." (I Cor. 1:30)

And in his righteousness, we are to be presented faultless before the presence of God.

"And now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power both now and forever. Amen.  
(Jude 24, 25)

The next scene logically follows, for as the first fruits were rendered faultless before God by the truth of God's word, all the remaining harvest of souls must also hear the one, simple, and only gospel of Christ. Hence, there follows a scene in which the fervent, missionary church proclaims the glorious and everlasting gospel of Christ.

vs. 6, 7 "And I saw another angel in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

There is a startling similarity between the angelology of the three interludes, or parentheses.

In the first parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seals an angel with a loud voice speaks: "And I saw another angel having the seal of God, and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels." (Rev. 7:2)

Again in the second parenthesis, between the sixth and seventh trumpets, we read: "And I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven clothed with a cloud." (Rev. 10:1)

In the first, second, and third parenthesis these angels are different from the other angels mentioned in their respective settings.

Here in this chapter six other angels are mentioned. Four messages and two commands concerning the harvest are given by these six angels.

*The First Angel and His Message.* This angel is seen flying in the midst of heaven. He has the everlasting gospel. It is the same gospel that Paul preached and of which the apostle said, "But though we or an *angel from heaven* preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:18)

So this is an eternal or unchangeable gospel which was to be preached "unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue and people."

Christ said, "The field is the world." So this angel "flying" speaks celerity, and since an angel excels in strength, this symbolism portrays a season of vigorous and rapid evangelism of all the world.

This angel flies rapidly across the heavens with the Blessed Message, the old Jerusalem gospel—the gospel of Pentecost, Caesarea Philippi and other New Testament places.

Here the revived church, full of zeal, with a sublime missionary spirit goes everywhere preaching the word.

That definitely identifies the point of time of this vision. After the "Little book" was given, world-wide evangelism began.

That this movement will be world-wide is made clear in that the angel addresses all races.

The message is a call to fear God (rather than papal power). And to give God glory and worship Him, because the hour of his judgment is come. This brings us to the message of the second angel.

*The Second Angel and His Message.*

vs. 8 "And there followed another angel saying, Babylon is

fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

The message of this angel is closely linked with the first angel and his message. In the closing statement of the first angel's message the hour of God's judgment was announced, and in this second angel's message the proclamation is made "Babylon is fallen, is fallen."

Doubtless "Babylon" is used here, because the Babylon of antiquity with all its vileness, as well as grandeur, was a type of the great Babylon of the Apocalypse.

John could not have referred to the ancient city of Babylon of the Old Testament, for it fell centuries before John wrote. It has never been rebuilt, even to this day. John then refers to some great city or power, unseen while John lived on Patmos, but would be revealed in due process of time.

Perhaps a careful consideration of that ancient Babylon—a type of this future Babylon—will help us in the latter's identity.

First: Before the erection of ancient Babylon all men were of one language and one family. On this site occurred the confusion of tongues and the dividing of the nations. The name "Babylon," itself, means, "confusion," derived from "babel." We still speak of a polyglot of noises as a "babel" of confusion.

Second: This old Babylon led the old Israel of God into captivity and destroyed their temple in Jerusalem.

Third: It was the first great universal empire, as described in Daniel.

As this was a type, the New Testament Babylon must correspond.

Before the beasts, political and Papal Rome, jointly ruled on the seven-Palatine Hills, the church spoke the same language, taking the Bible, or the "Little Book" for all authority. They spoke where the Bible spoke and were silent where it was silent.

There was unity of belief and practice. But with the coming of the apostate church to power, human decrees, dogmas, papal pronouncements and findings of church councils were substituted for the one Biblical language, and confusion resulted.

Satan was back of the rearing of the first tower of Babel, as, likewise, he was the one who spoke through political and papal Rome, as a spiritual tower of Babel was raised.

The new Babylon led the world into spiritual captivity. In the preceding chapter, verse 10, we have a parallel prophesy of the fall of this spiritual Babylon: "He that leadeth into captivity shall

go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword."

As the Babylon on the Euphrates was a powerful and universal Empire, so did the spiritual and political Babylon on the Tiber, hold universal sway over, both the bodies and souls of men.

The ancient, literal Babylon was the subject of prophesy concerning drunkenness, to be followed by a prediction of her downfall. "Babylon hath been made a golden cup in the Lord's hand, that *made all the earth drunken: The nations have drunken of her wine; wherefore the nations are mad.*" (Jeremiah 51:7)

The comes the prophesy of her downfall: "Babylon is suddenly fallen, and destroyed." (Jeremiah 51:8)

Just so antitypical, or spiritual Babylon is to come to a sudden end.

The literal Babylon of the Old Testament made the nations drunk in a physical way; the spiritual Babylon makes the nations drunk of the wine of spiritual fornication, or unchasteness toward Christ.

As a man drunken with "spirits," has an addled, or confused brain, mentally, so a man drunk with "evil spirits," also has a spiritually addled mind, confused by false doctrine and practice.

The announcement is made by anticipation as on the eve of the accomplishment. Just as Joseph said to Pharaoh: "And for that the dream was doubled unto Pharaoh twice; it is because the thing is *established*, and God will *shortly* bring to it pass," (Genesis 41:32) so the pronouncement of Babylon's doom is doubled, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen." In another vision of the same event the repetition of the announcement is also given double: (Rev. 18:2): "And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great, is fallen, is fallen."

What assurance is given the saints that this unholy institution, hoary with age will surely fall! This truly *is* the patience (or reward) of the saints. *The Third Angel and His Message.*

Just as the second angel's message (that of the destruction of Babylon) was linked with the message of the first angel (that the hour of judgment is come), so the message of this third angel is linked with that of the second one.

This third angel declares that those who *drink* of the wine of the wrath of Babylon's fornication shall also drink of the wine of the wrath of God. We read:

*vs. 9-11* "And the third angel followed them, saying, if any



man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of their torment ascendeth up forever and ever and they have no rest day or night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

The first thing to which we would call attention is the associating of Babylon with the beast" and "the image of the beast," and, the receiving the mark of the beast in the forehead and upon the hand and having the mark of his name. This proves beyond the least shadow of a doubt that "Babylon" and the beast and its image are one and the same institutions. Therefore, a declaration that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen" is an assurance to the true Church of Christ that both political and papal Rome, with its image—the Roman Catholic Church, will fall. And when it comes it will be very sudden. When the fullness of God's wrath has come, that apostate church will fall with a suddenness that will shock the whole world.

The awful punishment which will befall those who worship the beast and his image, and have his mark in the forehead, or in his hand, will be two-fold:

First: They shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God and it will be without mixture—not diluted, or mixed with mercy, hope or love. The cup of God's indignation not only will be full, but full of unadulterated divine wrath.

Second: They are to be tormented forever and ever. There are many today who laugh at and jeer at the idea of an everlasting hell of punishment for the wicked. Many verbal thrusts are made at the "preachers of fire and brimstone." But none other than a great and mighty angel from heaven proclaimed this fact, and with a "loud" voice. Whose word shall we believe and accept before it is eternally too late—God's angel, or man's wishful thinking and human opinion?

*vs. 12, 13* "Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God."

This is the reward of the saints, that they shall be spared such a fate. And who are the saints? Those "that keep the commandments of God."

The devotees of papal pronouncements and denomination mimick-

ings, will find their worship vain. This makes no difference whether a papal power commands other than the scriptural requirements, or whether it be a denominational bishop or preacher who teaches the doctrines of men, namely doctrines without divine authority. Did not Christ say: "But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the *commandments* of men?" (Matthew 15:9)

In God's sight there is no difference between a Roman priest sprinkling a person on the forehead, and a protestant preacher doing the same act. Both are teaching doctrines of men and putting the same into obedient practice.

Again there comes ringing the challenge of Christ: "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46) Rev. 14:13, "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."

When a matter of great and outstanding importance is to be considered we meet with the word "write." With the exception of John being forbidden to write what the voices of the seven thunders uttered, we do not run across this word since the time John was told to write the messages to the seven churches. The same is true of the mention of the Spirit speaking. Not since the admonitions of the Spirit to the seven churches, "Let him that hath an ear hear what the Spirit saith to the churches," does the Spirit speak until this present verse under consideration and he does not speak again until Rev. 22:17. Here then is the comfort of the saints and the Spirit confirms it.

So John is commanded to "write," because a matter of great importance is the subject matter. Since this time roughly corresponds to the period of the Reformation and, subsequent Restoration, the saints would be those who had heard and believed the "Little Book," and having obeyed the commands of entrance, and faithful continuance in the Kingdom of God's dear Son, were *in the Lord*.

There is an infinite difference between those who die in the Lord and those who die in their sins. "There is therefore now *no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*." (Rom. 8:1) Again: "The Lord shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and *the dead in Christ shall rise first*." (I Thess. 4:16)

But to die out of Christ, with the "Little Book" printed and published throughout the world—and not to have obeyed its commands,

to get into and remain in Christ—will be eternally tragic. Of such Jesus said, "Ye shall die in your sins." (John 8:21)

"Henceforth" is a precious word. Having scripturally become a Christian, death offers blessedness. "For me to die is gain." (Phil. 1:21)

Those from henceforth do rest from their labors. The realm of departed spirits is not some sort of purgatory where labors on both sides of the veil must be entered into in order to complete salvation, but the Spirit, after a long silence—since the first chapter, speaks up to say, "that they may rest from their labors."

How timely this message after the long Thyatira period of Catholicism! In this period arose, and flowered to fullness, the diabolical dogma that the departed must reside in Purgatory and are only released through much labor and purchasing of many masses *to secure rest for them*. If such a dogma is true, how would one on this side of the veil know when sufficient masses had been said to complete the transaction? No, the Scripture declares plainly that they are already at rest.

The words, "Their works do follow them," promises a reward awaiting the saints *there* for their works done *here*. Paul said: "For as much as ye know that your labor is not vain *in the Lord*." (I Cor. 15:58)

The character the true saint acquired, the influence for truth exerted, the results of transformed souls attained—all follow him into the presence of Christ.

### The Vision of the Harvest

Proclamation has now gone forth that the hour of judgment has come, that Babylon has fallen, that the damnation of beast-marked worshippers is at hand, that "the dead in Christ rest in their labors." We now are given a vision of the reaping of the harvest. First, the righteous are reaped, followed by the reaping of the "grapes of wrath."

*vs. 14-16* "And I looked and behold a white cloud, and upon the cloud one sat like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in His hand a sharp sickle. And another angel came out of the temple, crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud. Thrust in thy sickle, and reap: for the time is come for Thee to reap; for the harvest of the earth is ripe. And he that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped."

A work of separation takes place between the sixth and seventh trumpet. (Rev. 11:1, 2). Here, in Rev. 14:14-16 the separation of the good and bad again appears prominently.

The Son of man, as seen in this vision, has a golden crown on his head, showing that he comes back as a *King*.

John said, "I saw, and behold a white cloud." The cloud is a signal of the second advent of the Lord Jesus Christ. When He ascended, "A cloud received him out of their sight;" and at the same time two men stood by the apostles and said, "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come *in like manner* as ye have seen him go into heaven." (Acts 1:10-11)

The cloud took him up and the cloud will bring Him back. Luke said, "They shall see the *Son of man* coming *in a cloud* with power and with great glory." (Luke 21:27)

Let the Master, himself, clarify this dual harvest. In Matt. 13:24-30, he speaks a parable concerning the sowing of the good seed of the Kingdom and the harvest thereof:

"Another parable put He forth unto them, saying, The Kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field."

Then he proceeds to show what this Kingdom is to be like, down to the time of the harvest. It was to be a mixture of tares and wheat together. He, seed of the woman, Himself, the Christ sows good seed—the children of the Kingdom; the tares are sowed by the devil and are the "children of the wicked one."

When his disciples asked for the interpretation, He thus explained the good and bad seed and then proceeds to explain how the wheat and the tares will be separated at the time of the harvest. The description coincides in the finest way and parallels the order of gathering the harvest as portrayed in the fourteenth chapter of Revelation. Hear him: "The harvest is the end of the world; and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire; so shall it be in the end of this world."

"The Son of man," (same title as found in Rev. 14:14) shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all things that offend, and and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire: "there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. 13:39-42).

In (Mark 4:26-29) he said:

"And he said, so is the Kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep, and rise night and

day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how, for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself; first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear. But when the fruit is brought forth, immediately he putteth in the *sickle* because the harvest is come."

So we see the evil has its harvest as well as the good.

The setting of Christ on the cloud was to inaugurate the harvest and to this end, this gold-crowned King holds in his hand a sharp sickle.

Seeing Him with this harvest-sickle in his hand caused another angel to cry with a loud voice: "Thrust in thy sickle, and reap for the time is come for thee to reap, for the harvest of the earth is ripe." This is another angel, other than to those mentioned in verses 6, 8 and 9. Even the angel seems to cry out for speedy vengeance.

"And He that sat on the cloud thrust in His sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped." What awesome words! What an experience in the wind up human affairs, and with what brevity! Nothing but inspiration could have confined itself to such narrow limits of recording an event, a mere human being would have required volumes to relate.

But this is only one phase of the reaping. After the *grain* harvest comes the *grape* harvest. So we read: Rev. 14:17, "And another angel (this is the fifth thus far mentioned) came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also had a sharp sickle.

Whereas the angel in verse 15, (the fourth angel mentioned in this chapter) came from the temple—not the temple which is in heaven, but evidently the spiritual temple as made up of those who keep his commandments, this angel in the 17th verse came out of the temple which is in heaven. This angel comes from the holy place not made with hands. It is in this heavenly temple that Christ is now appearing in the presence of God for us as our great High Priest. And it is from that temple He is to come when He returns the second time.

vs. 17 Again we come to a parallel. Just as when Christ was seen coming on a cloud with a sickle in His hand (Verse 14), and the fourth angel in (Verse 15) cried with a loud voice, "Thrust in thy sickle," so here, as the fifth angel in verse 17, came out of the temple which is in heaven, having a sharp sickle in his hand, another angel, the sixth introduced in this chapter, came out from the altar and also cried with a loud voice saying, "Thrust in thy sickle." Shall we read the account:

*vs. 18* "And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe."

This last angel, one who has power over fire, comes forth from the altar where the fire was kept burning, or the altar of burnt offering.

Fire is an emblem of judgment and punishment.

John, the Immerser, referred to this scene when he said, "I indeed baptize you in water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, he shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire." (Matt. 3:11). The "fire" here refers to the final judgment, and John continues to so apply it: "Whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

This angel of the altar-fires is so outraged by the awful vintage of the wickedness of the earth that he cries with a loud voice for the angel to thrust in his sickle.

*vs. 19* "And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth, and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God."

Here we observe that "the vine of the earth" is set over against "the vine of heaven." The true vine is Christ and Christians are the branches, as Christ himself declared: "I am the true vine," (John 15:1) Ye are the branches." (John 15:5)

The grapes of the vine of the earth are the fully matured children of the wicked one, They are "fully ripe".

Into this mass of "vines of the earth" the sickle was thrust. The vine of the earth is cast into the great winepress of the wrath of God. The judgment is final and complete.

*vs. 20* "And the winepress was trodden without the city, and blood came out of the winepress, even unto the horses bridles, by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs."

The winepress is said to be trodden "without the city." First, this would mean that it was without the church, for in the apocalypse, the city, unless a wicked city is under consideration, refers to that institution. And, second, it would mean the Holy City of the future. There will be nothing unclean or defiling in that city. Speaking of that future city, John said, "For without are dogs" etc. (Rev. 22:15)

And who will do this treading of the wine press without the city?

None other than an outraged Christ himself. In a definite prophesy of the Christ, Isaiah said:

"I have *trodden* the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me; for I will *tread* them in my anger, and *trample* them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments. For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my *redeemed* is come." (Isaiah 63:3, 4).

And what a horrible flow of blood follows! From the trodden vintage there flows a stream of such magnitude that it rose to the horses bridles to the distance of 1600 stadia, or furlongs. What an appalling result!

Since this is a symbol in a book which is, of all the books of the Bible, preeminently symbolic, this doubtless symbolizes the terrible final destruction of the hosts of wickedness. A symbol of a river of human blood, one hundred and sixty miles in length, to the depths of the horses mouths, tells the tragic story.

The very mention of horses bridles here causes our minds to leap forward to the nineteenth chapter where Christ is pictured mounted upon a white horse, followed by the armies of heaven, also mounted on horses. (Rev. 19:11-16)

The whole seems to be symbolic of the awful carnage in the punishment of the wicked in that day. The figures 40 times 40 equals 1600, or 4 times 4 multiplied by 10 times 10 is a symbol of the completeness of the final judgment.

Four seems to be the apocalyptic symbol of the earth as there are said to be four corners, four winds, or four directions and four quarters of the earth. The earth 4 times 4 times 100 implies the completeness of the Divine Judgment.

## CHAPTER XV

*Text (15:1-8)*

1 And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, seven angels having seven plagues, which are the last, for in them is finished the wrath of God.

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingle with fire; and them that come off victorious from the beast, and from his image, and from the number of his name, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. 3 And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. 4 Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou only