



VERSE 1. And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither ; I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters: 2. With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. 3. So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns. 4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour, and decked with gold and precious stones and pearls, having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication: And upon her forehead was a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.

IN verse 19 of the preceding chapter we were informed that "great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of His wrath." The prophet now takes up more particularly the subject of this great Babylon; and in order to give a full presentation of it, goes back and gives some of the facts of her past history. That this apostate woman, as presented in this chapter, is a symbol of the Roman Catholic Church, is generally believed by Protestants. Between this church and the kings of the earth there has been illicit connection, and with the wine of her fornication, or her false doctrines, the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk.

Church and State.—This prophecy is more definite than others applicable to the Roman power, in that it distinguishes between church and state. We here have the woman, the church, seated upon a scarlet-coloured beast, the civil power, by which she is

upheld, and which she controls and guides to her own ends, as a rider controls the animal upon which he is seated.

The vesture and decorations of this woman, as brought to view in verse 4, are in striking harmony with the application made of this symbol; for purple and scarlet are the chief colours in the robes of popes and cardinals; myriads of precious stones adorn her altars, and costly vessels of silver and gold are common. From the golden cup in her hand—symbol of purity of doctrine and profession, which should have contained only that which is unadulterated and pure, or, explaining the figure, only that which is in full accordance with truth—there came forth only abominations, and wine of her fornication, fit symbol of her abominable doctrines, and still more abominable practices.

This woman is explicitly called Babylon. Is Rome, then, Babylon, to the exclusion of all other religious bodies?—No, from the fact that she is called the *mother* of harlots, as already noticed, which shows that there are other independent religious organizations that constitute the apostate daughters, and belong to the same great family.

VERSE 6. 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. 7. And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

A Cause of Wonder.—Why should John wonder with great astonishment when he saw the woman drunken with the blood of saints? Was persecution of the people of God any strange thing in his day? Had he not seen Rome launch its bloodthirsty decrees against the church, being himself in banishment under its cruel power at the time he wrote? Why, then, should he be astonished, as he looked forward, and saw Rome still persecuting the saints? The secret of his wonder was just this: all the persecution he had witnessed had been from pagan Rome, the open enemy of Christ. It was not strange that pagans should persecute Christ's followers; but when he looked forward, and saw a church professedly *Christian* persecuting the followers of the Lamb, and drunken with their blood, he could but wonder with great amazement.

VERSE 8. The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the

earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. 9. And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth. 10. And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space. 11. And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

Rome in Three Phases.—The beast of which the angel here speaks is evidently the scarlet beast. A wild beast, like the one thus introduced, is the symbol of an oppressive and persecuting power; and while the Roman power as a nation had a long, uninterrupted existence, it passed through certain phases during which this symbol would be inapplicable to it, and during which time, consequently, the beast, in such prophecies as the present, might be said not to be, or not to exist. Thus Rome in its pagan form was a persecuting power in its relation to the people of God, during which time it constituted the beast that was; but the empire was nominally converted to Christianity; there was a transition from paganism to another phase of religion falsely called Christian; and during a brief period, while this transition was going on, it lost its ferocious and persecuting character, and then it could be said of the beast that it was not. Time passed on, and it degenerated into popery, and again assumed its blood-thirsty and oppressive character, and then it constituted the beast that "yet is," or in John's day was to be.

The Seven Heads.—The seven heads are explained to be, first, seven mountains, and then seven kings, or forms of government; for the expression in verse 10, "And *there* are seven kings," should read, and *these* are seven kings. "Five are fallen," says the angel, or passed away; "one is;" the sixth was then reigning; another was to come, and continue for a short space; and when the beast reappeared in its bloody and persecuting character, it was to be under the eighth form of government, which was to continue till the beast went into perdition. The seven forms of government that have existed in the Roman empire are usually enumerated as follows: (1) kingly; (2) consular; (3) decemvirate; (4) dictatorial; (5) triumvirate; (6) imperial; and (7) papal. Kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, and triumvirs had passed away in John's day. He was living under the imperial form. Two more were to arise after his time. One was only to continue a short space, and hence is not usually

reckoned among the heads; while the last, which is usually denominated the seventh, is in reality the eighth. The head which was to succeed the imperial, and continue a *short space*, could not be the papal; for that has continued longer than all the rest put together. We understand, therefore, that the papal head is the eighth, and that a head of short continuance intervened between the imperial and the papal. In fulfilment of this, we read that after the imperial form had been abolished, there was a ruler who for about the space of sixty years governed Rome under the title of the "Exarch of Ravenna." Thus we have the connecting link between the imperial and papal heads. The third phase of the beast that was, and is not, and yet is, is the Roman power under the rule of the papacy; and in this form it ascends out of the bottomless pit, or bases its power on pretensions which have no foundation but a mixture of ecclesiastical errors and pagan superstitions.

VERSE 12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast. 13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast. 14. These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for He is Lord of lords, and King of kings; and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

The Ten Horns.—On this subject, see remarks on Dan. vii. 8, where they are shown to represent the ten kingdoms that arose out of the Roman empire. They receive power one hour (Gr. *ᾠρα*, *hora*, an indefinite space of time) with the beast; that is, they reign a length of time *contemporaneously* with the beast, during which time they give to it their power and strength.

Croly, in his work on the Apocalypse, offers this comment on verse 12: "The prediction defines the epoch of the papacy by the formation of the ten kingdoms of the Western empire. 'They shall receive power *one hour* with the beast.' The translations should be 'in the same era' (*μὲν ᾠρᾷ*). The ten kingdoms shall be *contemporaneous*, in contradistinction to the 'seven heads,' which were *successive*."

This language must refer to the past, when the kingdoms of Europe were unanimous in giving their support to the papacy, and upholding it in all its pretensions. It cannot apply to the future; for after the commencement of the time of the end, they were to take away its dominion to consume and to destroy it unto the end

(Dan. vii. 26); and the treatment which these kingdoms are finally to bestow upon the papacy, is expressed in verse 16, where it is said that they shall hate the harlot, make her desolate and naked, eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. A part of this work the nations of Europe have been doing for years. The completion of it, burning her with fire, will be accomplished when Rev. xviii. 8 is fulfilled.

These make war with the Lamb. Verse 14. Here we are carried into the future, to the time of the great and final battle; for at this time the Lamb has assumed the title of King of kings and Lord of lords, a title which He does not assume till His second coming. Chapter xix. 11-16.

VERSE 15. And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues. 16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire. 17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled. 18. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

An Important Symbol Defined.—In verse 15 we have a plain definition of the scripture symbol of waters; they denote peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues. The angel told John, while calling his attention to this subject, that he would show him the judgment of this great harlot. In verse 16 that judgment is specified. This chapter has, naturally, more especial reference to the old mother, or Catholic Babylon. The next chapter, if we mistake not, deals with the character and destiny of another great branch of Babylon, the harlot daughters.

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CHAPTER XVIII

A CAGE OF EVERY UNCLEAN AND HATEFUL BIRD

BABYLON THE DAUGHTERS

VERSE 1. And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory. 2. And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. 3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

SOME movement of mighty power is symbolized in these verses. (See under verse 4.) The consideration of a few facts will guide us unmistakably to the application. In chapter xiv. we had a message announcing the fall of Babylon. Babylon is a term which embraces not only the Roman Catholic Church, but religious bodies which have sprung from her, bringing many of her errors and traditions along with them.

A Moral Fall.—The fall of Babylon here spoken of cannot be literal destruction; for there are events to take place in Babylon after her fall which utterly forbid this idea; for instance, the people of God are there after her fall, and are called out in order that they may not receive of her plagues; and in those plagues is embraced her literal destruction. The fall is therefore a moral one; for the result of it is that Babylon becomes the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. These are terrible descriptions of apostasy, showing that, as a consequence of her fall, she piles up an accumulation of sins even to the heavens, and becomes subject to the judgments of God, which can no longer be delayed.

And since the fall here introduced is a moral one, it must apply

especially to some branch of Babylon besides, or outside of, the pagan or papal divisions; for from the beginning of their history paganism has been a false religion, and the papacy an apostate one.

Great Babylon is a mother of harlots and in the overthrow of Babylon all the daughters will be included. These daughters are the ecclesiastical organizations that have been born of the papacy or have inherited her spirit and her errors. Some of these churches may resent the imputation that they are the daughters of the papacy, but when they bear the same fruits and walk in the same path they demonstrate their membership of the family. They may for a time have warred against the papal dominion, but in the long run heredity asserts itself and the papal principles that have never been wholly abandoned lead them back by a logical development into unity with the papacy. As the mother was false to the heavenly Bridegroom, and joined herself in illicit connection with the kings of the earth, so the daughter churches prove similarly unfaithful to Christ and enter into an unhallowed and adulterous union with the governments of earth. They forsake the spiritual for the earthly. For temporal rewards they sell their celestial birthright, and become departments of the State that they may share in the exercise of civil authority for the advancement of their own ends. The passage before us indicates the result. As the papal church became "the synagogue of Satan," so the confederation of churches that constitutes the final development of Babylon becomes a habitation of devils and a prison (R.V.) of every foul spirit.

We can see to-day the working of a tendency that is steadily drawing the churches into a closer union with the Church of Rome. The Bible which was once the standard of reform, and the weapon that inflicted on the papal beast its deadly wound, is gradually losing its old power over the reforming churches; they have developed among themselves a system of criticism that has divested their gospel of its supernatural elements; and they no longer raise the battle cry of the Reformers, "the Bible and the Bible only as the rule of faith." Here is a summary of the results of modern Biblical criticism, given by the Rev. G. Bettex:—

"According to this radical criticism is there any inspiration? None. Any trinity? None. Any fall into sin? None. Any devil or angel? None. Any miracles? None. Any law from Mount Sinai? None. Any wrath of God? None. Any pro-

phesy? None. Is Christ God? No. Is the death of Christ vicarious? No. Did Christ rise from the dead? No. Has there been any outpouring of the Holy Ghost? No. Will there be any resurrection of all the dead? or a final judgment? No. This is rather radical, and practically robs Christianity of everything that it has."

This spirit of denial has not yet taken entire possession of the churches. But every reader of modern religious literature knows that it has made remarkable progress during recent years, and threatens ere long to dominate the religious world. The prophecy before us intimates that by this spirit of unbelief and worldliness the churches will decline to such a point that it will be necessary for God to raise up a movement, attended by great spiritual light and power, to call His faithful people out of the apostate bodies that they may escape His judgment on the harlot and her daughters.

It would be easy to present an abundance of testimony, emanating from the more devoted and loyal in the churches, that such an apostasy as the Scripture foretells is in rapid and alarming progress. The student of modern religious life will possess evidence enough, and if any reader is so happy as to be in a church where there is no indication of apostasy from the standards set up by the great reformers, he will be conscious of the fact that his church is in a decided minority.

Chronology of this Movement.—At what time do these verses have their application? When may this movement be looked for? If the position here taken is correct, that these churches, this branch of Babylon, experience a moral fall by the rejection of the first message of chapter xiv., the announcement in the chapter under consideration could not go forth previously. It is, then, either synchronous with the message of the fall of Babylon, in chapter xiv., or it is given at a later period than that. But it cannot be synonymous with that; for that merely announces the fall of Babylon, while this adds several particulars which at that time were neither fulfilled nor in process of fulfilment. As we are therefore to look this side of 1844, where the previous message went forth, for the announcement brought to view in this chapter, we inquire, Has any such message been given from that time to the present? The answer must still be in the negative; hence this message is yet future. But we are now having the third

angel's message, which is the last to be given before the coming of the Son of man. We are therefore held to the conclusion that the first two verses of this chapter constitute a feature of the third message which is to appear when this message shall be proclaimed with power, and the whole earth be lighted with its glory.

The work brought to view in verse 2 is in process of accomplishment, and will soon be completed, by the work of Spiritualism. What are called in Rev. xvi. 14 "spirits of devils working miracles" are secretly but rapidly working their way into the religious denominations above referred to; for their creeds have been formulated under the influence of the wine (errors) of Babylon, one of which is that the spirits of our dead friends, conscious, intelligent, and active, are all about us; and this renders such denominations unable to resist the approach of evil spirits who come to them under the names and impersonations of their dead friends.

A significant feature in the work of Spiritualism, just now, is the religious garb it is assuming. Keeping in the background its grosser principles, which in its earlier history appeared so prominently, it now assumes to appear as respectably religious in some quarters as any other denomination in the land. It talks of sin, repentance, salvation, prayer, and claims to be in harmony with Christ. In this guise it is penetrating with its subtle teaching almost every denomination in Christendom. The basis of Spiritualism is a fundamental dogma in the creeds of almost all the churches. What, then, can save Christendom from its seductive influence? Herein is seen another sad result of rejecting the truths offered to the world by the messages of chapter xiv. Had the churches received these messages, they would have been shielded against this delusion; for among the great truths developed by the religious movement there brought to view, is the important doctrine that the soul of man is not naturally immortal; that eternal life is a gift suspended on conditions, and to be acquired through Christ alone; that the dead are unconscious; and that the rewards and punishments of the future world lie beyond the resurrection and the day of judgment. This strikes a death-blow at the first and most vital claim of Spiritualism. What foothold can that doctrine secure in any mind fortified by Bible truth? The spirit comes, and claims to be the disembodied soul, or spirit, of a dead man. It is met with the fact that this is not the kind of

soul, or spirit, which man possesses; that the "dead know not anything;" that this, its first pretension, is a lie, and that the credentials it offers show it to belong to the synagogue of Satan. Thus it is at once rejected, and the evil it would do is effectually prevented. But the great mass of religionists stand opposed to the truth which would thus shield them, and thereby expose themselves to this last manifestation of satanic cunning.

And while Spiritualism is thus working, startling changes are manifesting themselves in high places in some of the denominations. The infidelity of the present age, under the seductive names of "science," "the higher criticism," "evolution," "new thought," is making not a few notable converts.

When the great facts which alone account for the existence of sin in our world, and for all the anomalies of the present state, are termed "fabulous"; when it is avowed that man has not fallen, that the race did not meet the disaster of the introduction of sin by disobedience in the beginning, and that no atonement to meet this state of things is necessary—what becomes of all those portions of the Scriptures in which these facts are recorded, and by which they are recognized? They must be relegated to the realm of fable. And when professed ministers of the Gospel, to whom the people look for instruction, and on whose views they depend in these matters, lead out with such teaching, what reverence for the Word of God can be expected from the masses? "Like priest, like people." Such ministers are doing more for the cause of infidelity than all the Voltaires and Paines and Ingersolls of the past. Worse than wolves without the fold, they are wolves within it, and all the more dangerous because arrayed in sheep's clothing.

Others in high positions, and influential journals in the Christian world, speak in a similar strain. It has come to be a very easy thing to accuse the Record of inaccuracy, and charge the sacred writers with a failure to comprehend their subjects. Paul, they say, held erroneous ideas on a number of questions, more especially in reference to the second coming of Christ; and one learned doctor of divinity has asserted that even Christ Himself misapprehended the question He was discussing, according to the record of Matthew xxiv.! Under the leadership of such men, how long before Babylon will become full of spirits that are foul, and birds that are hateful and unclean? What progress has already been

made in this direction! How would the godly fathers and mothers of the generation that lived just before the first message was given, could they rise from their graves, and comprehend the present condition of the religious world, hearing its teaching and beholding its practices, stand aghast at the fearful contrast between their time and ours, and deplore the sad degeneracy! And Heaven is not to let all this pass in silence; for a mighty proclamation is to be made, calling the attention of all the world to the fearful counts in the indictment against these unfaithful religious bodies, that the justice of the judgments that follow may plainly appear.

Verse 3 shows the wide extent of the influence of Babylon, and the evil that has resulted and will result from her course, and hence the justness of her punishment. The merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the *abundance* of her delicacies. Who take the lead in all the extravagances of the age? Who load their tables with the richest and choicest viands? Who are foremost in extravagance in dress, and all costly attire? Who are the very personification of pride and arrogance? — Are they not churchmembers?

But there is a redeeming feature in this picture. Degenerate as Babylon has become as a body, there are exceptions to the general rule; for God has still a people there, and she must be entitled to some regard on their account until they are called from her communion. Nor will it be necessary to wait long for this call. Soon Babylon will become so thoroughly leavened with the influence of these evil agents that her condition will be fully manifest to all the honest in heart, and the way be all prepared for the work which the apostle now introduces.

VERSE 4. 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. 5. For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities. 6. Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works; in the cup which she hath filled, fill to her double. 7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her; for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow. 8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God Who judgeth her.

The voice coming from heaven denotes that it will be a message of power attended with heavenly glory. How marked becomes the interposition of heaven, and how the agents for the accom-

plishment of God's work multiply, as the great crisis approaches! This voice from heaven is called "another" voice, showing that a new agency is here introduced. We now have five celestial messengers expressly mentioned as engaged in this last religious reformation. These are the first, second, and third angels of chapter xiv.; fourth, the angel of verse 1 of this chapter; and fifth, the agency indicated by the "voice" of verse 4, now before us. Three of these are already in operation. The second angel has joined the first, and the third has joined them. The first and second have not ceased. All three now have the field. The angel of verse 1 is entering upon his mission, as the conditions which call for his work are supplied; and the divine call from heaven must take place in connection with his work.

Proof has already been offered to show that the message of verses 1 and 2 of this chapter is to be given in connection with the now current third message, and will mark a new era in this work. An idea of its extent and power may be gathered from the description of the angel there given. The first message is said to go with a "loud voice"; the same is also said of the third message; but this angel, instead of simply flying "in the midst of heaven," like the others, is said to "*come down* from heaven." He comes, as it were, nearer to the earth, with a message more pointed and direct; and he has "great power," and the earth is "lightened with his glory." No such description of a message from heaven to man is elsewhere to be found in all the Bible. This is the last; and as it meets, it comes with surpassing glory and unwonted power. It is an awful hour when a world's destiny is to be decided—a most solemn crisis when an entire contemporaneous generation of the human family is to pass the bounds of probation, as the last note of mercy is sounded in their ears. In such a time, the world must not be left without warning. So amply must the great fact be heralded, that none can plead a reasonable ignorance of the impending doom. Every excuse must be taken away. The justice and longsuffering and forbearance of God in delaying threatened vengeance till all have had an opportunity to receive a knowledge of His will, and space to repent, must be vindicated. An angel is sent forth, panoplied with Heaven's power. The light that encircles the throne enshrouds him. He comes to the earth. None but the spiritually dead—yea, "twice dead, and plucked up by the roots"—will fail to realize

His presence. Light flashes everywhere. The dark places are lighted up. And while his presence dispels the shadows, his voice in thunder tones utters a warning. He cries "mightily." He speaks in no feeble tones, and with no uncertain sound. It is no drawing-room announcement, but a *cry*, a *mighty* cry, a cry with a *strong voice*. The fatal defects in the profession of a worldly church are again pointed out. Their errors are once more, and for the last time, exposed. The inadequacy of the present standard of godliness to meet the final crisis is emphasized beyond all mistaking. The inevitable connection between cherished errors and irretrievable and everlasting destruction is heralded till the earth resounds with the cry. Meanwhile, great Babylon's sins mount up to the heavens, and the remembrance of her iniquities comes up before God. The storm of vengeance gathers. The great tidal wave of supernal wrath rolls onward. The feathery foam plays along its crest, indicating that but an instant remains ere it will burst upon the great city of confusion, and proud Babylon will go down, as a millstone sinks in the depths of the sea. Suddenly another voice rings out from heaven, "Come out of her, My people!" The humble, sincere, devoted children of God, of whom there are some still left, and who sigh and cry over the abominations done in the land, heed the voice, wash their hands of her sins, separate from her communion, escape, and are saved, while Babylon becomes the victim of the just judgments of God. There are stirring times before the church. Let us be ready for the crisis.

The fact that God's people are called out so as not to be partakers of her sins, shows that it is not till a certain time that people become guilty by being connected with Babylon; and this explains how it can be said of the 144,000 (Rev. xiv. 4), many of whom are the very ones here called out, that they were not defiled with women.

Verses 6 and 7 are a prophetic declaration that she will be rewarded, or punished, according to her works. Bear in mind that this testimony applies to that portion of Babylon which is subject to a moral fall. As already pointed out, it must apply especially to the "daughters," the denominations who persist in clinging to the personal traits of the "mother," and keeping up the family resemblance. These, as pointed out on a previous page, are to attempt a sweeping persecution against the truth and the people of God. By these the "image of the beast" is to be

formed. These are to have what will be to them a new experience—the use of the civil arm to enforce their dogmas. And it is doubtless this first intoxication of power that leads this branch of Babylon to utter the boast, “I sit a queen, and am no widow;” that is, I am no longer *χήρα*, “one bereaved,” or destitute of power, as I have been; I rule like a queen; I shall see no sorrow; the kingdom of heaven has come among the nations; the church is enthroned, and shall henceforth bear sway. The expression, “Reward her even as she rewarded you,” seems to show that the time for this message to be given, and for the saints to be called out, will be when she begins to raise against them the arm of oppression. As she fills up the cup of persecution to the saints, so the angel of the Lord will persecute her (Psa. xxxv. 6); and judgments from on high will bring upon her, in a twofold degree, the evil which she thought to bring upon the humble servants of the Lord.

The day in which her plagues come, mentioned in verse 8, must be a prophetic day, or at least cannot be a literal day; for it would be impossible for famine to come in that length of time. The plagues of Babylon are without doubt the seven last plagues, which have already been examined; and the plain inference from the language of this verse, in connection with Isa. xxxiv. 8, is that a year will be occupied in that terrible visitation.

VERSE 9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, shall bewail her, and lament for her, when they shall see the smoke of her burning, 10. Standing afar off for the fear of her torment, saying, Alas, alas that great city Babylon, that mighty city! for in one hour is thy judgment come. 11. And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her; for no man buyeth their merchandise any more.

A Fitting Retribution.—The infliction of the very first plague must result in a complete suspension of traffic in those articles of luxury for which Babylon is noted. And when the merchants of these things, who are to a great extent citizens of this symbolic city, and who have been made rich by their traffic in these things, suddenly find themselves and their neighbours smitten with putrefying sores, their traffic suspended, and vast stores of merchandise on hand, but none to buy them, they lift up their voices in lamentation for the fate of this great city; for if there is anything which will draw from the men of this generation a *sincere* cry of distress, it is that which touches their treasures. And there is a fitness in

this retribution. They who but a short time before had issued a decree that the saints of God should neither buy nor sell, now find themselves put under the same restriction by a far more effectual process.

The question may arise how persons involved in the same calamity can stand *afar off* and lament, etc.; but it must be remembered that this desolation is brought to view under a figure, and the figure is that of a city visited with destruction. Should calamity come upon a literal city, it would be natural for its inhabitants to flee from that city if they had opportunity, and, standing afar off, lament its fall; and just in proportion to their terror and amazement at the evil impending, would be the distance at which they would stand from their devoted city. The figure the apostle uses would not be complete without a feature of this kind; and so he uses it, not to imply that people would literally flee from the symbolic city, which would be impossible, but to denote their *terror* and *amazement* at the descending judgments.

VERSE 12. The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble, 13. And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

Babylon's Merchandise.—In these verses we have an enumeration of great Babylon's merchandise, which includes everything pertaining to luxurious living, pomp, and worldly display. All kinds of mercantile traffic are brought to view. The declaration concerning "slaves and souls of men" may pertain more particularly to the spiritual domain, and have reference to slavery of conscience by the creeds of these bodies, which in some cases is more oppressive than physical bondage.

VERSE 14. And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee, and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee, and thou shalt find them no more at all.

Gluttony Rebuked.—The fruits here mentioned are, according to the original, "autumnal fruits"; and in this we find a prophecy that the "delicacies of the season," upon which the luxurious gourmand so sets his pampered appetite, will be suddenly cut off. This, of course, is the work of the famine, which is the result of the fourth vial. Chapter xvi. 8. And we may be even now

having a premonition of this destruction in the phylloxera of the vineyards, and the many insect pests that work havoc in crops and orchards.

In this connection we can hardly forbear glancing at the general aspect of the times in respect to the remarkable physical phenomena everywhere manifesting themselves, as they seem so plainly to indicate that all the courses of nature are disturbed, and that the earth itself is waxing old in anticipation of the time when it shall vanish away. Within a few years past, how many unnatural visitations of storm and fire and flood and earthquake and volcanic eruption have wrought ruin in different localities, and awakened forebodings of fear in the hearts of men in general.

VERSE 15. The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing, 16. And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls! 17. For in one hour so great riches is come to naught. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off, 18. And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city! 19. And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

Emotions of the Wicked.—The reader can readily imagine the cause of this universal voice of mourning, lamentation, and woe. Imagine the plague of sores preying upon men, the rivers turned to blood, the sea like the blood of a dead man, the sun scorching men with fire, their traffic gone, and their silver and gold unable to deliver them, and we need not wonder at their exclamations of distress, nor that shipmasters and sailors join in the general wail. Very different is the emotion the saints are called upon to exercise, as the following testimony shows:—

VERSE 20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her. 21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all. 22. And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee: and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee; 23. And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of

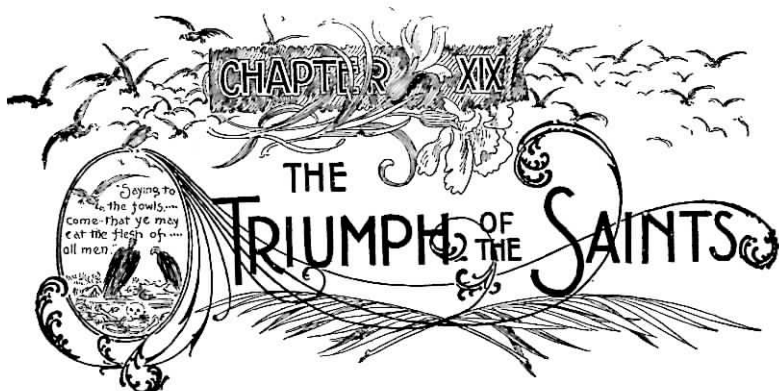
the earth ; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived. 24. And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.

Emotions of the Righteous.—The apostles and prophets are here called upon to rejoice over great Babylon in her destruction, as it is in close connection with this destruction that they will all be delivered from the power of death and the grave by the first resurrection.

Like a great millstone, Babylon sinks to rise no more. The various arts and crafts that have been employed in her midst, and have ministered to her desires, shall be practised no more. The pompous music that has been employed in her imposing but formal and lifeless service, dies away for ever. The scenes of festivity and gladness, when the bridegroom and the bride have been led before her altars, shall be witnessed no more.

Her sorceries constitute her leading crime; and sorcery is a practice which is involved in the Spiritualism of to-day. "And in her was found the blood" of "all that were slain upon the earth." From this it is evident that ever since the introduction of a false religion into the world, Babylon has existed. In her has been found, all along, opposition to the work of God, and persecution of His people. In reference to the guilt of the last generation, see on chapter xvi. 6.





VERSE 1. And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia ; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God : 2. For true and righteous are His judgments ; for He hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of His servants at her hand. 3. And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.



CONTINUING the subject of chapter xviii., the apostle here introduces the song of triumph which the redeemed saints strike up on victor harps, when they behold the complete destruction of that great system of opposition to God and His true worship comprehended in great Babylon. This destruction takes place, and this song is sung, in connection with the second coming of Christ at the commencement of the thousand years.

For Ever and Ever.—But one query arises on this scripture, and that is, how it can be said that her smoke rose up for ever and ever. Does not this language imply eternity of suffering ? Let it be remembered that this is borrowed language ; and to gain a correct understanding of it, we must go back to its first introduction, and consider its import as there used. In Isaiah xxxiv. will be found the language from which, in all probability, such expressions as these are derived. Under the figure of Idumea, a certain destruction is brought to view : and it is said of that land that its streams should be turned into pitch, its dust into brimstone, that it should become burning pitch, and not be quenched night nor day, but that its smoke should go up for ever. Now this language is spoken, as all must concede, of one of two things ; either of the particular country called Idumea, or of the whole earth under that name. In either case it is evident that the language must be

limited. Probably the whole earth is meant, from the fact that the chapter opens with an address to the earth and all that is therein, the world and all that come forth of it; and the indignation of the Lord is declared to be upon all nations. Now, whether this refers to the depopulation and desolation of the earth at the second advent, or to the purifying fires that shall purge it of the effects of the curse at the end of the thousand years, the language must still be limited; for after all this, a renovated earth is to come forth, to be the abode of the nations of the saved throughout eternity. Three times this expression of smoke going up for ever is used in the Bible: once here in Isaiah xxxiv., of the land of Idumea as a figure of the earth; in Revelation xiv. (which see), of the worshippers of the beast and his image; and again in the chapter we are now considering, referring to the destruction of great Babylon; and all of them apply to the very same time, and describe the same scenes; namely, the destruction visited upon this earth, the worshippers of the beast, and all the pomp of great Babylon, at the second advent of our Lord and Saviour.

VERSE 4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia. 5. And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye His servants, and ye that fear Him, both small and great. 6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. 7. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to Him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready. 8. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

A Song of Triumph.—The Lord God omnipotent, the Father, reigneth, is the language of this song. He reigns at the present time, and has ever reigned, in reality, though sentence against an evil work has not been executed speedily; but now He reigns by the open manifestation of His power in the subjugation of all His foes.

“Rejoice, . . . for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and His wife hath made herself ready.” Who is the “bride, the Lamb’s wife,” and what is the marriage? A vast field for thought is here opened, and material furnished for a more lengthy exposition than falls within the design of this work. The Lamb’s wife is the New Jerusalem which is above. This will be noticed more fully on chapter xxi. The marriage of the Lamb is His reception of this

city. When He receives this city, He receives it as the glory and metropolis of His kingdom; hence with it He receives His kingdom, and the throne of His father David. This may well be the event designated by the marriage of the Lamb. That the marriage relation is often taken to illustrate the union between Christ and His people, is granted; but the marriage of the Lamb here spoken of is a definite event to take place at a definite time; and if the declaration that Christ is the head of the church as the husband is the head of the wife (Ephes. v. 23), proves that the church is now the Lamb's wife, then the marriage of the Lamb took place long ago; but that cannot be, according to this scripture, which locates it in the future. Paul told his Corinthian converts that he had espoused them to one husband, even Christ. This is true of all converts. But while this figure is used to denote the relation that they then assumed to Christ, was it a fact that the marriage of the Lamb took place in Corinth in Paul's day, and that it has been going on for the past eighteen hundred years? Further remarks on this point are deferred to a consideration of chapter xxi.

But if the city is the bride, it may be asked how it can be said that she made *herself* ready. Answer: By the figure of personification, which attributes life and action to inanimate objects. (See a notable instance in Psa. cxiv.) Again, the query may arise on verse 8 how a city can be arrayed in the righteousness of the saints; but if we consider that a city without inhabitants would be but a dreary and cheerless place, we see at once how this is. Reference is had to the countless number of its glorified inhabitants in their shining apparel. The raiment was *granted* to her. What is granted to her? Isa. liv. and Gal. iv. 21-31 will explain. To the new-covenant city are granted many more children than to the old; these are her glory and rejoicing. The goodly apparel of this city, so to speak, consists of the hosts of the redeemed and immortal ones who walk its golden streets.

VERSE 9. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. 10. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

The Marriage Supper.—Many are the allusions to this marriage supper in the New Testament. It is referred to in the

parable of the marriage of the king's son (Matt. xxii. 1-14), again in Luke xiv. 16-24. It is the time when we shall eat bread in the kingdom of God, when we are recompensed at the resurrection of the just. Luke xiv. 12-15. It is the time when we shall drink the fruit of the vine new with our Redeemer in His heavenly kingdom. Matt. xxvi. 29; Mark xiv. 25; Luke xxii. 18. It is the time when we shall sit at His table in the kingdom (Luke xxii. 30), and He will gird Himself, and come forth and serve us. Luke xii. 37. Blessed indeed are they who have the privilege of partaking of this glorious feast.

John's Fellow Servant.—A word on verse 10, in reference to those who think they find here an argument for consciousness in death. The mistake which such persons make on this scripture is in supposing that the angel declares to John that he is one of the old prophets come back to communicate with him. The person employed in giving the revelation to John is called an angel, and angels are not the departed spirits of the dead. Whoever takes the position that they are, is repeating the fundamental error of Spiritualism, and is in grave danger of finding himself committed to that dangerous delusion. But the angel says no such thing. He simply says that he is the fellow servant of John, as he had been the fellow servant of his brethren the prophets. The term *fellow servant* implies that they were all on a common footing as servants of the great God; hence he was not a proper object for John to worship. (See on chapter i. 1, "His Angel.")

VERSE 11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war. 12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on His head were many crowns; and He had a name written, that no man knew but He Himself. 13. And He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and His name is called The Word of God. 14. And the armies which were in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean. 15. And out of His mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it He should smite the nations: and He shall rule them with a rod of iron: and He treadeth the wine-press of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God. 16. And He hath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords. 17. And I saw an angel standing in the sun: and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God; 18. That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great. 19. And I saw the beast, and the kings

of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against Him that sat on the horse, and against His army. 20. And the beast was taken, and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone. 21. And the remnant were slain with the sword of Him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of His mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

Christ's Second Coming.—With verse 11 a new scene is introduced. We are here carried back to the second coming of Christ, this time under the symbol of a warrior riding forth to battle. Why is He represented thus?—Because He is going forth to war—to meet “the kings of the earth and their armies,” and this would be the only proper character in which to represent Him on such a mission. His vesture is dipped in blood. (See a description of the same scene in Isa. lxiii. 1-4.) The armies of heaven, the angels of God, follow Him. Verse 15 shows how He rules the nations with a rod of iron, when they are given Him for an inheritance, as recorded in the second psalm, which popular theology interprets to mean the conversion of the world. But would not such expressions as “treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God,” be a very singular description of a work of grace upon the hearts of the heathen for their conversion? The great and final display of the “winepress of God’s wrath,” and also of “the lake of fire,” occurs at the end of the thousand years, as described in chapter xx.; and to that it would seem that the full and formal description of Rev. xiv. 18-20 must apply. But the destruction of the living wicked at the second coming of Christ, at the beginning of the thousand years, furnishes a scene on a smaller scale, similar, in both these respects, to what takes place at the close of that period. Hence in the verses before us we have this mention of both the winepress of wrath and the lake of fire.

Christ has at this time closed His mediatorial work, and laid off His priestly robes for kingly attire; for He has on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings and Lord of lords. This is in harmony with the character in which He here appears; for it was the custom of warriors anciently to have some kind of title inscribed upon their vesture. Verse 17. What is to be understood by the angel standing in the sun? In chapter xvi. 17, we read of the seventh vial being poured out into the air, from which it was inferred that as the air envelops the whole earth, that

plague would be universal. May not the same principle of interpretation apply here, and show that the angel standing in the sun, and issuing his call from thence to the fowls of heaven to come to the supper of the great God, denotes that this proclamation will go wherever the sun's rays fall upon this earth? And the fowls will be obedient to the call, and fill themselves with the flesh of horses, kings, captains, and mighty men. Thus, while the saints are partaking of the marriage supper of the Lamb, the wicked in their own persons furnish a great supper for the birds of heaven.

The beast and false prophet are taken. The false prophet is the one that works miracles before the beast. This proves him to be identical with the two-horned beast of chapter xiii., to whom the same work, for the very same purpose, is there attributed. The fact that these are cast *alive* into the lake of fire, shows that these powers will not pass away and be succeeded by others, but be living powers at the second advent of Christ.

The papacy has long been in the field, and has come to the closing scenes in its career. And its overthrow is emphatically predicted in other prophecies than the one now before us, notably in Dan. vii. 11, in which the prophet says that he beheld till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed and given to the burning flame. And this followed close upon the utterance of great words which the horn spake, which words were doubtless heard in the decree of papal infallibility in the great Ecumenical Council of 1870. This power must therefore be very near the close of its existence. But it does not perish till Christ appears, for it then goes alive into the lake of fire.

The other power associated with it, the two-horned beast, we see fast approaching the very climax of the work it has to do before it also goes alive into the lake of fire. And how thrilling is the thought that we see before us two great prophetic agencies which are, by all the evidences, near the close of their history, which yet are not to cease till the Lord shall appear in all His glory.

It appears from verse 21 that there is a remnant not numbered with the beast or false prophet. These are slain by the sword of Him that sits upon the horse, which sword proceeds out of His mouth. This sword is doubtless what is spoken of elsewhere as "the spirit of His mouth" and "the breath of His lips," with which the Lord shall slay the wicked at His appearing and kingdom. Isa. xi. 4; 2 Thess. ii. 8.



VERSE 1. And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand. 2. And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years. 3. And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.



THE event with which this chapter opens seems to follow, in chronological order, the events of the preceding chapter. The inquiries that here arise are, Who is the angel that comes down from heaven? what are the key and chain which he has in his hand? what is the bottomless pit? and what is meant by binding Satan a thousand years?

1. *The Angel.*—Is this angel Christ, as some suppose?—Evidently not. A bright ray of light is thrown from the old typical service directly upon this passage. Thus, Christ is the great High Priest of this dispensation. On the day of atonement, anciently, two goats were taken by the priest, upon which lots were cast, one for the Lord, and the other for the scape-goat. The one upon which the Lord's lot fell was then slain, and his blood carried into the sanctuary to make an atonement for the children of Israel, after which the sins of the people were confessed upon the head of the other, or scape-goat, and he was sent away by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness, or a place not inhabited. Now, as Christ is the priest of this dispensation, so by arguments, a few of which we here introduce, Satan is shown to be the antitypical scape-goat.

(1) The Hebrew word for scape-goat, as given in the margin

of Lev. xvi. 8, is *Azazel*. On this verse, Jenks, in his Comprehensive Commentary, remarks: "Scape-goat. (See diff. opin. in Bochart.) Spencer, after the oldest opinion of the Hebrews and Christians, thinks *Azazel* is the name of the devil; and so Rosenmüller, whom see. The Syriac has *Azzail*, the angel (strong one) who revolted." The devil is here evidently pointed out. Thus we have the definition of the Scripture term in two ancient languages, with the oldest opinion of the Christians, in favour of the view that the scape-goat is a type of Satan.

Charles Beecher, in "Redeemer and Redeemed," pages 67, 68, says: "What goes to confirm this is that the most ancient paraphrases and translations treat *Azazel* as a proper name. The Chaldee paraphrase and the targums of Onkelos and Jonathan would certainly have translated it if it was not a proper name, but they do not. The Septuagint, or oldest Greek version, renders it by ἀποπομπαῖος (*apopompaios*), a word applied by the Greeks to a malign deity sometimes appeased by sacrifices. Another confirmation is found in the book of Enoch, where the name *Azalzel*, evidently a corruption of *Azazel*, is given to one of the fallen angels, thus plainly showing what was the prevalent understanding of the Jews at that day.

"Still another evidence is found in the Arabic, where *Azazel* is employed as the name of the evil spirit. In addition to these, we have the evidence of the Jewish work *Zohar*, and of the Cabalistic and Rabbinical writers. They tell us that the following proverb was current among the Jews: 'On the day of atonement, a gift to *Sammael*.' Hence Moses Gerundinesis feels called to say that it is not a sacrifice, but only done because commanded by God.

"Another step in the evidence is when we find this same opinion passing from the Jewish to the early Christian church. Origen was the most learned of the Fathers, and on such a point as this, the meaning of a Hebrew word, his testimony is reliable. Origen says: 'He who is called in the Septuagint ἀποπομπαῖος, and in the Hebrew *Azazel*, is no other than the devil.'

"In view, then, of the difficulties attending any other meaning, and the accumulated evidence in favour of this, Hengstenberg affirms with great confidence that *Azazel* cannot be anything else than another name for Satan."

(2.) In the common acceptance of the word, the term *scape-goat* is applied to any one who has become obnoxious to the claims

of justice; and while it is revolting to all our conceptions of the character and glory of Christ to apply this term to Him, it must strike every one as a very appropriate designation of the devil, who is styled in Scripture the accuser, adversary, angel of the bottomless pit, Beelzebub, Belial, dragon, enemy, evil spirit, father of lies, murderer, prince of devils, serpent, tempter, etc., etc.

(3.) The third reason for this position is the very striking manner in which it harmonizes with the events to take place in connection with the cleansing of the heavenly sanctuary, as far as revealed to us in the Scriptures of truth.

We behold in the type, (a) the sin of the transgressor transferred to the victim; (b) we see that sin borne by the ministration of the priest and the blood of the offering into the sanctuary; (c) on the tenth day of the seventh month we see the priest, with the blood of the sin-offering for the people, remove all their sins from the sanctuary, and lay them upon the head of the scape-goat; and (d) the goat bears them away into a land not inhabited. Lev. i. 1-4; iv. 3-6; xvi. 5-10, 15, 16, 20-22.

Answering to these events in the type, we behold in the anti-type, (a) the great offering for the world made on Calvary; (b) the sins of all those who avail themselves of the merits of Christ's shed blood by faith in Him, borne, by the ministration of Christ while pleading His own blood, into the new-covenant sanctuary; (c) after Christ, the minister of the new tabernacle (Heb. viii. 2), has finished His ministration, He will remove the sins of His people from the sanctuary, and lay them upon the head of their author, the anti-typical scape-goat, the devil; and (d) the devil will be sent away with them into a land not inhabited.

This we believe to be the very event described in the verses under notice. The sanctuary service is, at the time here specified, closed. Christ lays upon the head of the devil the sins which have been transferred to the sanctuary, and which are imputed to the saints no more, and the devil is sent away, *not* by the hand of the High Priest, but by the hand of another person, according to the type, into a place here called the bottomless pit. Hence this angel is not Christ.*

2. *The Key and Chain.*—It cannot be supposed that the key

*For a full exposition of this subject, see the work, "Looking Unto Jesus; or Christ in Type and Antitype."

and chain are literal; they are rather used merely as symbols of the power and authority with which this angel is clothed upon this occasion.

3. *The Bottomless Pit.*—The original word signifies an abyss, bottomless, deep, profound. Its use seems to be such as to show that the word denotes any place of darkness, desolation, and death. Thus in Rev. ix. 1, 2, it is applied to the barren wastes of the Arabian desert, and in Rom. x. 7, to the grave; but the passage which specially throws light upon the meaning of the word here is Gen. i. 2, where we read that "darkness was upon the face of the deep." The word there rendered *deep* is in the Septuagint version the same word that is here rendered *bottomless pit*; so that passage might have been translated, "Darkness was upon the face of the abyss, or bottomless pit." But we all know what is meant by the word *deep* as there used; it is applied to this earth in its chaotic state. Precisely this it must mean in this third verse of Revelation xx. At this time, let it be borne in mind, the earth is a vast charnel-house of desolation and death. The voice of God has shaken it to its foundations; the islands and mountains have been moved out of their places; the great earthquake has levelled to the earth the mightiest works of man; the seven last plagues have left their all-desolating footprints over the earth; the burning glory attending the coming of the Son of man has borne its part in accomplishing the general desolation; the wicked have been given to the slaughter, and their putrefying flesh and bleaching bones lie unburied, ungathered, and unlamented from one end of earth to the other end thereof. Thus is the earth made empty and waste, and turned upside down. Isa. xxiv. 1. Thus is it brought back again, partially, at least, to its original state of confusion and chaos. (See Jer. iv. 19-26, especially verse 23.) And what better term could be used to describe the earth thus rolling on in its course of darkness and desolation for a thousand years than that of the abyss, or bottomless pit? Here Satan will be confined during this time, amid the ruins which indirectly his own hands have wrought, unable to flee from his habitation of woe, or to repair in the least degree its hideous ruin.

4. *The Binding of Satan.*—We well know that Satan, in order to work, must have subjects upon whom to work. Without these, he can do nothing. But during the thousand years of his confinement to this earth, all the saints are in heaven, beyond the power

of his temptations; and all the wicked are in their graves, beyond his power to deceive. His sphere of action is circumscribed, he being at this time confined to this earth; and thus he is bound, being condemned throughout this period to a state of hopeless inactivity. This, to a mind that has been so busy as his has been for the past six thousand years in deceiving the world, must be a punishment of the most intense severity.

According to this exposition, the "binding" of Satan means simply the placing beyond his reach of the subjects upon whom he works, and his being "loosed" means their being brought again, by a resurrection, to a position where he can again exercise his power upon them. More than this, there is here a great limitation of Satan's power, which may well be called a "binding." He no longer has the power of traversing space, and visiting other worlds, but is confined to this earth, which he nevermore leaves. The place of the ruin he has wrought now becomes his gloomy prison-house, till he is led out to execution, at the end of the thousand years.

VERSE 4. And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them, and judgment was given unto them: and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God, and which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands; and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. 5. But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection. 6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.

The Exaltation of the Saints.—From the devil in his gloomy confinement, John now directs our attention to the saints in victory and glory—the saints reigning with Christ—their employment being to assign to the wicked dead the punishment due their evil deeds. From that general assembly John then selects two classes as worthy of special attention: first, the martyrs, those who had been beheaded for the witness of Jesus; and secondly, those who had not worshipped the beast and his image. This latter class, the ones who refuse the mark of the beast and his image, are of course those who hear and obey the third message of Revelation xiv.; but these are not the ones who are beheaded for the witness of Jesus. The Greek word rendered *which*, in the expression, "and which had not worshipped the beast," etc., shows another

class is introduced. The word is the compound relative, *ὅστις* (*hostis*), not merely the simple relative *ὅς*, and is defined by Liddell and Scott, "Whosoever; whichsoever; *any one who*; anything which." "And such as worshipped not the beast" is the Revised Version. As one class, John saw the martyrs, and as another, he saw *those who* had not worshipped the beast and his image.

It is true that *ὅστις* is sometimes used as a simple relative, as in 2 Cor. iii. 14; Ephes. i. 23, but never in such constructions as this, preceded by the conjunction *καί*.

Lest any one should say that if we render the passage "and whosoever had not worshipped the beast," we thereby include millions of heathen and sinners who have not worshipped the beast, and promise them a reign with Christ of a thousand years, we would call attention to the fact that the preceding chapter states that the wicked had all been slain, and the seal of death has been set upon them for a thousand years; and John is viewing only the righteous company who have part in the first resurrection.

To avoid the doctrine of two resurrections, some claim that the passage, "But the rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished," is an interpolation, not found in certain ancient manuscripts. Even if this were so, it would not disprove the main proposition that the righteous dead are raised by themselves, in a "first resurrection," and that there is a second resurrection a thousand years later, in which all the wicked are brought from their graves. But the criticism is unsound. All scholarship is against it. The Revised Version retains the passage.

Two Resurrections.—"The rest of the dead lived not again till the thousand years were finished." No language could more plainly prove two resurrections; the first, a resurrection of the righteous at the commencement of the thousand years; and the second, that of the wicked at the end of that period. On such as have part in the first resurrection, the second death will have no power. They can pass unharmed through the elements which destroy the wicked like chaff. They will be able to dwell with devouring fire and everlasting burnings (Isa. xxxiii. 14, 15); they will be able to go forth and look upon the carcases of the men who have transgressed against the Lord, as the quenchless fire and undying worm are preying upon them. Isa. lxvi. 24. The difference between the righteous and the wicked in this respect

illustrates the fact that while God is to the latter a consuming fire, He is to His people a sun and a shield.

The Wicked Raised to Life.—The wicked who are raised at the end of the thousand years as really live again as they have once lived on the earth. To deny this is to do violence to the scripture before us. In what physical condition they will be raised we are not informed. It is usual to say on this point that what we have lost unconditionally in Adam is restored unconditionally in Christ. With respect to physical condition, this should not perhaps be taken in an unlimited sense; for we have lost greatly in stature and vital force, which need not be restored to the wicked. If they are brought back to the average mental and physical condition which they enjoyed during life, or the period of their probation, that would certainly be sufficient to enable them to receive at last understandingly the reward due them for all their deeds.

VERSE 7. And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison, 8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea. 9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them. 10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The Perdition of Ungodly Men.—At the end of the one thousand years, the holy city, the New Jerusalem, in which the saints have dwelt in heaven during that period, comes down, and is located upon the earth, and becomes the camp of the saints, around which the resurrected wicked come up, numberless as the sand of the sea. The devil deceives them, and thus brings them up to this battle. They are induced to commence an impious warfare upon the holy city, in prospect of some advantage to be gained by fighting against the saints. Satan doubtless persuades them that they can overcome the saints, dispossess them of their city, and still hold possession of the earth. But fire comes down from God out of heaven, and devours them. The word here rendered *devoured*, Professor Stuart admits, is "intensive," and signifies "to eat up, devour, so that it denotes utter excision." This is the time of the perdition of ungodly men—the time when the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and when the works that are in the earth shall be burned up. 2 Peter iii. 7, 10. In the light of

these scriptures, we can see how the wicked are to receive their recompence in the earth (Prov. xi. 31); we can see also that this recompence is not eternal life in misery, but an "utter excision," entire and complete destruction.

The Wicked Never Tread the New Earth.—Two views deserve a passing notice at this point. The first is that the earth is renewed at the second coming of Christ, and is the habitation of the saints during the thousand years; the other is that when Christ appears the second time, He sets up His kingdom in Palestine, and performs, in connection with His saints, a work of conquest over the nations left on the earth during the thousand years, and subdues them to Himself.

One among many objections to the first view is that it makes the wicked, in their resurrection, come up, with the devil at their head, and tread with their unhallowed feet upon the purified and holy earth, and the saints, who have held possession for a thousand years, are obliged to yield the ground, and flee into the city. But we cannot believe that the saints' inheritance will ever be thus marred, or that the fair plains of the earth made new will ever be soiled with the polluting tread of the resuscitated wicked; for besides outraging all ideas of propriety, there is no scripture from which even an inference can be drawn to support it.

And as to the second view, one among many of its absurdities is that notwithstanding Christ and His saints have conquered the earth during the thousand years, at the end of this period the wicked get the upper hand of them, they lose their territory, the work of a thousand years is undone, and they are compelled to beat an ignominious retreat into the city for shelter, leaving the earth to the undisputed sway of their foes. Those who wish may rack their brains in trying to harmonize the inconsistencies and absurdities of such theories, or may endeavour to draw consolation from the dubious prospect. For ourselves, we prefer better employment and a brighter hope.

A Thousand Years in Heaven.—In contrast with these theories, there is a beautiful harmony in the view herein presented; namely, that the saints are with Christ in heaven during the thousand years while the earth lies desolate; that the saints and the city come down, and the wicked dead are raised and come up against it; that the latter there receive their judgment; and that from the purifying fires which destroy them come forth the new

heavens and the new earth, to be the abode of the righteous throughout endless ages.

The Subjects of Torment.—From verse 10, some have argued that the devil alone was to be tormented day and night; but the verb "shall be tormented" is the plural, and agrees with the beast and false prophet; whereas it would be in the singular number if it referred to the devil alone. It will be noticed that in the expression, "where the beast and false prophet are," *are* is a supplied word.

The Lake of Fire.—This is a symbol of the agencies which God employs to close up His controversy with the living wicked at the beginning of the thousand years, and with all the hosts of the ungodly at the end of that period. Literal fire will of course be largely employed in this work. We can better describe its effects than the thing itself. At the second coming of Christ, it is the flaming fire in which the Lord Jesus is revealed; it is the spirit of His mouth and brightness of His coming by which the man of sin is to be consumed; it is the fire in which great Babylon shall be utterly burned. Rev. xviii. 8. At the end of the thousand years, it is the day that shall burn as an oven (Mal. iv. 1); it is the fervent heat that shall melt the elements and the earth, and burn up the works that are therein; it is the fire of Tophet "prepared for the king" (the devil and his angels, Matt. xxv. 41), the pile whereof is deep and large, and which "the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle." Isa. xxx. 33. It is the fire that comes down from God out of heaven. (On the expression, "tormented day and night for ever and ever," see on chapter xiv. 12.)

VERSE 11. And I saw a great white throne, and Him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. 12. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. 13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. 14. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. 15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

With verse 11 John introduces another scene to take place in connection with the final doom of the ungodly. It is the great white throne of judgment, before which they are assembled to.

receive their awful sentence of condemnation and death. Before this throne the heavens and the earth flee away, so that no place is found for them. A moment's reflection on the changes which must then take place in the earth will bring out the great force of this language. The scene is that of Peter's burning day, which is the "perdition of ungodly men," and in which even the "elements" melt with fervent heat. 2 Peter iii. 7-13. The city is then located upon the earth, the foundations of course extending under its whole area, so that it will not be affected by any changes that may take place, or any conditions which may exist, in the earth beneath it. Fire comes down from God out of heaven.

First, the works that are in the world are burned up; and by the poisonous gases evolved, and the flames, the wicked are destroyed; this is the fire of Gehenna, which contains all the elements necessary to consume utterly every mortal being that comes under its power (Mark ix. 43-48); and then will be fulfilled Isa. lxvi. 24: "They [the righteous] shall go forth, and look upon the carcases of the men that have transgressed against Me: for their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched; and they shall be an abhorring unto all flesh."

Secondly, the heat is raised till all the material of which this globe is composed is fused like the ores in a smelter's furnace, and the whole earth becomes a fiery, molten mass. Upon this the city floats, as the ark of Noah floated upon the waters of the flood. Then will be fulfilled Isa. xxxiii. 14: "Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?" The answer, in the following verses, shows it to be the righteous, and this must be the time when it will be fulfilled.

Thirdly, there is one stage more to be reached. It is well known that with a sufficient degree of heat, any substance on this earth can be reduced to the condition of gas, and thus become invisible. So will it be then with this whole earth. The heat being raised to a sufficient degree of intensity, would not the whole earth be converted into gas, and become invisible, and thus appear most literally to flee away, so that no place is found for it? The city would then seem to be, as virtually it would be, suspended in mid-heaven.

But the elements are not destroyed. They are only, by that process, purged from the last and minutest taint of sin, and every token of the curse. The almighty fiat again goes forth, "Behold,

I make all things new. . . . It is done" (Rev. xxi. 5, 6), and the particles combine again to compose a new world; and there beneath the wondering and admiring gaze of all the redeemed and the angelic host, the work of creation is gone through with again. At the first creation, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. Job xxxviii. 7. At this new creation, this song and shout will be augmented by the glad voices of the redeemed. So will this earth, wrenched for a time, by sin, from its intended orbit of joy and peace, be brought back, renewed, into harmony with a loyal universe, to be the everlasting home of the saved.

The Books of Record.—All are judged out of the things written in the books, from which we learn the solemn fact that a record of all our deeds is kept on high. A faithful and unerring record is made by the angelic secretaries. The wicked cannot conceal from them any of their deeds of darkness, nor bribe them to pass over in their record any of their unlawful acts. They must meet them all again, and be judged accordingly.

The Execution of the Sentence.—The wicked are to be punished according to their works. The Scriptures declare that they shall be rewarded according to their deeds. There are, then, to be degrees in the punishment of the wicked; and it may be asked how this can be harmonized with the view that death is the punishment for sin, and comes upon all alike. Let us ask believers in eternal misery how they will maintain degrees in *their* system. They tell us the intensity of the pain endured will be in each case proportioned to the guilt of the sufferer. But how can this be? Are not the flames of hell equally severe in all parts? and will they not equally affect *all* the immaterial souls cast therein? But God can interpose, it is answered, to produce the effect desired. Very well, then, we reply, cannot He also interpose, if necessary, and graduate the pain which will attend the infliction of death upon the sinner as the climax of his penalty? So, then, our view is equal with the commonly accepted one in this respect, while it possesses great advantages over it in another; for while that has to find its degrees of punishment in intensity of pain alone, the duration in all cases being the same, this may not only have degrees in pain but in duration also; inasmuch as some may perish in a short space of time, and the weary sufferings of others be long drawn out. But yet we apprehend that the bodily suffering will be

but an unnoticed trifle compared with the mental agony, that keen anguish which will rack the souls of the unsaved as they get a view of their incomparable loss, each according to his capacity of appreciation. The youth who had but little more than reached the years of accountability, being less able to comprehend his situation and his loss, will of course feel it less; to him of older years, more capacity, and consequently a deeper experience in sin, the burden of his fate will be proportionately greater; while the man of giant intellect and almost boundless comprehension—who hence possessed greater influence for evil, and so was the more guilty in devoting his powers to the service of that evil—being able to understand his situation fully, comprehend his fate, and realize his loss, will feel it most keenly of all. Into *his* soul the iron will indeed enter most intolerably deep. And thus, by an established law of mind, the sufferings of each may be most accurately adjusted to the magnitude of his guilt.

That the degree of suffering which each one is to endure is taken into the account as a part of the punishment of his crimes, is evident from Rom. ii. 6-10. Paul, here speaking of the future "judgment of God," says:—

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honour and immortality [He will render], eternal life; but unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness [He will render], indignation and wrath, *tribulation and anguish*, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile."

The Book of Life.—Why, it may be asked, is the book of life brought forth on this occasion, when all who have part in the second resurrection, beyond which this scene is located, are already foredoomed to the second death? One apparent reason, at least is, That it may be seen that none of the names of all the multitude who die the second death are in the book of life, and why they are not there; and if the names have ever been there, why they were not retained; that all the intelligences of the universe may see that God acts with strict justice and impartiality.

"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death." This is the final epitaph of all the forces that have risen up from first to last, to oppose the will and work of the Lord Almighty. Satan originated and led out in this nefarious

work. A portion of heaven's angels joined him in his false position and murderous work; and for him and them the everlasting fire was prepared. Matt. xxv. 41. Men become involved therein only because they join him in his rebellion. But here the controversy closes. The fire is to them everlasting because it allows of no escape. The second death is their punishment, and it is "everlasting punishment" (Matt. xxv. 46) because they never find release from its dread embrace. "The wages of sin is death."

"And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Reader, is your name written in the book of life? Rest not till you have reason to believe that your name is registered in the list of those who are to share at last in the blessings of eternal life.

