

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
(Including a brief commentary on chapters 4 – 19)

The Lord's Day, 24th March 2019

Reading: Revelation 1

THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION:

IN THE FIRST CHAPTER THERE ARE 12 SEVENS (EMPHASIS ADDED):

4 JOHN to the SEVEN churches which are in Asia:

5 from the SEVEN Spirits which are before his throne;

11 What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the SEVEN churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto *Laodicea*.

12 I saw SEVEN golden candlesticks; 13 And in the midst of the SEVEN candlesticks *one* like unto the Son of man,

16 And he had in his right hand SEVEN stars:

20 The mystery of the SEVEN stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the SEVEN golden candlesticks. The SEVEN stars are the angels of the SEVEN churches: and the SEVEN candlesticks which thou sawest are the SEVEN churches.

AS THE RISEN, ASCENDED, AND REIGNING LORD JESUS ADDRESSES THE SEVEN CHURCHES INDIVIDUALLY IN CHAPTERS 2 AND 3, HE AGAIN MAKES REFERENCE TO SOME OF THESE SEVENS, AS A SORT OF PERSONAL SIGNATURE TO HIS COMMENTS:

FIRSTLY, IN 2:1 TO THE CHURCH OF EPHESUS: “UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the SEVEN STARS in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS”; and

SECONDLY, IN 3:1 TO THE CHURCH OF SARDIS: “AND unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the SEVEN SPIRITS OF GOD, and the SEVEN STARS.

Is this just a prophet speaking? Or a good hippy? Or somebody's imaginary god? No! This is the Lord Who created all things visible and invisible, and His signature here, or the seal upon His signature, is the number 'seven'.

SO, ALTOGETHER, THERE ARE 16 SEVENS MENTIONED, IN REFERENCE TO THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES, which, if we allow for repetition, amount to actually **6 SEPARATE SEVENS,** which describe only **3 SEPARATE OBJECTS:** There are the **SEVEN SPIRITS** (also symbolically represented by the **SEVEN BURNING LAMPS**); the **SEVEN CHURCHES** (also symbolically represented by the **SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS**; and the **SEVEN ANGELS,** which are the ministers of the seven Churches (also symbolically represented by the **SEVEN STARS** in the Lord's hand). **In other words, in this context of the seven Churches, there are,**

THREE THINGS WHICH ARE REPRESENTED BY SEVENS: THE CHURCHES AND THEIR MINISTERS, AND THE LORD, WHO HOLDS THEM ALL IN HIS ALMIGHTY HAND.

There can be no doubt that the much repetition of the sevens is a special emphasis, to get the full attention of the reader. You can't read this, even casually, and not notice all the sevens! You can't read this and just think all the sevens are sheer coincidence!

SO, WHAT SHOULD WE LEARN FROM THIS AMAZING PHENOMENON OF SEVENS IN THE REVELATION?

1. FIRSTLY, THE LORD IS FROM THE VERY BEGINNING, UNDERLINING THE SYMBOLIC NATURE OF THE PROPHECY AND VISIONS.

WHEN THE LORD JESUS BEGINS TO SPEAK THIS MAGNIFICENT PROPHECY, HE IS SAYING, IN THESE SYMBOLS OF SEVEN, “I AM YOUR CREATOR! HEAR WHAT I AM SAYING!” In the same way as on the Mount of Transfiguration, a voice from heaven was heard, saying, “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; Hear ye Him!” So, Jesus is saying, in effect, “I am the Light of the world. I am He who created light. I am He who was with Noah and gave him my covenant sign in the rainbow, which shows that pure, WHITE LIGHT IS MADE OF SEVEN DISTINCT COLOURS. I am He who created the world, the heavens and the earth and the sea and all that in them is, and I did this IN SEVEN DAYS. I am the Eternal God Who created time, and divided it into weeks of seven days.”

THIS NUMBER AND PHENOMENON OF SEVEN IS HIS DIVINE SIGNATURE. This is the Lord God, in the Person of Christ, introducing Himself as the Author of all things. And it is He Who speaks to the Churches!

THE PROPHECY BEGINS BY PLAINLY STATING THAT IT IS IN THE FORM OF SYMBOLIC COMMUNICATION: 1:1, “THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which

God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and **he sent and signified it** by his angel unto his servant John.” *And this plain statement is verified by all the sevens in the opening chapter, and throughout, as well as by many other numerical signs.*

REMEMBER THE SYMBOLIC THOUSAND YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST WITH HIS SAINTS: We have already studied various parts of *The Revelation*, and have seen that the 1,000 years, or 'millennium,' is not literally 1,000 years, but the heavenly reign of the saints with Christ, from the beginning of the Christian era to the end of the world, from the very day of Christ's crucifixion, when the crucified thief beside Him said, “Lord, remember me **when thou comest into thy kingdom.** 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, **To day shalt thou be with me in paradise**” (*Luke 23:42-43*), so that the “kingdom of God,” the heavenly reign this thief entered into with Jesus, began for him that day, and has continued 2,000 years already, and will end only when Jesus returns to judge the quick and the dead. The thousand years is symbolic, by necessity it has to be, because it is already longer than the literal numerical figure of 1,000 years.

A SYMBOLIC THOUSAND YEAR REIGN OF THE ANTICHRIST IN THE TRIBULATION: We saw also that the tribulation under the power of the Antichrist or “man of sin,” is not literally 3 ½ years or 1260 days or 42 months, but is also (just like the millennium), the whole period of the Christian era until the Lord returns, because the Scriptures confirm that this Antichrist was to arise out of the Roman Empire and continue till Christ's return, so that the Antichrist is a power, not an individual man, but the system of the Roman Papacy, as all the Protestant Reformers declared with one voice. Again, we prove by the Scriptures themselves, that the tribulation is much longer than 3 ½ years, and even much longer than 1260 years, because it began with Christ and His apostles and continues to this day – “In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world! (*John 17:33*)! **Jesus is saying, “Tribulation is of this world, but My kingdom is not of this world!”**

NOTE WELL, THE COUNTER-REFORMATION’S OVERTHROW OF THE TRUE SYMBOLIC UNDERSTANDING OF THE PROPHECIES OF THE REVELATION: We have seen that the Roman Catholic order of The Jesuits began a deliberate Counter-Reformation, just a few years after Martin Luther's famous challenge, on that first Reformation Day in 1517, even the Jesuit Ribera's 500 page commentary on *The Revelation*, sowing the seeds of false doctrine, in a propaganda campaign unequalled in the world's history, and so

effectively as to have succeeded in the course of about 300 years, in overthrowing the historic understanding of Bible prophecy throughout almost the whole Protestant Church. **ONE OF THE TOOLS RIBERA USED WAS LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY**, today called Fundamentalism, whereby he said the tribulation under Antichrist would be a literal 3 ½ years after a so-called rapture of the Church, and just before the return of Christ, effectively clearing the Papacy of the Reformers' charge, that the Pope is “very Antichrist.”

And if we fail today to believe the very Word of God when it says this book of prophecy is communicated by signs (“sent and signified”), we will fall for the same Jesuit propaganda – sadly the majority of Christians have done so. May God use His Word mightily today to deliver all the people from the Jesuits' lies! And if we turn from these more obscure parts of the prophecy and go right to the beginning and introduction of this great prophecy, **taking the example of the “seven Spirits of God,” it is very easy to confirm that almost everything in *The Revelation* is to be understood symbolically, not literally**, for there is clearly one God, manifested in Three Persons, The Father, The Son, and the Holy Ghost, as the Scriptures everywhere confirm, but “seven spirits” speaks, not of a contradictory number of spirits, but of the perfection of the one, true Spirit of God, and as He speaks of seven Churches and their ministers, He underlines the perfection of a distinctly Divine plan for His Churches, and equally, He speaks to all Churches via the symbol of the seven Churches of Asia (even though the churches were real, they are nevertheless symbolic in the prophecy as well). And so, the key to staying on a safe course is to allow the Holy Scriptures to interpret themselves (let every Holy, inspired Word of God interpret every other Holy inspired Word of God) rather than allowing the lying, deceiving, Counter-Reformation Jesuit propagandists to do the interpreting for us! **By the way, just as a very up to date illustration of this fact, those ministers who claim to be Reformed and Protestant, but *who, at the same time insist on using the Pope's Counter-reformation bibles, so-called 'inter-confessional' bibles, or 'common bibles' (e.g. NIV, NKJV etc.), are allowing the Jesuits to do their interpretation for them* – Don't listen to their words when they claim they are for 'Scripture Alone' like Martin Luther! They are lying about this, because, because, whether they realize it or not, they are not for 'Scripture alone', but for Scripture plus Popery, i.e. Scripture plus the help of the Jesuits. Therefore, do as they say, and not as they do – let Scripture alone be your rule! NB: The Trinitarian Bible Society exposes**

the work of the high ranking Roman Catholic officials in the production of 'common Bibles' or 'inter-confessional Bibles', modern translations acceptable (they say) to both Catholics and Protestants), by ecumenical Bible Societies, namely UBS, the one everybody calls “The Bible Society,” in the *TBS Article A107*, “*Ecumenism and The United Bible Societies.*” About 25 years ago I supported the 'Bible Society,’ but then I had news from them that they were changing some of their rules so as to include Roman Catholics on their board – that was when I ceased to have anything to do with them. Later I discovered the Trinitarian Bible Society, which faithfully continues to produce “protestant or uncorrupt” versions of the Scriptures. It is no surprise that many so-called Protestants, who use the Pope's Bibles, also believe the Pope's false doctrines about the End Times, and on many other points as well.

LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD – THE REVELATION IS SYMBOLIC FROM START TO FINISH, AND THE NUMBER ‘SEVEN’ IS A MIGHTY PROOF OF THIS. The Revelation is a series of symbolic visions, and you only have to read it to see this is the case, unless you are already deceived by the Jesuits and their Counter-reformation. You don't need an interpreter. Much less do you need to mindlessly follow Jesuit lies and propaganda. And seven is a truly wonderful number, because the Lord God Almighty made it that way – he wove the number seven into all creation in ways beyond our wildest dreams, and into the Scriptures as well, as we see here. Let us receive the Scriptures with joy, as the very Words of God, which cannot be denied or contradicted. The Scriptures themselves, like the incarnation of the Son of God, is a miracle of astronomical proportions. Let us rejoice in both the written Word of God and the living Word of God, and give Him all the glory. Amen.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 31st March 2019.

We began by showing briefly that the numbers in The Revelation are generally symbolic because the whole of the series of visions was given to John in symbolic form, as stated clearly in the first verse (“sent and signified”).

2. SECONDLY, THE NUMBERS THEMSELVES ARE OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

THE NUMBER SEVEN, ITSELF, IS THE VERY SIGNATURE OF THE ALMIGHTY. Seven speaks of His divinity and His perfection. He didn't just pick a number randomly to show some sort of amazing pattern so we could marvel at the pattern itself, or marvel at what we might call a divine coincidence. He particularly chose the number seven because, in His sovereign purpose, somehow, for some reason known to Him, He has made the number seven His very own unique signature or seal.

THERE IS A VERY HELPFUL BOOK BY FC PAYNE, CALLED “THE SEAL OF GOD.” The extended title of the book is, *“The Seal of God, In Creation and The Word, An unanswerable challenge to an unbelieving world.”* I recommend this book, not for doctrinal purity (for which it is not perfect, in fact it has Dispensationalist views smattered throughout), but I recommend it purely for its study of numerics. In this the author also draws on the work of Ivan Panin. ***In the foreword he states his purpose for the book:***

“... to set forth in clear, simple language evidence, which cannot be denied that:-- 1. God is the mighty Creator of all things. 2. The Bible, as originally given, is God's revelation to man. 3. Jesus Christ is the Son of God and the only Saviour of the world. to bring forth abundant evidence of the Hand of God in the things around us and then **SHOW THAT THE AUTHOR OF CREATION IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF THE BIBLE.**” And he has done this wonderfully well!

I QUOTE HERE SOME EXCERPTS WHICH WILL HELP OUR PRESENT STUDY:

“As expositors have studied the Word of God it has been observed that some numbers in the Bible have a specific significance as though they are there to direct our attention to something or someone, in particular. **As a general rule, these numbers are evident right through the Bible, and have been followed with keen interest by students of Scripture for many years, not for any Supernatural quality that might be thought to be contained in the number itself, but because they were found to be like signposts pointing to God's Hand in His world, drawing our attention to an event or a Person**

or occasion and sometimes to His intervention into the affairs of men. However **just as in the Tabernacle, everything had a symbolic meaning**, the gold, and the silver, and the brass, all referring to the Person of God and of our Lord Jesus Christ His Son, and students of the Scriptures have discerned that some numbers seem to have symbolic meaning directing our attention to the Word or to some event, in a similar way. They are as follows:-

1. Unity or unit.
2. Separation or witness.
3. Divine perfection or Godhead.
4. Creative work or the world.
5. Grace (free gift of God).
6. Man (under sin).
7. God's seal, often called the perfect number.
8. Resurrection or new beginning.
9. Finality.
10. Ordinal perfection.
11. Disorganisation.
12. Perfect government.
13. Sin or rebellion.

..... and there are a few larger numbers such as 40 probation, 37 the living Word of God, and others. These numbers have a significance of their own but because of the discovery of numeric patterns, we see that beneath the surface are deeper patterns with which they harmonise. **I EMPHASISE AGAIN THAT THE SCRIPTURES WERE WRITTEN IN HEBREW IN THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND GREEK IN THE NEW TESTAMENT, AND THAT IN BOTH THESE LANGUAGES EVERY LETTER ALSO STANDS FOR A NUMBER.** Most of us are familiar with the Roman system of numbers and letters of course, where V stands for five, X for ten, and L for fifty, but as not all of us are aware of the number values of the Hebrew and Greek alphabets I have listed them in the appendix.” *(end of quote)*

AS THIS AUTHOR POINTS OUT, THE NUMBERS 3 AND 7 ARE PARTICULARLY SIGNIFICANT, AS NUMBERS WHICH SPEAK OF GOD AND HIS PERFECTION AND SEAL, and the combination of them in the number 37, speaks of Jesus as the living Word of God, and when combined with 8, which speaks of resurrection or new beginning, their significance in the Scriptures is just way beyond mind-boggling. Let me just touch on a few examples so as to make my point clear about the number 7. AND AGAIN, I QUOTE FC PAYNE:

“THE SEAL OF SEVEN STANDS OUT IN BOTH THE BIBLE AND CREATION, but before we examine the Seal in His Word let us turn to one or two other branches of Creation which show the pattern clearly because God's dealings with mankind, and all life, are marked by specific design in which Seven is prominent. **THIS IS EVEN DISCERNIBLE IN THE LIGHT WHICH COMES FROM OUR SUN. THIS PURE, CLEAR LIGHT IS MADE UP OF SEVEN DISTINCT COLOURS,** red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. Can this be accident? Did you know that **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HUMAN EMBRYO IS CALCULATED IN PERIODS OF SEVEN'S?** At the 28th week it is generally assumed a child is capable of living if born, and the date of normal birth is so calculated, at 40 seven day weeks, that the doctor gives this approximate date as the 'expected' date of birth. Children born prior to this time are generally known as 'premature', and born beyond this time as 'overdue'. **THE WONDERFUL FAMILY OF BIRDS IS ANOTHER PART OF NATURE IN WHICH WE CAN FIND THE DEFINITE SEAL OF THE CREATOR, UNCHANGING AND UNALTERABLE BY MAN.** Let me say first that the incubation period of many birds is very difficult to check, hence a difference of opinion exists regarding some birds, and the term 'about' is used extensively. There are, quite possibly, other numeric design among them besides seven, somewhat similar to that seen in the flowers, however, as I am only dealing with facts, I will not venture on speculation and the fact is that as soon as we begin to list the birds that have been definitely checked this remarkable Seal of Seven stands out again. Take first some of the domestic birds which anyone can check for oneself. It is well known that when eggs are set under **the domestic hen,** or even if they are placed in an incubator, one looks for chicks on the 21st. day. Check up on your canary, 14 days. Hundreds of finches of all varieties, and numerous other families of small birds like robins, thrushes, and the cockatoo have been checked out at 14 days also, and there are many bird families with incubation periods in multiples of seven.”

“THE SEAL OF SEVEN.

THE BIBLE WARNS US THAT THE VISIBLE THINGS OF CREATION REVEAL THE INVISIBLE CREATOR AND THAT THEREFORE WE ARE WITHOUT EXCUSE IF WE IGNORE THE EVIDENCE OF HIS HAND. ROMANS 1:19-20. We feel sad about those who have not discerned the Hand of God in His Creation, but what of those who have not seen Him revealed in His Word? **Does the Bible in fact bear any seal whereby we can identify it?** Can the Bible be brought into the scope of Divine Workmanship? **CAN IT BE SHOWN THAT THE AUTHOR OF THE**

SEALS IN SEVENS, SOME OF WHICH WE HAVE EXAMINED, IS ALSO THE AUTHOR OF THE BIBLE? Look first on the surface of the Scriptures. It has long been known, and appreciated, by those who have studied the Word, how the number seven has been used to convey a certain and specific conclusion. It usually denotes God's fullness of purpose, or completion of a specific period. **THE LEPER WAS TOLD TO WASH SEVEN TIMES IN THE JORDAN.** If he had stopped at six he would not have been healed. **THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL WERE COMMANDED TO MARCH AROUND JERICHO SEVEN TIMES ON THE SEVENTH DAY,** (no doubt with the inhabitants laughing at them), but at the seventh time the trumpet sounded, the earth shook, and they laughed no more. There is nothing magical in the number itself. It is only the 'mark' of God's Hand in the particular incident. His Signature, and we find it throughout the Scriptures, this seal of seven. The Bible itself is in seven distinct divisions. **JUST LOOK AT THE LAST BOOK, REVELATION, WHICH IS GOD'S BOOK OF CLIMAXES, JUDGEMENTS, AND CONSUMMATIONS.**

THIS IS WHAT WE FIND.

Seven Churches.

Seven Spirits of God.

Seven candle sticks.

Seven stars.

Seven seals.

Seven angels.

Seven trumpets.

Seven thunders.

Forty two months, six sevens.

Three and a half days with two witnesses.

Seven thousand men killed by earthquake.

Seven heads.

Seven crowns.

Seven plagues.

Seven mountains.

Seven kings.

A Beast with seven heads.

This is just an example of sevens on the surface, all in Revelation. **Here ALSO IN REVELATION IS A SOMEWHAT HIDDEN EXAMPLE OF SEVENS, that is, one could pass over them many times and perhaps not notice seven connected with them.** Revelation 5:12. Seven attributes of Christ. Revelation 7:12. Sevenfold greeting to God by angels. Revelation 5:14. Four beasts and four

and twenty elders worship God. The term 'blessed' is used exactly seven times, so also is the 'Book of Life'. There are, in fact, over fifty occurrences of seven in Revelation alone. Now. In respect to the watermark or seal beneath the surface. ***AN ABSOLUTELY STAGGERING DISCOVERY, CONCERNING THE HEBREW AND GREEK TEXTS, was made by several independent students of God's Word, a discovery that God has permitted to be disclosed as a challenge to this unbelieving age and one which, in itself, settles for Time and Eternity.*** A fact the believer already knows. A fact which underlines the Divine authority of the Bible. A challenge, before which all the liberal and modernistic theories of men crumble like a sand castle does before the incoming tide of the sea. A sweeping statement but nevertheless true. **IT WAS DISCOVERED THAT HIDDEN, AS IT WERE BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THESE TEXTS, WAS A SEAL, A SIGN, GOD'S DEFINITE SEAL ON HIS WORD.** Other patterns are present also, but the seal of seven is the most prominent in these intricate patterns, and more easily discerned than those, many other, designs. It stamps the Bible as the indisputable Word of God. Ivan Panin, who devoted much of his life to investigating and publishing these things, publicly invited the finest brains, by means of a challenge through the press, to prove that his facts were not facts, and gave three examples of these numerics. No one was able to refute those facts. He also challenged a Bible critic to produce a similar pattern of sevens as that found in the genealogy of Christ back to Abraham wherein the proper names investigated were named thousands of years before-hand and could not be manipulated in any way to aid the theory. Of course patterns of various kind have been found in other writings, but these are spasmodic in their occurrence, and generally require re-arrangement of the original statement, or phrase, before a pattern can be discerned, and of course they are not consistent throughout the text which contains them. On the contrary **THE PATTERN AND DESIGN RUNNING THROUGH THE HEBREW AND GREEK TEXTS ARE CONSISTENT, AND UNIFORM, THROUGHOUT ALL THE VARIOUS BOOKS IN BOTH THE OLD AND THE NEW TESTAMENT,** and when it is realised that the Bible is the collection of writings by some forty writers, men from all walks of life, over a long period of time, and in two different languages, the whole fitting together as harmonious whole, any honest seeker after truth must concede that a far greater Mind than man's is here', for **who but a Supreme Being, knowing the end from the beginning, could weave such a design into the writing of men when the names of places, and persons, of genealogies and events were settled long before the men writing them**

were even born. ***NOW I HAVE CHOSEN A VITAL PORTION, BEING THE ACCOUNT OF THE BIRTH OF JESUS. BEAR IN MIND, JESUS IS THE FOUNDATION OF THE WHOLE CHRISTIAN FAITH, AND SO I SHALL TAKE, ALL THROUGH, EXAMPLES WHICH HAVE A DIRECT CONNECTION WITH HIM BEGINNING WITH THE ACCOUNT OF HIS BIRTH IN MATTHEW 1:18-25.***

The number of Greek words is exactly 161 23-7's

The numeric value of these is exactly 93 394 13,342-7's

The number of vocabulary words is exactly 77 11-7's

The numeric value of these is 51,247 7,321-7's

Here we have a perfect, double, interlocked design covering every word and letter, which must remain constant, whilst the following designs are woven into it, and not a single letter can be altered.

There are six Greek words which are found nowhere else in Matthew.

Their numeric value is exactly 5,005 715-7's

These six Greek words have exactly 56 letters 8-7's

Now the first two verses, a natural division, have exactly 42 words 6-7's leaving 119 17-7's

The last verse, another natural division, has exactly, 14 words 2-7's leaving 147 3-7's of 7's

Again the 161 words occur in 105 forms 15-7's The numeric value of these forms is exactly 65,429 9,347-7's

In these 105 forms there are exactly 35 verbs 5-7's

There are also exactly 7 Proper Names 7

The number of letters in these names is exactly 42 6-7's

The word 'Emmanuel' is used here but nowhere else in the N.T.

Its numeric value is 644 92-7's

The sum of its figures is 14 2-7's

The number of forms exclusive to this passage is 14 2-7's

Their numeric value is exactly 8,715 1,245-7's" (*end of quote*)

TRUE BIBLE NUMERICS IS VINDICATED: I don't want to bore you with a lot of statistics, but I trust that I have said enough to recommend this book by FC Payne to all believers, for what it is worth. I trust that this is more than enough to make my point clear about the significance of the number 7 in The Revelation, but I do add a word of caution about numerics: The study of Bible numerics, Bible prophecy, creationism in the Bible and nature, and apologetics generally, whereby much study is made in order to find external evidence to prove the Bible true, are all possible gateways for the

unwary to enter into carnal reason and fanaticism, instead of pure and simple faith in God's Word. A little reasonable argument is always worthwhile, but when it is all boiled down, any individual will either believe the plain Truth of Scripture or he will not, and IF YOU HAD ENOUGH SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE AND REASON TO FILL THE WORLD, AN UNBELIEVER WOULD STILL BE AN UNBELIEVER, BECAUSE ONLY GOD ALMIGHTY CAN MAKE AN UNBELIEVER INTO A BELIEVER. Mark well also, that this humanistic tendency is rife among those who are of the Arminian school of theology, which majors on *man's* decision and *man's* responsibility to make a decision, rather than on God's sovereign grace. In other words, they rely too heavily on the evidence of God, and tend to forget God Himself.

LET US BE THANKFUL THEREFORE, THAT TRUE SCIENCE CONFIRMS THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE, BUT LET US NEVER FORGET THAT GOD HIMSELF CONFIRMS HIS TRUTH TO US BY HIS SPIRIT, and there are some who have heads full of facts but whose hearts are sadly unchanged, but God is well able to confirm His Word to the simplest of minds, even the minds of children, based on the plain testimony of Scripture itself –

“Faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing...” by scientific evidence? NO! “by the word of God” (*Romans 10:17*).

And, in *1 Corinthians 2*, “12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. 13 Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. 14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.”

In this present world, ‘faith’ is often thought of as an individual and personal thing – your faith, my faith, as if it is just an opinion or a preference, as somebody might prefer golf, or another might prefer tennis – but Scriptural faith is not like that at all! When the Bible speaks of faith, it speaks of faith in God’s Words – actually believing the Scriptures, and this is often not what people have in mind at all. But if faith comes by the hearing of the Word of God, then it has nothing to do with opinion or preference, it is conviction, it is simply the case, that you cannot deny what the Scriptures say. This is why so many people look at you funny when you talk of say, God bringing the rain or withholding the rain, or urging them to acknowledge Jesus must have the

pre-eminence in our parliament – e.g. we say that the Lord’s Prayer must not be removed from parliament, but unbelievers say, “What difference does it make?” Like Pharaoh of old, speaking to Moses, saying, “Who is the Lord” Why should I obey Him? Aren’t the gods of Egypt better? You claim to be God’s people, but look at you, you are my slaves! Who is the Lord?” Those who can rationalise all things, change what they believe from one day to the next, advocates changes in moral values etc., are not believers – they simply do not believe the Words of Scripture. How can they, when they continually contradict them? “Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God”. So, those who can take or leave the Word of God, those who can disagree with the Word of God, know nothing of faith in Christ, or saving faith. Their so-called faith is merely a personal opinion.

SO, TO CONCLUDE VERY SIMPLY, AS WE STUDY *THE REVELATION* AND ITS MANY SYMBOLIC SEVENS, DO YOU HEAR THE WORD OF GOD IN *REVELATION 1*? Do the many mentions of the number 7, God's number, God's signature, grab your attention a little more than usual?

Just one final word on the sheer importance of numbers (particularly the number 7) which the Almighty God has woven into His creation and into His Word as well, and this should convince even the hardest skeptics, and it is straight from the Scriptures:

WITH GOD, IMPORTANT MATTERS ARE CONFIRMED WITH AN OATH, AND THIS INVOLVES THE NUMBER 7 AS THE SEAL OF HIS IMMUTABLE WORD: Paul explains the absolute certainty surrounding God's purpose in the eternal priesthood of Christ (*Hebrews 6*), “11 And we desire that every one of you do shew the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end: 12 That ye be not slothful, but followers of them who through faith and patience inherit the promises. 13 For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, 14 Saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee. 15 And so, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise. 16 For men verily swear by the greater: and an oath for confirmation is to them an end of all strife. 17 Wherein GOD, WILLING MORE ABUNDANTLY TO SHEW UNTO THE HEIRS OF PROMISE THE IMMUTABILITY OF HIS COUNSEL, CONFIRMED IT BY AN OATH: 18 That by two immutable things, in which *it was* impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: 19 Which *hope* we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil;

20 Whither the forerunner is for us entered, *even* Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec.”

LET US NOTE THE WORD 'OATH' IN THE HEBREW IS SHEBUWAH, WHICH IS A FORM OF THE WORD SHEBA, from which we get the name Beersheba, the well Abimelech's servants took away, which Abraham claimed back, and he and Abimelech made an oath, hence the name **Beersheba (well of the oath)**, and that oath was ratified by the offering of 7 ewe lambs (**Genesis 21**). Not only this but **THE WORD ITSELF, SHEBA (OATH), LITERALLY MEANS 'SEVENED'**, and according to Strong's Concordance, to say you swore an oath or a covenant, is to say you sevened yourself, or repeated it seven times.

May God's gracious covenant be confirmed to us, as it was to Abraham that day, in Christ, as we observe the wonder of numbers, woven by Almighty Design into all creation and particularly into the Word of God – surely, if this is the Word of God we are reading, it is no surprise for us to find such mindboggling phenomena woven into its pages as well, especially in the number seven. Let us rejoice always in God's Words given to the prophets by His divine inspiration, and preserved for all generations by His divine providence. Amen.

Continued The Lord's Day, 7th April 2019.

3. **THIRDLY, THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD IS MIGHTILY SET FORTH BY THESE SEVENS.** The sovereign Lord God, in three Persons, Who “worketh all things after the counsel of his own will” (*Ephesians 1:11*), has so perfectly and precisely ordered all things, that everything in creation and everything in His written Word, should cause us to bow in awe and wonder. These sevens are a magnificent reminder of this.

WE DO NEED TO BE REMINDED OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. Many times, Christians talk about God's sovereignty, and even His other attributes, as if that quality is something like earthly majesty or power or some such thing, something which can be measured and compared, but they seem to forget both the nature of God and the actual meaning of the words which describe Him. ***GOD'S ATTRIBUTES ARE ABSOLUTES:*** With God, a matter is either absolutely right or absolutely wrong, absolutely true or absolutely false – He is absolutely right, there is no error in Him; God's power is absolute and infinite, it has no limits; He is eternal, not limited to time; He is omnipresent, not limited to space; He is omniscient, all-knowing, there is nothing He does not know, nothing He needs to learn or discover – nothing you need to tell Him or explain to Him (If you pray, you don't need to preach Him a sermon, or give Him a detailed list of everything He ought to do!); God is life, not merely the source of life – so JESUS COULD SAY, “I am the way, the Truth, and the life” (*John 14:6*) – He is not merely able to give life and create life, He is life itself! If He touches a leper, the leper is immediately healed! If He touches a corpse, the corpse comes to life! Even if He merely speaks, the dead rise! Many people have too low a view of the Lord Jesus: they think they need to go to Jesus for this and that; they say I must ask Him for salvation, I must ask Him for every little thing I need, but the Bible teaches us that we only need to look at Him and live! The evangelical churches, generally speaking, have forgotten Who Jesus is! They have a formula for salvation: they say, to be saved you need to repent of your sins, believe that Jesus died for your sins, etc. etc. They are no better than the Church of Rome, inventing methods of salvation – what you must do in order to be saved! But the apostle Paul says, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (*Acts 16:31*), and Jesus said, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. 25 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of

the Son of God: and they that hear shall live” (**John 5:24-25**). And every soul who has ever believed on that wonderful name knows that he is changed, that he has truly passed from death to life! CLAIMING TO BE THE ALMIGHTY, Jesus could say to Nicodemus, “no man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, *even* the Son of man which is in heaven” (**John 3:13**), CLAIMING TO BE THE OMNIPRESENT, ALMIGHTY GOD, in that He was on earth and in heaven at the same time! **THE WHOLE NEW TESTAMENT, ESPECIALLY THE GOSPELS, IS FOCUSED ON SHOWING THE READER THAT JESUS OF NAZARETH IS THE LORD GOD ALMIGHTY!** He walked on water; He stilled the storm; He healed the lepers and raised the dead; and He said, “47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (**John 6**). ***TO SAY GOD IS SOVEREIGN MEANS HE IS ABSOLUTELY SUPREME AND PRE-EMINENT IN EVERYTHING, IN EVERY WAY*** – in **Colossians 1:18**, we are told that Christ is to “have the preeminence” “in all things.” Sovereignty or supremacy has the connotation of being above everything else. People think, Yes, God is sovereign, but they also think, contrary to the meaning of the word, that His sovereignty is somehow limited – the Methodists and Pentecostals and Baptists, and most other modern churches, think this Sovereign Lord God Almighty gives up the right to His sovereignty in certain things, without realizing this is impossible – so they contradict themselves! ***GOD CAN'T GIVE UP HIS SOVEREIGNTY, ANY MORE THAN GRANITE CAN GIVE UP ITS HARDNESS, OR GOLD CAN GIVE UP ITS GLORY!*** God can't give up His sovereignty, any more than He can give up truth, righteousness, or life! People say, God died for our sins. No, the man Christ Jesus died for our sins! If God had died, even for a split second, the whole of creation would have disintegrated, because Christ “upholdeth all things by the word of his power” (**Hebrews 1:3**). People say, Christ's blood is effectual to take away our sins because it is the blood of God. Nonsense! God is a Spirit (**John 4:24**), He does not have blood, He doesn't even have a physical body! This is why God became a man! It is the man Christ Jesus who died on Calvary. Jesus' blood is effectual for us because He was without sin, and also because He is our Head, our representative – Adam was our head to take us down into sin and death; Jesus is our Head to take us up into righteousness and life eternal. God imputed Adam's sin to us – He counted us guilty, because He ordained from the beginning, that Adam was responsible for all His family, but thank God, He gave us a “second Adam”, and our sins are imputed to Him and His righteousness is imputed to us, because He is the new Head of the new creation! (**1 Corinthians 15:47**, “The first man *is* of the earth, earthy: the second man *is* the Lord from heaven.”)!

Aren't you glad that this man was the Lord from heaven? It was in His humanity that He died for us, but He is more than human, He is eternal and divine also, and He has shown and declared both His humanity and His divinity in many ways in the Scriptures. Remember Jesus, as the sovereign Lord God manifested in the flesh, said, **(John 10)** "17 Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. 18 No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." Let us understand what the Bible really teaches about God and about Christ. **LIKE EVERY OTHER UNIQUE AND ABSOLUTE AND SUPREME QUALITY OF GOD, SOVEREIGNTY IS AN INSEPARABLE PART OF HIS ETERNAL NATURE.**

SOME BELIEVERS, WITHOUT REALIZING IT, ARE MORE DEIST THAN CHRISTIAN – Deists believe in a god up there somewhere, who made everything somehow, but who isn't really involved in his creation, but just sort of folds his arms and lets it all unravel, **(the average Pentecostal or Charismatic does believe God is involved, but only sometimes,** only in the miraculous acts He does, as sometimes they give more glory to the Devil than to God. They see a sick person healed and say, "That was God!" But they see the sun rise and set every day, and don't consider that is also was the miraculous work of God! They will say of one matter, "That was God." And of another matter, "That was the Devil." And in one sense their statement may be true, but they seem to lack the understanding that, even if the Devil did something, it was part of God's sovereign plan and purpose anyway, that the Devil only did what God commanded Him to do. Read **Job chapter 1**, this doctrine is very clear!), but true Christianity, according to the Bible, sets forth God and Christ and the Holy Ghost, as absolutely sovereign. **THE ARMINIAN SAYS THAT GOD CREATED EVERYTHING, BUT THAT HE GAVE MAN A FREE WILL, WHICH, IN EFFECT, OVERRIDES GOD'S WILL,** because he says that God is "not willing that any should perish," but He lets them perish anyway, because He can say, I gave them a free will – Arminianism is a bit like a father who gives his new-born son a set of tools and a cheque book, and says, OK son, I've given you everything you need to make a success of your life, but be careful, if you mess it up, it's all your fault, and then leaves his new-born son to fend for himself, and takes no responsibility for his son's inevitable failure. They say, If a man goes to heaven by making the right choice, God's will is done, but if a man goes to hell, God's will is not done, because God never intended man to go to hell, He made hell only for the devil and his angels! But they contradict Scripture in saying this: **PETER TELLS US PLAINLY THAT THE REPROBATE**

WERE APPOINTED TO THEIR OWN REPROBATION! 1 Peter 2, “6 Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. 7 Unto you therefore which believe *he is* precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, 8 And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, ***even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.*** (BUT THEN, IN CONTRAST TO THE REPROBATE, HE SAYS TO THE CHRISTIANS:) 9 But ye *are* a chosen generation...” Yes, God did give man a will to choose with, but not so as to override the will of God! ***THE ARMINIAN IS A HOPELESS CONFUSED MIXTURE OF DEISM AND CHRISTIANITY, BUT MANY WHO CLAIM TO BE REFORMED OR CALVINIST ARE NOT MUCH BETTER.*** There are so-called theologians who split hairs about whether God decreed the destruction of the wicked before or after the fall of man – they even have names for these branches of theology, names which are very difficult to pronounce, but they kid themselves if they think they are theologians, or that this is even theology. They are philosophers, not theologians. True theologians study God, and to study God, your only text book is the Bible, but those who try to get inside the very mind of the sovereign Lord God, and to answer questions which are neither asked nor answered in Scripture, are not studying Scripture but the twists and turns of their own foolish minds. But their folly is evident in the fact that, if God is all-knowing, knowing the end from the beginning, it is ridiculous to consider which idea came to His mind first, because His mind is infinite and absolute! Nor is He limited by time, so, all His thoughts are simultaneous! What fools ‘theologians’ are, if they try to box the Eternal God into a little box called ‘time’! “Professing themselves to be wise”, the theologians have “become fools”! ***SCRIPTURE DOES HAVE AN ANSWER FOR EVERY REASONABLE QUESTION, BUT IT DOESN’T ANSWER EVERY FOOLISH QUESTION, AND THE ANSWER WHICH SETTLES ALL DISPUTES OVER SUCH THINGS IS THAT GOD IS SOVEREIGN – Ephesians 1:11***, He “worketh all things (all things, not some things) after the counsel of His own will,” (therefore there are no contingencies, no ‘Plan B’ or ‘Plan C’ – the whole idea is ridiculous! Such men who think so, are using sinful minds to vainly attempt to fathom the infinite mind of God, and in doing so, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools”, because they have ignored the very Word of God in order to arrive at such conclusions! They have ignored God’s written answer to their question before they even asked it! If God knows all things, then He knows all things instantly – He does not need time to ponder and ask

Himself questions!), and, as He is the Potter, and we are the clay, He also answers in **Romans 9**, “20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed *it*, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour? 22 *What* if God, willing to shew *his* wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory.” He does not need to give an answer to you, just because you are not satisfied with the answer He has already given. **THE PROBLEM WITH GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY IS NOT HOW TO UNDERSTAND A DIFFICULT DOCTRINE, OR A DIFFICULT SCRIPTURE, IT IS WHETHER YOU ACCEPT THE PLAIN EXPLANATION ALREADY GIVEN IN THE SCRIPTURES – THE PROBLEM IS SHEER UNBELIEF, SHEER UNWILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT THE TRUTH OF SCRIPTURE – AND THE NATURAL MAN CANNOT RECEIVE THIS OBVIOUS TRUTH, BECAUSE THE SCRIPTURE SAYS IT IS “SPIRITUALLY DISCERNED” (1 CORINTHIANS 2:14), YOU MUST BE MADE ALIVE FROM SPIRITUAL DEATH BEFORE YOU CAN SEE THE MOST OBVIOUS TRUTH OF GOD, AND ONLY THE SOVEREIGN GOD ALMIGHTY CAN DO THIS FOR YOU – “YOU MUST BE BORN AGAIN!”** But the philosophers have created their own branches of philosophy (and called it 'theology') as a cloak for their own unbelief. Beware of anybody who is highly acclaimed as a 'theologian.' Many great theologians have fallen from “the faith which was once delivered to the saints”, and this should not surprise us, for, “professing themselves to be wise, they became fools” (**Romans 1:22**). I was speaking to a Christian friend recently, and he talked about the usual concerns that are on the mind of Christians, the state of the world, the fact that this generation doesn't seem to be able to think and reason, and he told a very gripping little story to illustrate the mindset of people today – I replied to his story and said, You could put that in very simple and blunt terms by saying they are ignorant and arrogant. And he said that he really didn't think they were arrogant, but they just don't have understanding. This is interesting. I was speaking with a man who is perhaps as clever a man as you will ever find, but in all his wealth of knowledge and understanding, he fails to understand something crucial about the state of man and the sovereignty of God: **MAN IS BOTH IGNORANT AND ARROGANT! THE SCRIPTURES MAKE THIS CLEAR.** Man has rebelled against God, and continues to rebel against God, rejecting God's Truth and wisdom – **MAN'S IGNORANCE IS NOT INNOCENCE! IT IS ONLY MORE PROOF OF HIS**

GUILT! If man was not guilty, he would not be so ignorant, and because he seems nice and pleasant of manner, does not alter one iota of the fact of his arrogance. In fact, arrogance comes from ignorance. Arrogance is presumption, like the presumption of Peter when he tried to forbid Christ to go to Jerusalem and suffer. His ignorance was not innocence. It was arrogance, such arrogance as to presume to correct the Son of God, and Jesus answered accordingly, “Get thee behind me Satan! Thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men” (*Matthew 16:23*). **MUCH MISSIONARY ACTIVITY IS BASED ON SO-CALLED COMPASSION, ON AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO HUMAN SUFFERING AND DEPRIVATION.** The attitude is, “These poor lost souls, they are innocent, they have a right to hear the gospel, they mean well, they are basically good at heart but they are just ignorant.” But this is a gross error. This is presumption and arrogance, and it is a blatant lie, flying in the face of Christ and His gospel. The Scriptures say the opposite: *Romans 1* tells us “They are without excuse!” Even the creation of God is sufficient evidence to show His existence, His power, and His glory, but instead of turning to Him, they turn away and make gods of their own – this is the common depraved state of all mankind under sin, after Adam's fall! “There is none righteous, not one!” “None that seeketh after God!” “They are without excuse!” This is true of you and me also, but if God has truly changed us and made us alive in Christ, then we are no longer so ignorant and arrogant as we were. **God's sovereignty is made clear enough in both creation and in Scripture, but man is still a sinner, an ignorant, arrogant rebel, and only God's intervening sovereign grace can save him.**

THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE REASON GOD HAS WOVEN THIS MIRACLE OF THE NUMBER 7 INTO HIS WORD, IS NOT THAT HE JUST PLAYED A LITTLE GAME TO SHOW OFF WHAT HE CAN DO, BUT RATHER TO REMIND US OF WHAT HE REALLY DOES DO, to remind us that He *really does* work “all things after the counsel of His own will,” just as His Word declares in *Ephesians 1:11!* And this is important for us in a book like *The Revelation*, because *The Revelation* was written to the Church as it was about to face some of the most awful persecutions, and to comfort the Church through the many centuries to follow, as we await the Lord's return.

“THE YOUNG REFORMER” from the Protestant Alliance has featured the persecutions of Christians by the Roman Emperors, Domitian and Trajan and Hadrian and others through roughly the first 100 years or so after the

apostles. The author, speaking of the persecutions at Lyon in 177 AD, says, “The cruelty that was shown to them is almost unimaginable today.” **“FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS” covers all these persecutions, both of Pagan Rome and Papal Rome**, from the time of the apostles through the Middle Ages and The Reformation. *A CHURCH UNDER SUCH AWFUL PERSECUTION NEEDS TO KNOW WELL THE DOCTRINE OF THE SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD*, and many of the martyrs showed the fruit of such faith, as they smiled, and even sang hymns as they were tortured to death. **They believed that all things were from the Hand of God, for His own good purposes and for His own glory, and so they rejoiced in Him, regardless of their circumstances.** Some of the onlookers were converted, even some of their persecutors too, as they saw the miraculous faith of people, who, naturally speaking, had no hope, but their faith in Christ defied all natural things, as they showed in a gloriously real way, that they belonged to a better world.

THEREFORE THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS (WHICH WE LOOKED AT LAST WEEK) UNDERLINE THE MOST IMPORTANT DOCTRINE OF ALL, GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY, a doctrine which defines, to some extent, Who and What our God and Christ is, the eternal God, Creator of all things visible and invisible, the Upholder of all things created, and the Sovereign Who has decreed from the beginning all things that come to pass.

What can we do in view of such wonders of God's glory and His grace towards us, but bow before Him and worship the Almighty God – Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! May God give us grace to do so always. Amen.

Continued The Lord's Day, 14th April 2019.

4. FOURTHLY, THE LORD JESUS IN HEAVEN IS BOTH HEAD OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, AND HEAD OF ALL LOCAL CHURCHES (AND THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH CONSISTS OF ALL LOCAL CHURCHES, IT IS NOT JUST A COLLECTION OF INDIVIDUALS).

Revelation 1:20, “The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.”

I mentioned in our previous session, that **the phenomenon of the sevens in the first three chapters of *The Revelation***, reveals an interesting fact: while there are 16 sevens in reference to the letters to the seven churches, **ALL THESE SEVENS SPEAK OF ONLY THREE THINGS: THE CHURCHES, THEIR MINISTERS, AND THE LORD HIMSELF.** This underlines the fact of the intimacy of the Lord with His people on earth, and the fact that He has ordained only one institution on earth that He is really in (apart from marriage and the family), i.e. the Church, hence the great importance of His Church on earth, i.e. even every local Church on earth! The implications of this fact are really earthshattering, because this means that every other institution on earth ought to be subject and subordinate to the Church, and the Lord has promised His people that it shall be so, if we are faithful to Him – e.g. **Deuteronomy 28:13**, “13 And the LORD shall make thee the head, and not the tail; and thou shalt be above only, and thou shalt not be beneath; if that thou hearken unto the commandments of the LORD thy God, which I command thee this day, to observe and to do *them*.”

FIRST AND FOREMOST, LET US OBSERVE HOW JESUS SPEAKS TO HIS CHURCH: Notice, in this last book of Scripture, this last message to God’s people, that the message comes

FIRSTLY, from Jesus the Lord and the Head of the Church,

SECONDLY, through John the apostle,

THIRDLY, through the ministers of the churches, and thus to the churches themselves.

Given that the symbolic nature of the sevens in this prophecy, underlines the fact that this is **THE PERFECT MESSAGE TO THE ENTIRE CHURCH OF GOD**, we learn that this is also **THE PERFECT METHOD OF COMMUNICATING GOD’S**

MESSAGES TO HIS CHURCH – from the Head, which is Jesus, to an apostle (or prophet), to the minister, whom Jesus has called and appointed to speak to each church.

THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT HAS DONE GREAT HARM TO THIS WONDERFUL REVELATION AND DOCTRINE, because, at the expense of this most basic doctrine, it has overemphasised another doctrine, that God speaks through everybody and everybody has a gift, and the extreme end of this false doctrine is that false teachers and false prophets come along to the local church and start spruiking their false doctrines and false prophecies, and when challenged, say that the church should be listening to them, and the minister should be listening to them – and we have had many like this over the years, we had on just the other day! **THESE ARE “ANTICHRISTS”** – they are exactly what the Scriptures call “antichrists”: They usurp the place of Christ as Head of His Church – instead of letting Christ be Head and speak to His Church in the way He has ordained, they maintain they have a special mandate to speak, contrary to what God is already saying to His Church! As John said in his day (***1 John 2:18***), “even now are there many antichrists”! We should not be surprised by them 2,000 years later! Such people have no idea what the local Church is, what the ministry of God’s Word is, what the call of God is upon a man to be His minister, what it means that every minister must speak only the Word of God, given only by the apostles and prophets of the Lord, and, when you boil it all down, they even have no idea Who and What the Lord Jesus is!

THE IMPORTANCE THE LORD PLACES ON THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS STRUCTURE WOULD BE A SHOCK TO MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY. Many think it is relatively unimportant to be part of a local Church; many think it is relatively unimportant to keep holy that Sabbath Day and actually be in Church and worship God with God's people on the Lord's Day (even though that is the substance of one of the Ten Commandments). I have heard the saying many times, that “you don't have to belong to a Church, because Jesus said that wherever two or three believers are, that is the Church.” People who continue to harp on this nonsense are only making a vain cover for their own sins of rebellion and disobedience to the Word of God, and they are lying and distorting the Scriptures in order to do so! I understand that many people live in places where there really isn't a faithful Church to attend and be part of, and some faithful believers have been cast out of their local Church or made unwelcome by ungodly men, but there are many others who are just so self-willed they cannot get on with any Church, they cannot accept

the idea that anybody should teach them, or that any elders should correct them, or even that anyone should disagree with them on any point of doctrine.

THOSE WHO CONTINUE TO PROMOTE THIS FALSE DOCTRINE OF “WHERE ANY ‘TWO OR THREE’ MEET TOGETHER, THEY ARE THE CHURCH”, DO VIOLENCE TO THE SCRIPTURES BY IGNORING THE CONTEXT OF WHAT JESUS SAID: In Matthew 18, He was speaking to the Church, He was speaking to His apostles, who were the elders of the Church of that day – they were not an isolated little bunch of rebels doing their own thing and separating from their local Church, THESE APOSTLES WERE THE CHURCH, AND JESUS WAS LITERALLY IN THEIR MIDST, and He was giving them instruction on order and discipline in the Church, instruction for the times ahead when He would be with them in Spirit but not in body. Let us hear the Word of God: Matthew 18, “19 Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. 20 For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them,” - “two of you”, two of Christ's apostles, two of the faithful members of His Church; the context is in fact, two elders meeting to prayerfully carry out the oversight of the local Church, to solve disputes and overcome sin! THIS DISCOURSE OF JESUS WAS INSTRUCTION FOR EVERY LOCAL CHURCH, NOT AN EXCUSE FOR ANY TWO OR THREE TO SEPARATE FROM IT!

THERE IS GOOD REASON TO SEPARATE FROM APOSTATE AND EVIL CHURCHES, BUT NOT TO SEPARATE FROM A LEGITIMATE LOCAL CHURCH. Ungodly elders must be disobeyed. There is nothing more objectionable than men exalting themselves over others (and the Lord hates this too), but according to the Scriptures, the Lord does appoint elders to preside over His Church, and here in Revelation 1, the ministers of those Churches are one of the three things marked by the phenomenon of sevens; they are the seven stars in the Lord's right hand. Each Church must have a God-ordained and proven minister, as well as at least one or two other elders if the Lord so provides, and if it does, God really does speak through Him, not that he is infallible, not that he is a pope, not that he is not to be subject to the admonition of the whole Church where necessary, not that he shouldn't be sacked by the local Church if he stubbornly refuses to do the right thing, but LET US MARK THE DOCTRINE THAT CHRIST IS HEAD OF THE CHURCH, AND CHRIST BUILDS HIS CHURCH BY BUILDING LOCAL CHURCHES AND APPOINTING THEIR MINISTERS AND ELDERS. When you oppose that order, or set up an order of your own in

opposition to the local Church, you oppose Christ Himself, Who is Head of that local Church, and **His most glorious purpose in the earth, is to build His Church, His temple, His bride! And that Church is not some mystical, ethereal body which nobody can see, it is made up of real members of real local Churches.** So the sevens underline the doctrine of the Church, a doctrine which many professing Christians today know very little about, and many refuse to acknowledge.

Let us see, under this heading (*Christ is Head of both the universal Church and every local Church*), how the Protestant Confessions of Faith uphold some very important points of doctrine on the Church (for those reading my notes, I've printed excerpts and highlighted parts relevant to this discussion):

- **THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF FAITH, CHAPTER XXV – OF THE CHURCH**

I. THE CATHOLIC OR UNIVERSAL CHURCH WHICH IS INVISIBLE, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the Head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all. (*Eph. i. 10. 22, 23; Eph. v. 23, 27, 32; Col. i. 18.*)

II. THE VISIBLE CHURCH, which is also catholic or universal under the Gospel (not confined to one nation as before under the law), **consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God**, out of which there is no ordinary possibility of salvation. (*1 Cor. i. 2; 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13; Ps. ii. 8; Rev. vii. 9; Rom. xv. 9, 10, 11, 12; 1 Cor. vii. 14; Acts ii. 39; Ezek. xvi. 20, 21; Rom. xi. 16; Gen. iii. 15; Gen. xvii. 7; Matt. xiii. 47; Isa. ix. 7; Eph. ii. 19; Eph. iii. 15; Acts ii. 47.*)

(Notice that the Presbyterians here consider the children of believers to be part of the Church, whereas the Baptists do not. Baptists say that only believers showing evidence of conversion are members. This may not be widely known or understood, but it is one of the significant differences between the Presbyterians and the Reformed Baptists.)

III. UNTO THIS CATHOLIC VISIBLE CHURCH CHRIST HATH GIVEN THE MINISTRY, ORACLES, AND ORDINANCES OF GOD, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints, in this life, to the end of the world; and doth by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto. (*1 Cor. xii. 28; Eph. iv. 11, 12, 13; Matt. xxviii. 19, 20; Isa. Lix. 21.*)

IV. THIS CATHOLIC CHURCH HATH BEEN SOMETIMES MORE, SOMETIMES LESS VISIBLE. And particular Churches which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. (*Rom. xi. 3, 4; Rev. xii. 6, 14; Rev. ii. and iii; 1 Cor. v. 6, 7.*)

V. THE PUREST CHURCHES UNDER HEAVEN ARE SUBJECT BOTH TO MIXTURE AND ERROR; and some have so degenerated, as to become no Churches of Christ, but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall be always a Church on earth, to worship God according to His will. (*1 Cor. xiii. 12; Rev. ii. and iii; Matt. xiii. 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 47; Rev. xviii. 2; Rom. xi. 18, 19, 20, 21, 22; Matt. xvi. 18; Ps. lxxii. 17; Ps. cii. 28; Matt. Xxviii. 19, 20.*)

VI. THERE IS NO OTHER HEAD OF THE CHURCH, BUT THE LORD JESUS CHRIST; NOR CAN THE POPE OF ROME, IN ANY SENSE, BE HEAD THEREOF; BUT IS THAT ANTICHRIST, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself, in the Church. against Christ and all that is called God. (*Col. i. 18; Eph. i. 22; Matt. xxiii. 8, 9, 10; 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4, 8, 9; Rev. xii. 6.*)

(WE MIGHT WELL NOTE HERE THAT ALL THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES RECOGNISED THE POPE OF ROME AS A USURPER, AS THE VERY ANTICHRIST PREDICTED IN THE SCRIPTURES. He is a false Head and a false Christ, and as such, he is to be rejected and opposed by all true Churches. POPERY IS A CONTRADICTION OF WHAT WE READ ABOUT CHRIST HIMSELF WALKING AMONGST THE SEVEN CANDLESTICKS! Putting it very simply, it is not the pope who walks among the candlesticks and holds the stars in his right hand, it is the Lord Jesus Himself!)

- ***THE LONDON BAPTIST CONFESSION OF 1689, CHAPTER XXVI – THE CHURCH***

This is one of the chapters of the LBCF1689 which differs distinctly from the WFCV1646, and yet it is very similar, because the WCF was very much a foundation for other confessions. You could say the WCF was really the vanguard and fully-fledged foundation of Protestantism.

IV. THE LORD JESUS CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH. In Him, by the appointment of the Father, is vested in a supreme and sovereign manner all power for the calling, institution, order, or government of the Church. **The Pope of Rome cannot in any sense be head of the Church, but he is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition,** who exalts himself in the

church against Christ and all that is called God, who the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

V. IN THE EXERCISE OF THE AUTHORITY WHICH HAS BEEN ENTRUSTED TO HIM, THE LORD JESUS CALLS TO HIMSELF FROM OUT OF THE WORLD, THROUGH THE MINISTRY OF HIS WORD, BY HIS SPIRIT, THOSE WHO ARE GIVEN TO HIM BY HIS FATHER, so that they may walk before Him in all the ways of obedience which He prescribes to them in His Word. Those who are thus called, He commands to walk together in particular societies or churches, for their mutual edification, and for the due performance of that public worship, which He requires of them in the world.

(The Baptists here show their doctrine of the autonomy of the local Church, as also do the Congregationalists – which means that every local Church is a fully self-governing body under Christ as Head, whereas the Presbyterians, although they maintain a great degree of autonomy in their local churches, they also have Presbyteries and Synods, which form wider governing bodies of elders on a national scale. To put it simply, the Presbyterians see the whole visible world-wide Church more as one body, whereas the Baptists and Congregationalists see the visible Church as a collection of individual, autonomous local Churches. IT IS INTERESTING ON THIS POINT, TO OBSERVE, THAT CHRIST SPOKE SEPARATELY TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES, NOT TO A GATHERING OF ELDERS REPRESENTING ALL THE CHURCHES! HE DIDN'T CALL A CONFERENCE; HE SPOKE DIRECTLY TO THE CHURCHES – VIA THEIR MINISTERS. In many denominational systems, including the Assemblies of God, which we were in fellowship with in the past, conferences have been made almost the 'be-all-and-end-all': at conferences a special 'speaker' is brought in and he delivers what amounts to an agenda for all the Churches to follow – we have seen this: one conference speaker will be the world champion in small groups, so every church has to have small groups; another conference speaker will be a champion of children's groups with buses to pick them up, so all the local churches have to have a bus; another conference speaker will be the champion of the world in running 'seeker-sensitive-services, so all the local churches become 'seeker-sensitive' churches – they tone down anything that might frighten sinners away; another promoted 'faith promise offerings' as a way to increase the income of the churches, so we had to have it too! – we participated in this in our Assemblies of God days; we know from experience how the local church was run from pillar to post in

following every wind of doctrine, following every fad that false teachers could dream up. Thank God He delivered us from the Assemblies of God! THIS IS CULTISH. IT IS NOT GOD'S WAY. IT HAS LITTLE TO DO WITH GOD'S WORD, AND NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH JESUS' SPEAKING TO HIS CHURCHES! IN FACT, IT IS "ANTICHRIST", IT IS A SUBSTITUTE FOR CHRIST, WHO ALONE, SPEAKS TO HIS CHURCHES VIA HIS OWN APPOINTED MINISTERS, THROUGH THE SCRIPTURES! It is the way all major errors have been propagated around the world. It is the very means by which the Papal Antichrist has managed to further His Counter-Reformation agenda among all the Protestant churches. The Pope has played the Pied Piper, and all the churches have run after him like mindless children! Hence the local Church and its minister (and other elders) are the great bulwark and safeguard against this sort of man-made mania, this cult-following of conferences. TO PUT IT BRIEFLY, CHRIST IS THE ANSWER TO ALL ANTICHRISTS, AND CHRIST'S METHOD IS THE ANSWER TO THE SPURIOUS METHODS OF THE MANY ANTICHRISTS – CHRIST HIMSELF, IN THE MIDST OF THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS, HOLDING THE SEVEN STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND!)

VI. THE MEMBERS OF THESE CHURCHES ARE SAINTS BECAUSE THEY HAVE BEEN CALLED BY CHRIST, AND BECAUSE THEY VISIBLY MANIFEST AND GIVE EVIDENCE OF THEIR OBEDIENCE TO THAT CALL BY THEIR PROFESSION AND WALK. Such saints willingly consent to walk together according to the appointment of Christ, giving themselves up to the Lord and to one another, according to God's will, in avowed subjection to the ordinances of the Gospel. *(The Baptists differ from the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, in that they don't consider the children of believers to be members of the Church – hence the different wording here.)*

VII. TO EACH OF THESE CHURCHES THUS GATHERED, ACCORDING TO THE LORD'S MIND AS DECLARED IN HIS WORD, HE HAS GIVEN ALL THE POWER AND AUTHORITY which is in any way required for them to carry on the order of worship and discipline which He has instituted for them to observe. He has also given all the commands and rules for the due and right exercise of this power.

VIII. A PARTICULAR CHURCH GATHERED AND COMPLETELY ORGANISED ACCORDING TO THE MIND OF CHRIST, CONSISTS OF OFFICERS AND MEMBERS. THE OFFICERS APPOINTED BY CHRIST TO BE CHOSEN AND SET APART BY THE CHURCH ARE BISHOPS OR ELDERS AND DEACONS. These are to be appointed for the peculiar administration of ordinances and the execution

of power or duty with which the Lord has entrusted them and to which He has called them. This pattern of church order is to be continued to the end of the world.

IX. THE WAY APPOINTED BY CHRIST FOR THE CALLING OF ANY PERSON FITTED AND GIFTED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT FOR THE OFFICE OF BISHOP OR ELDER IN A CHURCH, IS THAT HE IS TO BE CHOSEN BY THE COMMON CONSENT AND VOTE OF THE CHURCH ITSELF. Such a person should be solemnly set apart by fasting and prayer, with the laying on of hands of the eldership of the church (if there be any previously appoint elder or elders). The way of Christ for the calling of a deacon is that he is also to be chosen by the common consent and vote of the church and set apart by prayer, with the laying on of hands.

X. BECAUSE THE WORK OF PASTORS IS TO APPLY THEMSELVES CONSTANTLY TO THE SERVICE OF CHRIST IN HIS CHURCHES BY THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND PRAYER, AND BY WATCHING FOR THEIR SOULS AS THEY THAT MUST GIVE AN ACCOUNT TO HIM, the churches to which they minister have a pressing obligation to give them not only all due respect, but also to impart to them a share of all their good things, according to their ability. This must be so done that the pastors may have a comfortable supply and that they may not have to be entangled in secular affairs, and may also be able to exercise hospitality towards others. All this is required by the law of nature and by the express command of our Lord Jesus, Who has ordained that they that preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel.

XI. ALTHOUGH AN OBLIGATION LIES ON THE ELDERS OR PASTORS OF THE CHURCHES TO BE URGENTLY PREACHING THE WORD BY VIRTUE OF THEIR OFFICE, YET THE WORK OF PREACHING THE WORD IS NOT EXCLUSIVELY CONFINED TO THEM. Therefore others who are also gifted and qualified by the Holy Spirit for the task, and who are approved and called by the church, may and ought to perform it.

XII. ALL BELIEVERS ARE BOUND TO JOIN THEMSELVES TO PARTICULAR CHURCHES WHEN AND WHERE THEY HAVE OPPORTUNITY SO TO DO, AND ALL WHO ARE ADMITTED INTO THE PRIVILEGES OF A CHURCH, ARE ALSO UNDER THE CENSURES AND GOVERNMENT OF THAT CHURCH, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE RULE OF CHRIST.

(It is really important to have an understanding of the structure of your Church, otherwise it is impossible to be in peace and harmony with the

Church. People often visit Churches from time to time and presume to have the right to speak, but all true and reasonable Churches have a particular order based on Scripture. The flock must be protected against wolves, and JUST AS YOU DON'T EXPECT TO BOWL ON INTO PARLIAMENT HOUSE AND CHAIR THE MEETING OF PARLIAMENT, NEITHER DO YOU EXPECT TO TREAT THE LOCAL CHURCH WITH THAT SORT OF CONTEMPT. The local Church is not a public forum or a public free-for-all, nor is it a supermarket that you can visit at your leisure and take or leave the various items on its shelves, as many modern Christians do – but the local Church is a gathering of saints for worship under the headship of Christ, in an orderly fashion, according to the Scriptures.)

XIII. No church members, because of any offence which has been given them by a fellow member, once they have performed their prescribed duty towards the person who has caused the offence, may disturb church order in any way, or be *absent from the meetings of the church or the administration of any ordinances on account of any such offence. On the contrary, they are to wait upon Christ in the further proceedings of the church.*

XIV. Each church and all its members are obligated to pray constantly for the good and prosperity of all Christ's churches everywhere, and to help forward everyone who comes into their district or calling, by the exercise of their gifts and graces. It clearly follows that when churches are planted by the goodness of God they ought also to hold fellowship among themselves to promote peace, increasing love and mutual edification as and when they enjoy an opportunity to do so to their advantage.

XV. IN CASES OF DIFFICULTIES OR DIFFERENCES, EITHER IN MATTERS OF DOCTRINE OR ADMINISTRATION, which concern the churches in general or any single church, and which affects their peace, union, and edification, or when any members of a church are injured because of any disciplinary proceedings not consistent with the Word and correct order, **it is according to the mind of Christ, that many churches holding communion together do, through their appointed messengers meet to consider, and give their advice about the matter in dispute, and to report to all the churches concerned. However, when these messengers are assembled, they are not entrusted with any real church power, or with any jurisdiction over the churches involved in the problem. They cannot exercise any censure over any churches or persons, or impose their determination on the churches or their officers.**

(THIS IS WHAT SETS CONGREGATIONALISM APART FROM OTHER CHURCHES – the complete autonomy of every local Church. This is sound Scriptural doctrine, as is evidenced by Paul's work in establishing new Churches among the Gentiles, how he would not allow any corrupting influences of the Jews from Jerusalem to enter in. And when he did participate in the council at Jerusalem (Acts 15), and took instructions to the Gentile Churches, it was more out of respect for the mother Church and out of mutual consent under the direction of the Spirit that he did so – THE BOTTOM LINE IS THAT THE GENTILE CHURCHES WERE GIVEN GREAT LIBERTY, AND CLEARLY, IT IS FOR THIS VERY REASON: THEY RECOGNISED CHRIST'S HEADSHIP OF EACH INDIVIDUAL CHURCH. This doctrine also recognises the fact that God can, and sometimes does, raise up Churches and elders in a local situation who are legitimately called and appointed, though not connected with any other Church. WE HAVE HAD AN INTERESTING EXPERIENCE IN RECENT CHURCH HISTORY: the Assemblies of God were traditionally, and officially still, as far as I know, Congregational in structure, i.e. they held the doctrine of the autonomy of the local Church, but in more recent times, the officers appointed as state and national representatives, began to take upon themselves more and more popish authority over the local Churches. In particular, they presumed the right to issue or withdraw the ministry credentials of local pastors – this high-handed action was opposed during those times by a dear brother Aeron Morgan, a Welshman, who had been previously superintendent in the UK, and was for some time dean of the AOG Bible College in Katoomba. He told us that in the UK, every Church, by virtue of its autonomy before God, had the right to appoint its own pastor, whether the state and national bodies agreed or not. This is interesting, because the man was no slouch, when it came to intellectual power and knowledge of the Scriptures, but HE BELIEVED IT IS GOD, NOT PRESBYTERIES OR ASSEMBLIES OF OFFICIALS, WHO APPOINT MINISTERS, AND THAT THIS APPOINTMENT IS CONFIRMED IN THE LOCAL CHURCH, AND HE POINTED OUT THAT THAT WAS ASSEMBLIES OF GOD DOCTRINE, HOWEVER, PROUD AND ARROGANT MEN HAD TAKEN UPON THEMSELVES TO RIDE ROUGHSHOD OVER THEIR OWN RULES, OVER THE LOCAL CHURCHES, AND OVER THE VERY WORD OF GOD – THEY HAD USURPED THE PLACE OF CHRIST IN APPOINTING HIS MINISTERS, HENCE THEY HAD MADE THEMSELVES “ANTICHRISTS”, AND WE COULD TELL THEM “BY THEIR FRUITS”, they had rejected the counsel of godly older men who had known the Lord's ways, and appointed a new bunch of younger advisors, as did Rehoboam

when he rebelled against the house of David – NB: CHRIST WALKS AMONG THE SEVEN GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS (THE CHURCHES) AND HAS THE SEVEN STARS (THEIR MINISTERS) IN HIS RIGHT HAND! THERE CAN BE NO DOUBT THAT THE WORD OF GOD IS CONGREGATIONAL ON THIS POINT – I.E. THE WORD OF GOD TEACHES THE ABSOLUTE AUTONOMY OF EVERY PROPERLY CONSTITUTED LOCAL CHURCH!)

(JUST BY WAY OF FURTHER COMMENT ON THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CONGREGATIONALIST AND PRESBYTERIAN CONFESSIONS, I would add that, although the Congregationalists and Baptists have it right concerning the structure of the Church, I believe the Baptists make a mistake by excluding the children of believers as part of the Church of God. This is a sad doctrine, because children are especially dear to the Lord Jesus, the Head of the Church, and neither He nor the Scriptures require little children to do anything in order to be accepted. Baptists have apparently blinded themselves by their over-zealous attachment to believers' baptism – i.e. they have gone further than the Scriptures in setting down this doctrine. Whether you baptize infants or not is not the issue – take your pick, if you will, on the doctrine of water baptism – but THE SCRIPTURES ARE CLEAR THAT WATER BAPTISM IS NOT WHAT QUALIFIES YOU FOR THE KINGDOM OF GOD OR FOR CHURCH MEMBERSHIP. There is a Scriptural basis and a warmth to the Presbyterian doctrine of the Church which many hard-nosed Baptists know nothing of – “The visible Church, consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion; and of their children: and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God.” As the apostle said to the Philippian jailer, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” Acts 16:31)

*THIS FOURTH POINT OF OUR LESSON (THE LORD JESUS IN HEAVEN IS BOTH HEAD OF THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH, AND HEAD OF ALL THE LOCAL CHURCHES) HAS MANY IMPLICATIONS. I am aware that I am really just skimming the surface of this subject, but for now, I must stick to my main subject, which is *The Symbolic Sevens of the Revelation*, and yet I must say enough about each individual point, so as not to merely focus on the phenomenon of numbers, but rather on the Truth of God's Word, which the numbers point us to. And I hope you can see in this, that *The Revelation* is not about numbers and calculations and dates, but about the gospel, about Christ Himself!*

I began this part of our study by pointing out that there are 16 sevens in reference to the letters to the seven churches, and **these all speak of only three things: the Churches, their ministers, and the Lord Himself**, which underlines the fact of the intimacy of the Lord with His people on earth, and the fact that He has ordained only one institution on earth that He is really in, i.e. the Church, hence the great importance of His Church on earth, i.e. even every local Church on earth, and the fact that the stars are in His right hand reminds us of His infinite power He wields on behalf of His people!

The importance of the local Church in God's purpose has been greatly devalued in recent decades – this has to change! If there is to be revival and reformation, which we so desperately need, it will be with a renewed focus on this doctrine of the Church, a renewed interest in what the Lord Himself is interested in! For He still stands in the midst of His own golden candlesticks and He still holds the stars in His right hand. May He do more so, for His glory and for the help of His people today! Amen.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 12th May 2019.

Scripture reading: Revelation 1:16-20

16 And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.

17 And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

18 I *am* he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

19 Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter;

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

It is clearly evident in this Scripture that the Lord Jesus has the ministers of His Churches in His right hand (figuratively and spiritually speaking), and that the “sharp two-edged sword” going “out of His mouth” is the Word of God, which He gives to His ministers, and that is how He speaks to His Churches. Hebrews 4: 12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. So, we see it is all about the Word of God, the “sharp twoedged sword” issuing forth from Jesus Himself!

This doctrine is so foundational, so vital to a proper understanding of the kingdom of God, of the local Church, of Christianity itself, that to neglect it, is to deliver a death-blow to the visible Church. Therefore, I stand before you today as your pastor, in fear and trembling, as a man without self-confidence, and yet, having as much confidence as is humanly possible, in the fact of my calling of God and my duty to deliver the Word of God to both God's people and to the world at large. Men who think they are ‘somebody’ because of their appointment to the ministry are the most dangerous kind of fools, and sadly, there are many of them – false shepherds, false prophets, false teachers, just as Jesus and His apostles warned long ago. So, this is an uncomfortable subject, but a vital one, which we must all embrace in the fear of God.

As we continue this study, let us observe,

5. FIFTHLY, IT IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD IN HEAVEN WHO APPOINTS MINISTERS TO HIS CHURCHES.

NOTICE THAT IT IS THE LORD JESUS WHO HAS THE STARS IN HIS RIGHT HAND. It is not the pope, not the bishop, not the moderator, the superintendent, the presbytery, or any other body of officials, who have the minister of the local Church in their hands, but the Lord Jesus only.

SOME TIME AGO, THERE WAS AN EXAMPLE PLAYING OUT IN THE MEDIA, OVER THE SUSPENSION OF A UNITING CHURCH MINISTER AT BONDI. The hierarchy stepped into the local Church and made a ruling contrary to the wishes of the local congregation, (at least that is what the media reported). The reasons and details of the matter were not revealed, but what is very evident in this case, is the fact that **SOMEBODY OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CHURCH HAD ASSUMED AUTHORITY OVER THAT LOCAL CHURCH.**

WE MUST BE AWARE OF THE REALITY OF THE BACKSLIDING OF WHOLE CHURCHES AND DENOMINATIONS: The ancient Protestant Churches, as we noted in our last session, from the example of THE WESTMINSTER CONFSSION, have declared that, *“The purest churches under Heaven are subject to mixture and error, and some have degenerated so much that they have ceased to be churches of Christ and have become synagogues of Satan.”* This is true, and whether your particular system of church government is Congregational or Presbyterian, whether you emphasise, to a greater or lesser degree, the autonomy (i.e. self-government) of the local Church, **IT IS ACKNOWLEDGED BY ALL, THAT INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES AND MINISTERS CAN, AND DO, FALL AWAY FROM THE FAITH, BUT THE REMEDY IS NOT AN OVERBEARING HIERARCHY OR SYSTEM OF POKERY, BUT THE GRACE OF GOD, WORKING IN INDIVIDUAL SAINTS, WHO COLLECTIVELY CONTEND EARNESTLY FOR THE FAITH – IN THE LOCAL CHURCH, NOT OUTSIDE THE LOCAL CHURCH.** (In fact, it is quite obvious that where there *is* a hierarchy, where there *is* control over the local Churches from an external or centralised power, the apostacy affects the whole denomination, not just the local Church! There is an epidemic of this apostacy, this “falling away” (*Paul predicted it in 2 Thessalonians 2:3*), including whole denominations across the Western World today, and such a broad falling away from the faith and from Scripture, that many of the individuals involved have no idea that they are being swept into a great tide of apostacy! They are oblivious to their own deception – like Lot and his family dwelling in Sodom, they are comfortable and cannot sense the imminent dan-

ger of the wrath of God against them!) Over the years I have had many occasions where it was necessary to contend with such people (men who are “deceiving and being deceived” – *2 Timothy 3:13*, some women as well), and they are so confident in themselves and their scholarship, that they ridicule us, calling us ‘dinosaurs’ and ‘bigots’ etc., but they cannot see that they are swallowed up by a world-wide apostasy – this is the very reason they are falsely confident, they think they have the numbers on their side, they have many friends and we have very few, but they fail to see, that if we hold to God’s Truth, then we have Jesus on our side, and if they oppose us, they oppose Him! What an awful state for men to be in – proud of their teaching and their scholarship, proud of their apparent success, but incapable of seeing that they teach the opposite of what Jesus and His apostles and prophets have taught; they have fallen under the wrath of God against apostates and reprobates, but they cannot see it! But it is the Lord Jesus Who “walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks” (His Churches); it is He Who holds His ministers in His right hand, and continues to speak to His genuine Churches.

ANY GIVEN MINISTER IS EITHER IN THE LORD'S RIGHT HAND OR HE IS A MINISTER OF SATAN, as Paul reminded the Corinthians: *2 Corinthians 11:13-15*, “13 For such *are* false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. 14 And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. 15 Therefore *it is* no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works.” Let’s stop and think for a moment: This is the apostle Paul speaking here! God’s chief theologian and missionary, author of half of the God-inspired books of the New Testament! This man, like other apostles as well, had occasion to urgently warn the Churches of his day, that there were false apostles operating among the Churches, that there were Satan’s ministers disguising themselves as God’s servants! This is no Sunday-school Picnic! This is real stuff! And if Satan’s ministers were rife among the Churches 2,000 years ago, how is it that so many think there is no such thing today? And think about this: If a Church has taken on a “minister of Satan” and the people support him, then that is not a Church, but a “synagogue of Satan.”

THIS EVIL WORLD HATES INDEPENDENTS: THE FOOTBALL FRATERNITY HATES ISRAEL FALAU, because he dares to be an independent, thinking individual, who expresses an opinion, even though that opinion is not really his own but straight out of the Scriptures! They want him to join the mindless

mob and have no opinion of his own. **THE SAME IS TRUE IN LOCAL MINISTERS' FRATERNALS** – they want you to join them and be like them. God forbid that we should be like those who maintain heresies and shut down any opinion to the contrary, trampling the Word of God underfoot! God forbid that we should join hand in hand with those who continually and stubbornly reject the Word of God! They are apostates. Many of them are Satan's ministers! They must be cut off in the name of the Lord Jesus! **THEY ARE LIKE TOBIAH AND SANBALLAT**, who harassed Nehemiah as he rebuilt Jerusalem after the captivity, calling on Nehemiah to come and meet with them, accusing those who were rebuilding the very temple of God, of rebellion against the kings around about. Their attitude was, "Just join with us in this corrupt mixed multitude which hates the Word of God and refuses to hear any contrary opinion, and you will do well", but of course they didn't say it in those words, they were much more subtle and serpentine than that. But what did faithful Nehemiah do? He refused to meet with them! Tobiah and Sanballat were reprobates who did not belong in the camp of Israel, and Nehemiah treated them accordingly – see his explanation in *Nehemiah 6*, "3 And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I *am* doing a great work, so that I cannot come down: why should the work cease, whilst I leave it, and come down to you?" Those who are genuinely called to the Lord's work, and are steadily engaged in serving God and the local Church, know their place, they know their duty, they cannot walk away, they know they cannot leave their post to fraternise with devils! In Fact, they know they are called, not only to preach the gospel, but to expose the false apostles and ministers of Satan, and they are hated for it, just as Jesus was hated before them. Let us count it a joy to be hated for the same reason Jesus was hated!

WE ARE CALLED TO TREAT THE REPROBATES AND INFILTRATORS AS NEHEMIAH DID TOBIAH AND SANBALLAT, to reject the reprobates, because they never cease to try to take us away from the great work we are doing, in maintaining the gospel of Christ as a witness in this world, and feeding the flock of God on His truth, not on the Devil's errors and lies, as so many do even to this day.

THIS IS THE PLAN JESUS HAS FOR REPROBATES: In the very last chapter of *The Revelation*, the same Lord Who first revealed Himself walking amongst the candlesticks says this, (*Revelation 22:10-12*), "10 And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book: for the time is at hand. 11 **He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be**

filthy still: and he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still. 12 And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward *is* with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Make up your mind! Choose whom you will serve! And when you have made your choice, your eternal destiny is sealed. No man can change your mind. Jesus will not run circles round you for the rest of your life, trying to get you to change your mind. If you choose to be filthy, then He says, “Be filthy!” If you choose to be righteous, then be righteous! And remember – Jesus said this 2,000 years ago! This is not a novel concept! Jesus requires sinners to repent!

THE LORD DOES NOT PRESCRIBE A *REMEDY*, FOR THIS WILFUL APOSTACY, THIS WILFUL REBELLION AGAINST HIS WORD, ONLY HIS DIVINE JUDGMENT! There is a prevailing mentality in the world today, and in many churches, that we must fix everything, that we must wrap everybody in cotton-wool, but that is not the mind of Christ.

THE SAME RULE APPLIES IN THE NATURAL WORLD, WHERE WE HAVE PRISONS TO DEAL WITH CRIMINALS – today they are called ‘correctional centres’, but this is a sad mistake, because they are primarily for punishment, not correction (I’m speaking here about the most serious of crimes – e.g. murderers, rapists, and traitors, who deserve a life sentence). Some of our politicians are waking up to a degree – lately they have been calling strongly for more severe punishment of child killers, they want them put away for at least 20 years. Good on them for such a stand! Prison is a place for those who refuse correction and make themselves a danger to society, and so it is, spiritually, for apostates – they have already refused to be corrected, so they must be put away – removed from decent society. The Lord does not prescribe a correction programme for apostates! **LIKEWISE, IN THE REAL WORLD OF NATURE**, if an animal is carrying some deadly contagious disease, it is put down and its body is burnt to remove all trace of contamination – so it is in the spiritual realm, when a church or a person is spiritually incorrigible, that individual or church must be cut off – there is no remedy, unless God grants them repentance – so, if they do not repent, cut them off! To ignore this instruction, is to pretend we are more merciful than God! If people pretend snakes are not harmful, what happens? They get bitten of course, and everybody else gets bitten as well! Is this kindness? Is this love? There are do-gooders everywhere, and many among the churches, who say you should never lay a hand on your children, you should never speak harshly to them when they do the wrong thing. What

is the result? They are raising up rebels and monsters, who cannot be corrected! God is not merciful when He judges reprobates and rebels – rebellion and reprobation call for justice, not mercy! This is a sad reality that a generation of snowflakes refuses to accept.

PAUL GIVES THE SAME INSTRUCTION TO TITUS: (*Titus 2:10*), “10 A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject.” Don't have the 'We can fix it at all costs' mentality! **DON'T FALL INTO THE HUMANISTIC 'COUNSELLING' MENTALITY, OR THE WORLD'S 'CORRECTIVE SERVICES' MENTALITY! FOLLOW THE WORD OF GOD: ADMONISH HIM! WARN HIM! AND THE THIRD TIME, REJECT HIM!** This is the instruction given to the shepherds of God's flock. Many simply will not accept this reality, many will not accept that God *really* judges. I had one of the Devil's ministers, just the other day, actually, openly, publicly, ridicule me for saying Jesus doesn't love everybody, as if that fact alone forever condemns me as a false teacher! Yet the Bible is full of this doctrine! What about the doctrine of hell? How can there be a hell if God loves everybody? These “ministers of Satan” are not only wrong – they are insane! (This is what I meant when I mentioned people in such a flood tide of apostasy, with so many going the same way, that they are foolishly confident they are right!) They have no capacity for any sort of sound reason or judgment. Like Esau, they are profane men, operating as the world operates, according to the natural, animal senses, yet they think they are spiritual. They do not know God! With all their talk about Jesus, they do not even know Who He is! The Bible presents to us an entirely different Jesus from the one they believe in. **THE CHURCHES ARE FULL OF DO-GOODERS WHO WRITE THEIR OWN RULES AND IGNORE THE WORD OF GOD – THEY CANNOT RECOGNISE THAT “SHARP TWO-EDGED SWORD” WHICH GOES OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE LORD, TO HIS CHURCHES VIA HIS CHOSEN MINISTERS.** Many refuse to accept that Christ is something other than an effeminate character who cuddles fluffy little lambs, many will not accept the true Christ revealed in the Scriptures, many will not accept that there are real consequences to sin (and especially continuing in sin, refusing to be corrected), but the reality is that if the local Church reneges on its own responsibility, and refuses to sort out its own sinful mess, then the Lord is well able to sort it out Himself. He doesn't need interfering men to help Him. But we must get beyond mere theory, and practise what the Bible teaches. We must cut off such Devils; we must have nothing to do with them! God calls us to both believe and carry out His Words! God help us to be faithful in doing so!

THINK ABOUT THIS: IF CHRIST'S MINISTERS ARE IN HIS RIGHT HAND, WHERE ARE HIS ENEMIES (THE FALSE TEACHERS AND FALSE APOSTLES AND PROPHETS)? Under His feet of course! For He must reign till He has put all His enemies under His feet (*1 Corinthians 15:25*). *Don't be afraid of Satan's ministers! Jesus is dashing them to pieces with His rod of iron every day!* People say, "Where is your love for the brethren?" And I say, "The Devil's ministers, who deny the plain Truth of God's Word, are not my brethren!" And I say back to these critics, "Where is *your* love for God's Word?" This is the 'acid test'! This is the 'yard stick' by which all are measured – the Word of God, and only the Word of God! Men's opinions will all be burnt up at the judgment seat of Christ – only the Word of God shall remain, only that which is built upon Christ the Rock will stand!

WE HAVE SEEN THE LORD DO THIS FROM TIME TO TIME, CUTTING OFF UN-FAITHFUL MINISTERS: Here's a bit of our own Church history, and it illustrates this point, and it shows the reality of this doctrine, that the Lord Jesus has His ministers in His right hand, but fake ministers (those He never called), he rejects, and sometimes removes (**THE LORD ROOTS UP ALL THAT HE HAS NOT PLANTED: As Jesus taught His disciples (*Matthew 15:12-13*), "Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying? 13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up."**): Years ago, I was in a situation in a district gathering of ministers, and I spoke up about my concerns, both locally and to our state body, stating that certain ones had lied about matters we had discussed at a district meeting. Of course, the hierarchy came down on me like a ton of bricks – it mattered nothing to them that I was telling the truth and my colleagues were lying (mind you, these were all ministers of Churches – supposed to be ministers of the Word of God!), but the Lord encouraged me, some time later as I was reading the Scriptures in *Zechariah 11*, and came across this: "4 Thus saith the LORD my God; Feed the flock of the slaughter; 5 Whose possessors slay them, and hold themselves not guilty: and they that sell them say, Blessed *be* the LORD; for I am rich: and their own shepherds pity them not. 8 Three shepherds also I cut off in one month; and my soul lothed them, and their soul also abhorred me." **And on reading this, I suddenly realized that three of the ministers in that gathering were no longer in the ministry – they were prominent men in that gathering, who were complicit in the lies, and in one month the Lord took them away, through various and differing circumstances, He took each one away**

from his respective Church and ministry! There was no man who stood by me at that time, except Curtis Grant, the pastor of Kingaroy Assembly at the time, and I will never forget him for this. Curtis was a very quiet and gracious man. He was not confrontational, but he was no coward either. He did stand beside me, and he'd had his own problems with those popish brutes of men as well (he mentioned at one time to me, "Brother so and so, and Brother so and so, are to speak at the conference on 'Ethics' – what would these men know of ethics?") Curtis knew what these men were. (By the way, that Scripture which the Lord showed me in *Zechariah 11*, was not written for me and my situation in 20th century Queensland, but the Lord in His infinite wisdom and providence, and absolute, sovereign rule over all creation, was able to encourage me by showing that He Who rules from heaven's throne, had ordered these events, almost to the letter of that portion of Scripture!) Two of those 'three shepherds' were involved in the lies and the cover-up and in the stand against me on that issue; the third man, to my knowledge was not involved in that incident, but he was very prominent in promoting a false doctrine at the time. That was in the Assemblies of God, and it is all history now.

SOME YEARS LATER I HAD A SIMILAR LOCAL EXPERIENCE: It was reported to me by a member of another Church in this town, that the minister of that Church had said that I was doing the Devil's work, or words to that effect, and interestingly, that minister was soon afterwards removed from the pulpit of that Church, by a completely unrelated set of circumstances. *Does this mean I can boast or gloat over the fall of other men? Certainly not! But if I don't acknowledge God's mighty hand in these things, I make myself a liar, like them.* Does that mean these men were greater sinners than I? Not necessarily! But I say this for the benefit of the saints, to underline the fact, that Jesus is at work in the local Churches and their ministers, in very real and practical ways, even when you are as weak as water, tired of continually fighting against the gainsayers and abusers of the Word of God, the Lord is with you! And we must give all glory to Him, in fear and trembling, lest we are caught up in the same apostacy! **THIS IS A COMFORTING DOCTRINE! WE DON'T NEED TO BE AFRAID OF SATAN'S MINISTERS. WE MUST FEAR GOD, NOT MEN.** The Scripture says, "God is not mocked, for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (*Galatians 6:7*). But this should cause us *all* to fear God and walk very carefully before Him. We are *all* sinners, we are *all* capable of the same things and worse. It is only by the grace of God, if we do not fail as these men have done.

MINISTERS MUST BE REQUIRED BY THEIR CONGREGATIONS TO BE BEYOND REPROACH. This is not automatic, and it is not easy. There is sometimes a great personal cost to making such a stand, just as ‘whistleblowers’ in this world often pay an awful price for doing the right thing, some even lose their lives! Are we, friends of Jesus, exempt? No. But if we love the Lord and His Word, we have no choice but to stand against the evildoers and false teachers. Don’t be fooled by such men. Don’t think of them as brethren, if they behave like the Devil continually, if they continually oppose the Word of God. A man who stubbornly and continually opposes the Word of God is not a man of God. But no minister can gloat over the fall of others or be proud of his own position, all must walk in the fear of God – *1 Corinthians 10:12*, “Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall”.

It is the Lord Jesus Who appoints His ministers and gives them His Words to speak, so that His Churches are fed and kept from the marauding “wolves in sheep’s clothing”.

20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

May this be true of us, for God’s glory. By God’s grace, let us hold this doctrine dearly and look to Him for blessing. God willing, we’ll continue this theme next week – meanwhile let us not forget, it is Christ alone, the one true Head of the Church and Lord of all creation, Who builds His Churches and appoints ministers to them, to be His prophets, His “angels”, His messengers of the very Words of God. Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)

THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION

THE SEVEN STARS IN CHRIST'S RIGHT HAND Continued, 19th May 2019.

FIFTHLY, IT IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD IN HEAVEN WHO APPOINTS MINISTERS TO HIS CHURCHES.

We've been observing from Revelation Chapter 1, that the Lord Jesus has the ministers of His Churches in His right hand (figuratively and spiritually speaking), and that the "sharp two-edged sword" going "out of His mouth" is the Word of God, which He gives to His ministers, and that is how He speaks to His Churches, and it is He Who appoints men to His service. We need to understand this doctrine correctly, so as to avoid the apostacy (the falling away), which is rife among the churches on every side, because the Devil also has recruits of his own, the Roman Antichrist has a big following, and many misguided pastors, and believers in general, think that there is safety and superiority in numbers, they think they are on the winning team, but seem oblivious to the Scripture (Revelation 13), which says, "3....all the world wondered after the beast..... 8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world". So, as we continue, here is an important word to the Church about the appointment of ministers.

WHILE IT IS THE LORD WHO APPOINTMENTS HIS MINISTERS AND OTHER ELDERS, THERE IS HUMAN INSTRUMENTALITY INVOLVED: Just as the Lord condescends to involve His children in many of the wonderful works of His kingdom, through prayer (so that the hearts and minds of ministers and members alike are moved by the Spirit of God, to answer a call, to refuse a call, to plead that the Lord would send labourers for the harvest), through the maintaining of sound doctrine in the local Church by a concerted effort, by diligent instruction in the Word of God, and discipline by the elders where necessary when God's Word is not being followed – all this is our collective responsibility.

I'M SURE THAT MANY CHURCH MEMBERS HAVE LITTLE IDEA JUST HOW IMPORTANT THEIR OWN INVOLVEMENT IN THE CHURCH IS. Some think, "I'm not much use to the Church. I can't teach Sunday School, or preach or sing." But do they stop to think that if they are just there, in the gathering of the saints, with a smiling face, a word of blessing for their brother or sister, an 'amen' to the preaching of the Word, if they bring their children or grandchildren, or invite their neighbour or friend to come to worship, hand

them a church bulletin with an article they might be interested in, what an eternal difference it might make?

“STARS” VERSUS “WANDERING STARS” – LET US NOTE WELL, THERE ARE MANY PREACHERS WHO RUN FROM PLACE TO PLACE, WHO ARE BETTER DESCRIBED AS “WANDERING STARS”, RATHER THAN STARS IN THE RIGHT HAND OF THE LORD JESUS (Jude 4-13 – “4 For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men.....10 But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. 11 Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. 12 These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds *they are* without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; 13 Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.)

THESE SPREAD FALSE DOCTRINE EVERYWHERE THEY GO, SEEMINGLY CALLED AND APPOINTED BY GOD TO THE MINISTRY, BUT IN REALITY, TRAITORS TO THE CAUSE. One minister comes to mind, who had been divorced and remarried about three times, and one lady in the relevant congregation, commented that he used his parishes to find his wives! Such a man ought to have been rejected from the ministry at least, and probably from the Church as well, but that was an apostate church, a fallen church, a church which did not seek the remedy the Lord prescribes for His Churches. But I say this to remind you of how important *you* are to *your* local Church, and how greatly you are blessed as you function as a faithful member, standing with your brothers and sisters, maintaining God’s truth in the local congregation, and standing together against all error and evil.

ORDINARY PEOPLE PLAY AN IMPORTANT PART IN THEIR CHURCH AND THEIR NATION:

PEOPLE IN DEMOCRATIC NATIONS OFTEN COMPLAIN ABOUT THEIR GOVERNMENTS, BUT THERE IS A SAYING, “YOU GET THE GOVERNMENT YOU DESERVE,” and it is true, partly because God is not mocked but man reaps what he sows under the Almighty hand of God, but also partly because man is responsible himself, as a matter of ‘cause and effect’, it is every man’s duty to participate in the democratic process (as it is in all the processes of life).

He is responsible to find out the facts about policies and finances and candidates, and to vote accordingly, and to voice his own concerns to others, not only for personal reasons, but out of love for family and neighbour.

IT IS VERY SIMILAR IN THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH: GOD HAS GIVEN ALL CHURCH MEMBERS A CERTAIN RESPONSIBILITY (not *absolute* responsibility – some think they have absolute responsibility, that it is all up to them, so they huff and puff and lead factions and rebellions at every little thing they don't agree with, but although they do have a personal responsibility, it is not *all* up to them, it is a matter for the whole Church, it is a **SHARED RESPONSIBILITY**), but if each member would realize he has that personal responsibility, and that every other member does too, what a powerful body every local Church would be! (I say it is not all up to you personally, but sometimes it may be so. You may be the only one game to speak up, so never think that somebody else will do what God requires you to do! And never think that your contribution is not important!) In this way, we would still get the government we deserve in the Church, (but in a *good* sense), we would work for *good*, with God's blessing, and see the glorious results. But all too often, men don't want to shoulder that personal responsibility, and maybe through negligence, cowardice, or sheer unbelief, they fail to make a difference, whereas, many times, just by being present at worship, they make the world of a difference as they make their small contribution to the body of Christ and its witness in their local town or district.

BUT THE SCRIPTURES HERE TEACH US THAT, ALTHOUGH MAN PLAYS A LIMITED PART, IT IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD GOD AND CHRIST WHO DOES ALL THESE THINGS, THAT IT IS HE WHO APPOINTS MINISTERS, AND IT IS HE WHO GUIDES THOSE MINISTERS AND GIVES THEM HIS WORD TO TEACH AND PREACH; it is *He* Who requires them to make a stand and even purge the Church of undesirables, like Jezebel and those who entertain evil doctrines and deeds, like the Nicolaitans which He hates (***Revelation 2:6-20***). This doctrine is confirmed by other Scriptures as well: ***Ephesians 4*** teaches us that Christ “gave gifts to the Church”, and that, as He has given in the past, apostles, prophets and evangelists, He continues to give “pastors and teachers” to all His Churches. Notice it is Christ Who gives these gifts to His Church! Rank unbelievers and rebellious Christians cannot accept this, but the Scripture plainly says, “8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.....11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers”.

In this modern world, where the emphasis is on yourself and how you feel, too many Christians think the world revolves around them – they continually say that two or three gathering together is a church, only to justify their rebellion against God’s ordained Church and ministry. There are even preachers like this, who promote this false doctrine of the Church. They divide and destroy Churches, and lead other unsuspecting believers away from their local Church into rebellious little cliques. Ask these usurpers, “Who are the God-ordained elders?” They will not answer you, because normally there are no elders, or they are all self-appointed! Reject such men, who are not members of anything but their own self-promotion party, because it is Christ Who gives gifts of pastors and teachers to His Churches, and the genuine Churches, that Christ has planted, recognise and receive those men Christ has given them. In this respect, the Church is altogether different from the democratic, political scene: You do not have to accept the least worst candidate as your pastor – you have the God-given privilege of accepting the man who is chosen and sent by the Lord, and proves it “by his fruits”, by his faithfulness as a true Christian, and by his faithfulness in the Word of God and sound doctrine. A man who does not prove his calling must be rejected – better to have no shepherd than a wolf in sheep’s clothing (men who promote themselves, or promote false doctrine, like Arminianism, Zionism, or Dispensationalism, or who oppose the Word of God, who lean towards Popery or promote the Pope’s bibles)! I say that, in this respect, the Church differs from the state, but in reality, *in this country*, under The Westminster System of government, which we have by God’s grace, we have the self-same responsibility and privilege – to reject wolves in sheep’s clothing – we sin against God if we vote for such men to rule us (men who promote Feminism, Socialism, or Islam, or Popery)! And if the Church was faithful in accepting God’s men and rejecting the Devil’s infiltrators, then the whole nation would have godly leadership, as well! NB: It seems Scott Morrison, a professing Christian and member of Hillsong, is still our Prime Minister after yesterday’s election – he is far better than Bill Shorten who is nothing but a Communist wrecking ball to destroy us and everything godly about our national heritage, but don’t be too complacent – don’t put one atom of faith in a man who says he is a Christian, but when asked if God will send gays to hell, tells the nation a blatant lie, by saying “God loves everybody”! Let us be honest and realistic, and continue to fight hard the good fight.

LET US “PRAY THE LORD OF THE HARVEST, THAT HE WOULD SEND FORTH (MORE) LABOURERS INTO HIS HARVEST” (MATTHEW 9:38), BECAUSE THERE IS A SHORTAGE OF FAITHFUL MEN TODAY.

Are we praying for them?

Are we recognising faithful men when we see them?

Or are we running after false teachers still?

Are we still supporting missions and societies which promote false doctrine and the Pope's bibles?

And is the Lord saying, “Well, if you like false teachers so much, here's a few more”? (Like the Church in the wilderness, which cried to the Lord for meat because they didn't like the heavenly manna, and the Lord gave them so much meat that they vomited it out of their nostrils! - *Numbers 11*, and that is exactly what is happening to the modern-day Church. It is so full of false teachers that hardly a faithful man of sound doctrine can be found! But thank God, there *is* a faithful remnant of God's people here and there, continuing to serve God and uphold the Scriptures. I had a phone call just the other day. A man had seen our advertisement in the paper and phoned me. He was very interested to see that there is a Reformed Church in the district. He has been around a long time, he has seen the churches, he has seen the apostacy all around us, and he was pleasantly surprised at the small number we are, considering the awful apostacy in the churches. By contrast, our critics despise us because we are relatively small in number. What a difference it makes to a man's perspective, when he is a believer in the Word of God, not just a pretend believer or a humanistic, pride-filled, self-made believer, who uses a worldly yardstick to measure everything by, who is impressed with large numbers and loud noises, but who has no taste for the Word of God, and ridicules the plain Truth of the King James Bible.)

REMEMBER, IT IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD AND CHRIST WHO APPOINTS MINISTERS TO HIS CHURCHES. The one true, Almighty and sovereign God (“seven Spirits of God”), seven Churches (“seven golden candlesticks” and Christ walks among them), and seven ministers (“seven stars in His right hand”) – seven Churches (the perfect and complete Church that Christ Himself continues to build in the earth, the very dwelling place of God on earth). Let us believe the doctrine, and take it seriously, and realize its enormous implications and blessings. Let us remember that Jesus said, “Upon

this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (*Matthew 16:18*).

SO, WE SEE THAT A HEALTHY LOCAL CHURCH, A LOCAL CHURCH COMPRISED OF FAITHFUL MEMBERS, IS A CHURCH WHICH HAS A GOD-ORDAINED, GOD-APPOINTED MINISTER, AND GOD WILLING, OTHER ELDERS AS WELL, and this is partly because the members take an active and prayerful interest in their Church, and they become part of God's plan and God's workings. There are Churches out there which have appointed lesbians and homosexuals as their ministers! How can this happen in a Christian Church where many of the members disagree with that sort of outcome? It happens because the members do not get prayerfully and conscientiously involved in their Church, and do not protest against such evils when they are proposed, and when such evil prevails, so that eventually, true believers stay there, as Lot lingered in Sodom right up to the day it was destroyed, instead of leaving that “synagogue of Satan” as they are commanded: *2 Corinthians 6:17*, “Come out from among them and be ye separate...,” and *Revelation 18:4*, “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.” Too many hang in their rotten and corrupt churches like Lot's wife in Sodom – they just won't leave! And so, the fire of God falls and consumes them with it, and they don't even know they are being consumed, it is such an insidious, creeping fire which devours them, as they gradually comply with the evil, accept the false doctrines, and become friends with God's enemies.

THE MINISTER OF EVERY LOCAL CHURCH IS A WATCHMAN AND A SHEPHERD: A watchman on the wall of an ancient, walled city, could either save the city or allow it to fall into the hands of an approaching enemy – **all he was required to do was speak up and speak the truth! But how many ministers today are speaking God's Truth?** Many ministers are like those of Isaiah's day, when he called them “dumb dogs” that “cannot bark” (*Isaiah 56:10*, “**His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber**”).

When the Lord called the prophet Ezekiel to the ministry, He said this, “17 **Son of man, I have made thee a watchman unto the house of Israel: therefore hear the word at my mouth, and give them warning from me.** (*See how similar this is to the vision of Jesus with the sharp two-edged sword coming out of His mouth, how He speaks the Word of God to His*

ministers which are the stars in His right hand, and they must bring that Word to the Church!) 18 When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die; and thou givest him not warning, nor speakest to warn the wicked from his wicked way, to save his life; the same wicked *man* shall die in his iniquity; but his blood will I require at thine hand. 19 Yet if thou warn the wicked, and he turn not from his wickedness, nor from his wicked way, he shall die in his iniquity; but thou hast delivered thy soul” (**Ezekiel 3**). *(Here is a classic example of how some mistakenly think that all depends on them personally – they read this Scripture, and think if they don’t brow-beat every person they meet and preach to them, they have blood on their hands – but this Scripture is written to pastors. Pastors do have blood on their hands if they fail to consistently warn the wicked. It is not about every individual person – it is a message to the whole Church, and particularly to God’s chosen spokesman, God’s preacher, God’s ‘prophet’. The faithfulness of the pastor, in this way, makes the whole local Church a light to the world, just as Jesus said!)* **EVERY PASTOR OR MINISTER TODAY IS CALLED TO THE SAME WORK AND SAME RESPONSIBILITY AS EZEKIEL WAS IN THAT DAY.** But many will not speak the truth for fear of offending people, many of them don't even know the truth (how did they get into the pulpit in the first place?), or because they see the ministry as a status symbol or just a well-paying vocation, but they'd be far better off in the day of judgment, if they would leave the ministry, than to remain and continue to abuse the Church and make a mockery of the Word of God.

THE ROLE OF A SHEPHERD IS SIMILAR. AND SO, THE MINISTER IS NOT ONLY CALLED A WATCHMAN, BUT A SHEPHERD AS WELL. Jesus gave some very poignant warnings about shepherds: ***John 10:11-14***, “11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. 12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13 **The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.** 14 I am the good shepherd, and know my *sheep*, and am known of mine.” And in ***Matthew 7:15-16***, “15 Beware of false prophets, which **come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves.** 16 **Ye shall know them by their fruits.**”

THERE ARE MANY WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING WHO APPROACH THE CHURCHES. There are many who want to get into the pulpit (it is quite safe to say that **any man, or woman, who repeatedly tries to get access to the**

pulpit of a Church, especially if he is new to that Church, is a wolf in sheep's clothing – it is just so obviously wrong, so obviously out of order with that which God has ordained and commanded for His Church!). If a man had one iota of decency and Christian character about him, he wouldn't dream of being pushy about getting into the pulpit, but he would talk to the minister (or the elders collectively) of that Church, or wait upon their invitation! What did Jesus say about being pushy? (*Luke 14:8-11*), “8 When thou art bidden of any *man* to a wedding, sit not down in the highest room; lest a more honourable man than thou be bidden of him; 9 And he that bade thee and him come and say to thee, Give this man place; and thou begin with shame to take the lowest room. 10 But when thou art bidden, go and sit down in the lowest room; that when he that bade thee cometh, he may say unto thee, Friend, go up higher: then shalt thou have worship in the presence of them that sit at meat with thee. 11 For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” **THE MEN GOD CHOOSES ARE HUMBLE MEN, NOT PUSHY. THE PUSHY ONES DON'T LIKE TO BE ASKED TO STEP DOWN, AND THIS REVEALS THAT THEY ARE MOTIVATED BY THEIR OWN SELFISHNESS AND EGO, NOT BY THE CALL OF GOD**, they are not prepared to let God open or close doors for them, they must beat the door down by their own belligerent attitude, or slither through the door like a serpent. We have seen all too many of these over the years. But a pastor must stand firm and do his duty as a watchman and a shepherd of God's flock. He is God's appointed shepherd guarding the flock against wolves. **DON'T BE SURPRISED THAT WOLVES SEEM SO GOOD, AND SO CREDIBLE, AND SO GIFTED OR LEARNED** – remember Jesus said that they “**come to you in *sheep's clothing!***” **They look so much like the genuine article, but He also said, “Ye shall know them by their fruits.”** The true shepherd will be genuinely humble, not proud, boastful and pushy, not promoting his own ministry, nor will he be a stand-over man, abusing the sheep. God's shepherd must be bold, but not proud and boastful, not promoting himself and his ministry. And he must be bold sometimes to confront sin, but not overbearing and manipulative towards the people – those who are bullies, who talk down to the people, who love to play the school master, who enjoy rapping people over the knuckles, are not men of God! – by their fruits ye shall know them! False shepherds are generally not the kind who will shoulder any personal responsibility – they run from Church to Church, infiltrating and interfering and dividing the flock, but you don't normally find them persevering in a pastoral work of their own, in a proper appointment to a local Church. And Jesus has this situation covered also. He

said, (**John 10**), “12 But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. 13 **The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep.**” **SO, WE SEE THAT A WATCHMAN/SHEPHERD IS DEPICTED IN PROPHECY AS A “STAR IN CHRIST’S RIGHT HAND”. HE IS NOT AT LIBERTY TO LET ALL AND SUNDRY TEACH THE CHURCH. HE WILL ANSWER TO THE LORD JESUS FOR WHAT HE TEACHES, AND HE WILL ANSWER TO THE LORD JESUS FOR WHAT HE HAS ALLOWED OTHERS TO TEACH, UNLESS HE CORRECTS THEM.**

NOTICE THAT THERE ARE SEVEN CHURCHES AND SEVEN STARS – THIS PROVES THE DOCTRINE OF THE APPOINTMENT OF ONE MINISTER FOR EACH CHURCH. Each letter to an individual Church is addressed, “To the angel of the church of” (“angel” which means “messenger”, is singular in each case). The Plymouth Brethren, and some of the more cultish groups, maintain that there should be no single minister appointed to a Church but there should be a number of elders who share the ministry. They maintain that where churches appoint only one minister, they are merely following the tradition of Popery, but this is not true – the Scriptures gave us this doctrine long before Popery emerged.

THE BIBLE TEACHES MULTIPLE ELDERS BUT SINGULAR MINISTERS: It is true that “in the multitude of counsellors there is safety,” and that “elders” (plural) are to be appointed “in every Church” (*Acts 14:23, Titus 1:5, Acts 20:17*), but here we see that there is a special gift and calling to the ministry of the Word of God. Spurgeon once said, speaking of the doctrine of multiple preachers in the Plymouth Brethren, that the Brethren come together to share their ignorance – this is a very poignant and valid point. When men, who are not appointed by God to the ministry, come together and presume to teach His Church, a channel of deception is set up, an avenue for Satan to teach the Church. And haven't we observed a few times in the course of these studies on end times prophecy, that it has been largely the Brethren movement, through Irving, Darby, and Scofield, which has been responsible for spreading among the Protestant Churches, the false doctrines of Futurism and Dispensationalism, a doctrine which first came from the Jesuit scholars who spearheaded the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation? This is a classic case of just how devastating a combination of false doctrine and false shepherds can be, and how far reaching its effects, and all because the Church does not

maintain sound doctrine – This is the doctrine of the church and its ministry (the seven candlesticks and the seven stars)! Many Charismatics are even more deceived than the Brethren on this point, because they have added yet another error, that everybody has a gift and everybody is a 'minister' (some, at the extreme end of this scale of error, even go so far as to teach that the four ministry gifts of *Ephesians 4* are given to every member of the body – they claim that every believer is either an apostle, a prophet, an evangelist, a pastor or a teacher!), and so, they obscure the doctrine of the ministry of the Word of God, and just end up with a free-for-all, with all sorts of people teaching all sorts of rubbish to the Church. (but men occupying pulpits without God's call in the Church are like the robbers who climbed up another way ***John 10***, “1 VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. 2 But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. 3 To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out.” This speaks primarily of Christ the Good Shepherd, but it also applies in part to the shepherds He appoints to look after His sheep. **But the false shepherds are like snakes that wriggle their way into the pulpit, instead of entering openly by the door, by Christ Himself, by Christ's appointment. Some false shepherds don't so blatantly approach the pulpit, but work quietly around the edges of the flock, gaining favour with certain people, fostering small dissenting groups – we have seen much of this over the years.**) Let us remember it is God Who opens doors to ministry. It is the Good Shepherd who keeps the gate!

May God give us all grace to know and practise this doctrine. May He rise up in our times and mightily defend His Church and His Word, and send a purging fire through the Churches, that the fear of God might prevail everywhere. Let us continue to pray that the Lord of the harvest might send forth more labourers, more genuinely called and proven ministers and elders in His Churches! May it be so, for the help of God's children everywhere, and for the glory of Him Who walks amongst the seven golden candlesticks and holds the seven stars in His right hand! Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
Continued The Lord's Day, 26th May 2019.

Reading: Revelation 1:18-2:7

6. SIXTHLY, IT IS THE SOVEREIGN LORD IN HEAVEN WHO PLACES THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICKS AND REMOVES THEM AS HE SEES FIT.

We have already observed some of the aspects of apostacy, how Churches fall away because of neglect of duty by members and ministers alike, by sheer unbelief, as ordinary members of Churches think they can't make any difference, so they have a 'take it or leave it' attitude to their involvement in their Church, hence they allow Satan's ministers to “climb up another way” into their pulpits, and fail to act when ministers lead the flock in the wrong direction.

We have seen that it is the Lord Jesus, Who walks amongst the candlesticks, Who holds the seven stars in His right hand, Who appoints the ministers, of His choice, to His Churches.

Now let us also note particularly, that it is Christ (and Christ alone) Who places the golden candlesticks and removes them:

NOTICE THERE WERE SEVEN CHURCHES THE LORD ADDRESSED THE REVELATION TO: 1:4-5, 10-11, “4 JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, *who is* the faithful witness, *and* the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood 10 I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet, 11 Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.” It is He who plants the Churches; it is He who walks among them; and it is He who removes the candlestick, if and when He sees fit.

SOME OF THESE CHURCHES OF ASIA DO NOT EXIST TODAY. Some of the Churches of our own town and district do not exist today! For one reason or another, the Lord, Who walks in the midst of the candlesticks and holds the stars in His right hand, has removed the candlesticks!

IT MAY NOT BE ALWAYS THE FAULT OF THE CHURCH ITSELF: sometimes cities have become so corrupt that the Lord has counted them unworthy of the light of His Word and witness – like Sodom, whose wickedness was so great, and so prevalent in that city, that only Lot remained as a gospel light, and God removed him and his two daughters, for their own sakes! Don't think for a minute that the same Lord is not still at work in the same way in the world today! ***BUT IN MOST CASES, THE CHURCHES THEMSELVES HAVE BECOME CORRUPT, AND THAT IS THE REASON FOR THEIR REMOVAL, THEY HAVE CEASED TO HONOUR THE LORD AND HIS WORD.***

LOOK AT THE EXAMPLE OF THE PRIEST ELI: Remember what the same Lord of the Church said many years ago to him: He sent a man of God to speak to Eli, in what was a sad day for all Israel: ***(1 Samuel 2)***, “27 And there came a man of God unto Eli, and said unto him, Thus saith the LORD, Did I plainly appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt in Pharaoh’s house? 28 And did I choose him out of all the tribes of Israel *to be* my priest, to offer upon mine altar, to burn incense, to wear an ephod before me? and did I give unto the house of thy father all the offerings made by fire of the children of Israel? 29 Wherefore kick ye at my sacrifice and at mine offering, which I have commanded *in my* habitation; and honourest thy sons above me, to make yourselves fat with the chiefest of all the offerings of Israel my people? 30 Wherefore the LORD God of Israel saith, I said indeed *that* thy house, and the house of thy father, should walk before me for ever: but now the LORD saith, Be it far from me; for them that honour me I will honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed. 31 Behold, the days come, that I will cut off thine arm, and the arm of thy father’s house, that there shall not be an old man in thine house. 32 And thou shalt see an enemy *in my* habitation, in all *the wealth* which God shall give Israel: and there shall not be an old man in thine house for ever. 33 And the man of thine, *whom* I shall not cut off from mine altar, *shall be* to consume thine eyes, and to grieve thine heart: and all the increase of thine house shall die in the flower of their age. 34 And this *shall be* a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. 35 And I will raise me up a faithful priest, *that* shall do according to *that* which *is* in mine heart and in my mind: and I will build him a sure house; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.”

WHAT WAS THE LEAD-UP TO THIS AWFUL SITUATION? “22 Now Eli was very old, and heard all that his sons did unto all Israel; and how they lay with the

women that assembled *at* the door of the tabernacle of the congregation. 23 And he said unto them, Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. 24 Nay, my sons; for *it is* no good report that I hear: ye make the LORD's people to transgress. 25 If one man sin against another, the judge shall judge him: but if a man sin against the LORD, who shall intreat for him? Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto the voice of their father, because the LORD would slay them. 26 And the child Samuel grew on, and was in favour both with the LORD, and also with men." *Samuel was the man God would raise up in their place. Let us take a leaf out of Eli's book, and pray that the Lord of the harvest would raise up faithful men in His Church and remove the false shepherds, the "wolves in sheep's clothing"! The need is desperate!*

NOTICE THAT ELI DID REBUKE HIS SONS, BUT THE LORD SPOKE TO HIM AS IF HE JUST LET THEM RUN. HOW DO WE UNDERSTAND THIS? It seems that Eli spoke to his sons but he didn't take decisive action – Hophni and Phinehas should have been put out of the priesthood. *We are required to act on our faith, and in defence of the faith – not just talk about it.* Centuries later in Jerusalem, Jesus said to the Jews, (**Matthew 7:6**), "Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me." How many Churches honour the Lord with their lips, but refuse to take the right action against evil in their midst? As the Lord said to Eli, He said to Jerusalem, "Them that honour me, I will honour." And He says the same to this generation: "Them that honour me, I will honour." **God give us grace to honour thee truly and not just with our lips only!**

YET, IN THE CASE OF ELI, THE LORD HAD NOT ALTOGETHER ABANDONED HIS CHURCH: It seems to be a prophetic statement, in the narrative of the boy Samuel, dwelling in the temple with the aged priest Eli, (**1 Samuel 3**), "3 And ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the LORD, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down *to sleep*; 4 That the LORD called Samuel: and he answered, Here *am* I." **THE LORD WOULD NOT ALLOW HIS OWN LIGHT TO GO OUT**, but in the face of the worst situation, where the priest and his family were condemned, God raised up a priest and a prophet in Israel, who was second to none – even the boy Samuel, while he was just weaned from his mother's breasts, and the Word of the Lord came to him, and he heard the call of God, and he obeyed!

WHERE IS THE LAMP OF GOD BURNING TODAY? Where is the ark of God today? Where is Christ walking and communing today? Where are His candlesticks? His light will always shine! Is there a Samuel somewhere in *our* midst? May God give us all grace to walk with Him today! If there seems to be no Samuels today, take heart, God is able to raise them up and He is able to teach them. Men who are taught by corrupt churches and seminaries are no good, they are not rational thinkers, and they are not based squarely on Scripture alone, even if they say so – but God can raise up His own servants, even out of obscurity. Didn't Jesus choose fishermen and tax collectors as his chief apostles? Any man can be taught of the Lord in sound doctrine – there is no excuse for pastors who hold onto false doctrine, when we have a wealth of history and Christian heritage for 2,000 years, and we still have the same faithful old Bible, God raised up out of the dust in the Protestant Reformation, 500 years ago! Even if all modern pastors despise God's preserved Words, he is able to raise up faithful men again! Let us never doubt Him! Let us never lose hope in His Truth!

BUT SHILOH DID FALL, AND EVENTUALLY, JERUSALEM ALSO FELL – somehow God's purpose was being worked out through it all.

LIKEWISE, IN THE MODERN WORLD, CHURCHES HAVE COME AND GONE. Candlesticks have been removed from our own district, yet the light of Christ still shines here and there. But God's light still shines here and there. Let us be thankful for every candlestick God has planted which remains and is faithful to the Word of God in a large measure.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO SAY THEY WILL PLANT CHURCHES, for this denomination or that, and some say they will plant 'non-denominational churches', whatever that is, but the Lord and Head of the Church, Who walks amongst the golden candlesticks, plans a Lutheran Church here, a Baptist Church there, and over there, a Presbyterian Church – it is He Who plants the candlesticks and makes them burn. Arminians believe in compassing sea and land to make proselytes and build churches, but it is the Lord Jesus Who is building His Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it (***Matthew 16:18***). Many would say, “But Paul planted Churches! We are just following his example.” But Paul preached the gospel, and he denounced every false gospel – no, these modernists are not doing what Paul did! Paul did not preach, “God loves everybody and wants to bless everybody if only you will let Him.” Paul did not preach, “Come to Jesus and be healed!” or, “Give me money and God will bless you.” No, Paul boldly preached, *You are too superstitious! The*

*God Who made the world is not to be compared to idols of wood and stone! God commands all worshippers of other gods to repent because He has appointed His Son, Whom He raised from the dead, to be judge of the world! (Look it up in Acts 17!) We are to be true witnesses unto Him! We are commanded to teach and preach Jesus Christ the Lord, and God Himself will build His Churches. REMEMBER, THERE ARE 7 CHURCHES, 7 MINISTERS, AND 7 SPIRITS OF GOD – IT IS GOD'S PERFECT AND DIVINE WORK TO PLANT CHURCHES. We cannot make one hair of our heads black or white (Matthew 5:36), much less, convert souls and plant Churches! Let us plead for God's sovereign grace to do what no man can do, in a day of desperate need and great reproach! As somebody said, "We must pray as if all depends on God, and work as if all depends on us." We must do what God requires of us, and simply be faithful, day by day, and God will do what he will do! Probably the greatest challenge for a Church is not, "How can we do God's work?" but, "How to avoid hindering God's work." MANY PASTORS HINDER GOD'S WORK! I have corresponded with yet another one this past week. He posted a Facebook article which quoted Spurgeon, saying, "neglect of private prayer is the locust which devours the strength of the church". To which I agreed and also added my own comment – I said, "True, and rejection of the King James Bible provokes the Lord Jesus to remove the candlestick and write "Ichabod" over the door". What ensued was truly amazing, to see how I was attacked for saying this brief but true statement. The man's continuing arguments were so convoluted and dishonest, as he tried his best to avoid all I said and argue to defend modern bible versions – and this man is apparently a Reformed pastor. **ISTAND BY MY ORIGINAL WORDS, AND SAY THAT REJECTION OF THE KING JAMES BIBLE IS THE GREATEST SIN OF THE MODERN CHURCH IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD! YOU CANNOT JUSTIFY REJECTING THE KJB – YOU CANNOT REJECT THE KJB AND PRETEND YOU ARE NOT REJECTING THE WORD OF GOD! AND GOD WILL REMOVE THE CANDLESTICK, EVENTUALLY, FOR SUCH STUBBORN, PERSISTENT BLASPHEMY. THE KING JAMES BIBLE HAS BEEN THE FOUNDATION OF CHRISTIANITY IN THE ENGLISH SPEAKING WORLD FOR 400 YEARS – WHY ARE MEN SO READY TO SET IT ASIDE? BECAUSE THEIR MINDS HAVE BEEN ALTERED BY POPISH PROPAGANDA – THE KJB IS THE ONLY BIBLE HATED BY SO MANY – WHY IS THAT? THE ANSWER IS OBVIOUS. THE FALSE SHEPHERDS OF TODAY, WITH THEIR WEETBIX-PACKET-DEGREES AND DIPLOMAS, BOAST OF THEIR SUPPOSED KNOWLEDGE OF GREEK AND HEBREW, BUT CANNOT READ THE PLAIN ENGLISH OF THE KJB. BUT THEY HAVE BEEN TAUGHT BY JESUIT SCHOLARS TO HATE OUR PROTESTANT BIBLE - BECAUSE IT***

EXPOSES THE ROMAN ANTICHRIST AND ALL HIS HERESIES MORE CLEARLY THAN ANY OTHER VERSION, ONLY BECAUSE IT IS ASTRONOMICALLY MORE ACCURATE THAN VERSIONS APPROVED BY POPERY ITSELF! THEREFORE, CHURCHES WHICH FOLLOW THESE SCHOLARS ARE DOOMED!

SOME OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA WERE IN DANGER OF COMING TO THE SAME END AS SHILOH: Ephesus had “left its first love”; In Pergamos there were those who held the “doctrine of Balaam” and “the doctrine of the Nicolaitans;” In Thyatira they had allowed a false prophetess, Jezebel, to influence the congregation; Sardis had “a name” that it was alive but was “dead;” Laodicea was a Church which was “lukewarm” and proud of it; of all the seven Churches, only Smyrna and Philadelphia were not rebuked and warned of judgment! Both Smyrna and Philadelphia, the Lord commended for marking those whom He called a “synagogue of Satan” – **TO SMYRNA (2:9)**: “I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but *are* the synagogue of Satan; **TO PHILADELPHIA (3:7-9)**: “7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; 8 I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee.” **BUT TO EPHESUS**, He gave the warning, **(2:5)**, “5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and **WILL REMOVE THY CANDLESTICK OUT OF HIS PLACE, EXCEPT THOU REPENT.**” (*emphasis added*)

CLEARLY, IN ALL THIS, THE LORD TEACHES US THAT IT IS REQUIRED OF HIS CHURCHES TO BE VERY ACTIVE, NOT ONLY IN TEACHING AND MAINTAINING HIS TRUTH, BUT ALSO IN EXPOSING AND REJECTING ERROR. It is not good enough with Him, to merely concentrate on the positives and ignore the negatives! The Lord frowns on hypocrisy! If a pastor maintains that he holds Reformed doctrine, but stubbornly refuses the King James Bible, after being warned and instructed on the matter, that man is a fake and a liar, I don’t care how good he looks on the outside, something is awfully wrong with his heart. We are not talking about baby Christians here, who are still learning basic lessons, we are talking about men who say they have the call of God to teach His Church and guard His flock against the wolves! **Over the years I have seen**

many of God's people learn and amend their ways and ideas, but I can't remember one pastor I've spoken to in over 30 years, who has repented of his false doctrines. We must see such men for what they are – they are usurpers in the Church, and they will bring the Church undone if they are not stopped.

WHAT ABOUT THE CHURCHES (CANDLESTICKS) OF OUR TIMES? In recent years I have taken an interest in a number of little Church halls around the district which have been abandoned, and sold or moved. In each case, for one reason or another, the lamp of God has gone out in that place – Christ has removed the candlestick there. The latest one of interest is the Methodist Church at Kunioon, which began with an influx of zealous Methodists from Victoria. The building itself dates back to about 1903, and although it has not been used for worship for some years, it is still standing. So I read up on some of the history of the Methodists, and was surprised to find how active they were so early in our history, so active that for some time they even had worship every Sabbath at the community hall in the tiny village of Maidenwell! It is a sad fact that both the Methodists and the Presbyterians were largely swallowed up by the liberal and ecumenical Uniting Church, which you'd have to say today, is bordering onto a “synagogue of Satan.” But if you think about it, you can count in this town, **AT LEAST FIVE NOMINALLY PROTESTANT CHURCHES WHICH HAVE, FOR MANY YEARS, BEEN IN THE CLUTCHES OF FREEMASONRY.** They have managed to remain somewhat separate from the rank Paganism of the Church of Rome, yet have extended the right hand of fellowship to Pagan Freemasonry. Is it any wonder that lights are going out and Churches are closing down?

THESE ARE VERY SERIOUS ERRORS, BUT WHAT ABOUT THE MORE SUBTLE ONES? ***Revelation 2:1-5***, “UNTO the angel of the church of Ephesus write; **These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks.** 2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. 4 Nevertheless I have *somewhat* against thee, because **thou hast left thy first love.** 5 Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and **will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent.**”

A CHURCH MAY WELL HAVE MUCH ABOUT IT THAT IS COMMENDABLE, YET BE IN DANGER OF BEING SHUT DOWN BY THE LORD!

WHEN A CHURCH IS IN ERROR, REPENTANCE IS A REQUIREMENT, NOT AN OPTION! Repentance is required in order to prevent the Church being snuffed out as the candle of the Lord. We have observed already that a Church may become a “synagogue of Satan.” That is, it may remain in physical existence, yet have no life or presence of Christ in it. This is a frightening prospect! To Ephesus, the threat of the removal of their candlestick was because they had “left their first love.” This can only be that somehow, they had forgotten the Lord Jesus. Had they begun to think of themselves as an important Church, and forgot that it is Jesus Who is all-important? Had they failed to give Him the pre-eminence in all things? Had they failed to give Him the pre-eminence in all things? Had they maintained sound doctrine, yet neglected to love one another in a real and practical way? Had they stopped caring for each other? Had they thought that they had 'moved on' from basic things (the simplicity of faith in Jesus)? Had they begun to rely on methods of evangelism, psychological schemes of counselling or group therapy, or innovative methods of evangelism? Had they gone beyond faith in Scripture, to faith in theological studies or even the study of Pagan philosophy or just learning in general? If we think about it, there are many ways in which the leaving of our first love may be manifested. Similarly, ***2 Corinthians 11***, “3 **But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.** 4 For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or *if* ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with *him*.” **Hence, the subtilty of the serpent is such, that he can even deceive Churches into receiving “another Jesus” and “another gospel.”** I firmly believe that many churches today have done this, and yet, if you warn them, they simply laugh at you.

THE TERRIBLE TRUTH IS THAT THE LORD IS ABLE TO REMOVE HIS CANDLESTICK AND LEAVE THE DEVIL'S DARK CANDLESTICK IN ITS PLACE. Jesus said (***John 8:12***), “I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Everyone who does not walk with Jesus in His light is walking in darkness! There is no in-between: ***Matthew 6***, “19 Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: 20 But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth

corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: 21 For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also. 22 The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. 23 But if thine eye be evil, thy whole body shall be full of darkness. **IF THEREFORE THE LIGHT THAT IS IN THEE BE DARKNESS, HOW GREAT IS THAT DARKNESS!**" (*emphasis added*). There are big churches, mega-churches even, which have not the light of Christ in them! They follow Antichrist and not Christ – e.g. Hillsong is happy to share the pulpit with Roman Catholic priests; and most churches today teach that God loves everybody and that we should not judge anybody – this is so foreign to Scripture, so foreign to the way Jesus and His apostles operated, that it beggars belief, yet those people are convinced they are the true Christians, that they are the ones who are truly like Christ, and they have the numbers to prove it! They are Pharisees, proud of their own brand of religion while ignoring the Word of God. They make many proselytes, but when they make them they are two-fold more the children of hell than themselves (**Matthew 23:15**). Their light is darkness, like the 'light' of Hillsong and other 'mega-churches' which have an enormous following but are far from the gospel of Christ.

SUCH CHURCHES HAVE LEFT THEIR FIRST LOVE AND GONE AFTER ANOTHER JESUS AND ANOTHER GOSPEL – THEIR GLORY IS DEPARTED. They seem healthy enough. They still exist. They even build new churches and spread their influence, but the Lord Jesus is no longer there – the candlestick has been removed, the lesbian minister (or liberal minister, or ecumenical minister, or entrepreneur minister) is not a 'star' in Jesus' right hand but an empty 'black hole,' the light of Christ has gone, "Ichabod" has been written above the door, for the glory of God has departed, but only those who walk in the light can see this (**COMING BACK TO THE STORY OF SAMUEL AND SHILOH, NB: 1 Samuel 4**, "12 And there ran a man of Benjamin out of the army, and came to Shiloh the same day with his clothes rent, and with earth upon his head. 13 And when he came, lo, Eli sat upon a seat by the wayside watching: for his heart trembled for the ark of God. And when the man came into the city, and told *it*, all the city cried out. 14 And when Eli heard the noise of the crying, he said, What *meaneth* the noise of this tumult? And the man came in hastily, and told Eli. 15 Now Eli was ninety and eight years old; and his eyes were dim, that he could not see. 16 And the man said unto Eli, I *am* he that came out of the army, and I fled to day out of the army. And he said, What is there done, my son? 17 And the messenger answered and said, Israel is fled before

the Philistines, and there hath been also a great slaughter among the people, and thy two sons also, Hophni and Phinehas, are dead, and the ark of God is taken. (***NOTICE, IF THE CHURCH WILL NOT REMOVE THE EVIL PERSONS FROM HER MIDST, THE LORD IS WELL ABLE TO DO SO! Therefore, if you feel powerless to do anything about a bad situation, remember that you can pray, and God can act!***) 18 And it came to pass, when he made mention of the ark of God, that he fell from off the seat backward by the side of the gate, and his neck brake, and he died: for he was an old man, and heavy. And he had judged Israel forty years. 19 And his daughter in law, Phinehas' wife, was with child, *near* to be delivered: and when she heard the tidings that the ark of God was taken, and that her father in law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her. 20 And about the time of her death the women that stood by her said unto her, Fear not; for thou hast born a son. But she answered not, neither did she regard *it*. 21 **And she named the child Ichabod, saying, The glory is departed from Israel: because the ark of God was taken, and because of her father in law and her husband.** 22 And she said, The glory is departed from Israel: for the ark of God is taken.”). **Sadly, the glory departs from those Churches which do not obey the Word of God.**

7. SEVENTHLY, ALTHOUGH THESE WERE SEVEN REAL LOCAL CHURCHES IN ASIA, THEIR SEVEN LETTERS SPEAK PERFECTLY TO ALL CHURCHES.

FIRSTLY, LET US DISMISS THE ERROR OF DISPENSATIONALISM – that the seven Churches represent seven thousand years of history and seven periods or phases in the decline of the world wide Church! This idea is nothing more than sheer fabrication. It has no basis in Scripture, and only exists in the imaginations of those who believe it.

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT WE REMEMBER TO READ THIS PROPHECY IN ITS PROPER CONTEXT, THAT WE REMEMBER THAT THE WHOLE BOOK OF REVELATION IS ACTUALLY ADDRESSED TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA: See ***1:1-6***, “THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John: 2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw. 3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand. 4 **JOHN to the seven churches which are in Asia:** Grace be unto you, and peace, from him which is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits

which are before his throne; 5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the kings of the earth. Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, 6 And hath made us kings and priests unto God and his *Father*; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

IT IS THE LORD HIMSELF WHO PLANTED THE SEVEN CHURCHES, APPOINTED THE SEVEN MINISTERS, AND IN HIS WISDOM, MADE THESE SEVEN CHURCHES AN EXAMPLE FOR THE WHOLE UNIVERSAL CHURCH. The Revelation is a prophecy given for the whole Church till the Lord returns, but it is addressed to seven real Churches of that day, and the number 7, God’s number for perfection, is the key to indicate that The Revelation is for the whole Church – in the early verses of the first chapter, we are told “the time is at hand,” and throughout the prophecy, we are urged to be ready for the Lord’s return and the great judgment. Revelation is for the whole Church until the end of time, and it addresses a whole range of issues which face the whole Church from time to time and place to place.

IF WE WOULD STUDY CAREFULLY THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE SEVEN CHURCHES, WE WOULD HAVE SUFFICIENT INSTRUCTION TO LIGHT OUR OWN PATH. By the grace of God let us imitate the good points of these Churches and avoid their errors: EPHESUS: (2:2), “2 I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: 3 And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name’s sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. ...6 But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.” But they had left their first love! SMYRNA: (2:10), “10 Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.” But they had some who held the doctrine of Baalam and of the Nicolaitans! PERGAMOS: (2:13), “I know thy works, and where thou dwellest, even where Satan’s seat is: and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith, even in those days wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.” THYATIRA: (2:19), “I know thy works, and charity, and service, and faith, and thy patience, and thy works; and the last to be more than the first.” But they had Jezebel in their midst! PHILADELPHIA: (3:8), “I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength,

and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name. 9 Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee. 10 Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. 11 Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.” Even the “dead” Church of **SARDIS** and the “lukewarm” Church of **LAODICEA**, the Lord urged to repent. How gracious and how patient He is! In the most corrupt of Churches, the Word of God is present in some measure, and individual souls are urged to repent. **The simplicity of the gospel is there for all to see** – “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ (Jehovah Jesus, the King) and thou shalt be saved, and thy house” (*Acts 16:31*), but this King of kings and Lord of lords requires us to obey Him, and does not suffer us to have other gods and preach other gospels. ***This infinitely perfect Lord is building His perfect Church, in His own perfect way, and He has wonderfully placed His seal of 7 upon it all. Let us give Him the praise and glory due to His great Name, and seek more grace from Him, to help one another to be faithful, and not fool ourselves into thinking we are better than we really are, and not fool ourselves if in any way we are opposing the Word of God! Amen.***

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
Continued, The Lord's Day 2nd June, 2019.

8. EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL THROUGH THE REVELATION.

An overview of the whole Revelation shows the pattern of sevens throughout, and the use of other important symbolic numbers as well.

Let us go through *The Revelation* chapter by chapter with this in mind: **I hope, by the grace of God, to continue through the bulk of the middle chapters i.e. Revelation 4 – 19, just commenting briefly, with an emphasis on the symbolic nature of the visions and the numbers.**

PERHAPS THE BIGGEST MISTAKE MADE IN THE MATTER OF INTERPRETING THE REVELATION IS TO TAKE MANY THINGS LITERALLY WHICH ARE INTENDED TO BE SYMBOLIC, and I remind you yet again, that the most popular system of interpretation today, known as **Futurism or Dispensationalism**, has its origin in the Jesuit scholar, **Francesco Ribera (C. 1590)**, who, in an attempt to overthrow the doctrine of the Protestant Reformers, taught a literal 3 ½ years (1260 days) tribulation and reign of the Antichrist (as opposed to the early Protestants' understanding of 1260 years, a period in which they already lived, and experienced persecution by the Roman Antichrist), and Ribera also taught that the Antichrist would be a literal individual man (as opposed to the "beast" or "antichrist" being a system of government, as were all the other "beasts" of Daniel's prophetic visions). *Just on the point of the 1260 years, so as not to confuse anybody with this comment on Ribera:* Some Protestants believed in the calculation of 'a year for a day' in these time prophecies, but as I've mentioned in other studies, I don't believe that is correct either ('day for a year' is just another form of literal interpretation, although it is better than Ribera's error, which many believe today), but the 1260 days are symbolic, as practically all the figures in *The Revelation* are. So, when we can see it as symbolic, it takes away all the foolish calculation of dates and times, which the Lord never intended us to do. But I don't have the time to explain that fully now, as we have covered it well in our studies elsewhere, especially on the Millennium, which is also a symbolic 1,000 years, not a literal 1,000 years. This false literalism has almost destroyed the Protestant understanding of Bible prophecy world-wide, so Rome's Counter-Reformation has been very successful on this front! Yet, strangely, their literalism is not consistent – on

some points, they just leap out off the cliff of facts and sound reason, and grab out of thin air the most fantastic things, and some even claim divine revelation to support their fantasies. But by God’s grace, we shall stick to the Word of God only, and we’ll see how easy it is to understand, if only we can ignore the Roman Antichrist’s popular heresies long enough to take God’s Word in. And the symbolic numbers, especially the sevens, help to make the correct method of interpretation very clear. **REMEMBER – THE LORD SAID IN THE FIRST VERSE OF THE REVELATION, THAT HE “SENT AND SIGNIFIED IT...”, AND SIGNIFY IT HE DID!** An honest, straightforward look at the numbers proves that He communicated these visions in symbolic form – e.g. “the seven spirits of God”, which signify the perfection of the one true Spirit of God, etc.

CHAPTER 4

THIS CHAPTER BEGINS A NEW VISION. THE SCENE MOVES FROM THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA, ON EARTH, TO HEAVEN, GOD'S THRONE, AND WORSHIP. The symbolic “sevens” continue to show Christ as the Lord God, Who “hath the seven Spirits of God” (3:1), or in other words, “the fulness of the Godhead bodily” (Colossians 2:9).

“AFTER this I looked, and, behold, a door *was* opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard *was* as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter. (This is where the apostle is given a glimpse into the future, (but not 2,000 years into the future, as the Futurist heretics claim), and although this gives John a glimpse into the future, it begins with something that is *already past* at the time of the vision, for Christ is *already* crowned and *already* exercising His rule from the throne of God by this time, and John sees the beginning of this as well – YOU WILL NOTICE THAT *THE REVELATION* IS A SERIES OF VISIONS WHICH *BEGIN* WITH MATTERS SURROUNDING THE *FIRST ADVENT* OF CHRIST AND *END* WITH HIS *SECOND ADVENT* AND JUDGMENT AND COMPLETE FULFILMENT OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD – That was the case with *chapters 1 – 3*, and that's what this *4th chapter* is about also, but let us also note what it certainly is not about: IT IS NOT, AS THE FUTURISTS SAY, THE 'RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH' AT A TIME JUST BEFORE THE VERY END OF THE WORLD! This is not the whole Church taken up to heaven before the so-called ‘tribulation’ begins! The ‘tribulation’ is what all the saints live through in this world, and the Antichrist has been operating for over 1,500 years! LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD WHICH IS BEFORE US: Here is John the apostle being asked to come and see what the Spirit is

revealing to him in these visions – the context makes that absolutely clear as we read on. It has nothing to do with events 2,000 years into the future! Nor does anything in Scripture suggest such a fantastic idea – it is only the Jesuit Ribera’s idea that causes people to believe such nonsense, instead of the Scriptures!)

2 And immediately I was in the spirit (*Notice: John was “in the spirit,” **not in the body** – **THIS IS NOT ABOUT A BODILY RESURRECTION OF JOHN OR ANY-ONE ELSE, BUT A SPIRITUAL VISION, IN SYMBOL, OF WHAT HAD RECENTLY BEGUN TO OCCUR IN HEAVEN, AS CHRIST ASCENDED THE THRONE AS KING OF KINGS!** And remember, that is what *The Revelation* is – it is “the revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John” (1:1), i.e. a revelation of the ascended and reigning King of kings! Look at the very next words of our text in *ch 4!!!!*): and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne. (*In Psalm 103 we read, “19 The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.” HEAVEN IS WHERE GOD'S THRONE IS, AND THAT IS WHERE CHRIST RULES NOW AS KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS: He 'd already said so to the Church of Laodicea: Revelation 3, “21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne.”**

LET US NOT ENTERTAIN THE JESUIT INSPIRED IDEAS OF A FUTURE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL ON EARTH, WITH CHRIST ON A THRONE IN JERUSALEM, BEGUN BY THE FUTURISM OF THE JESUIT RIBERA IN 1585! Christ already occupies an infinitely greater throne than any on earth! Such Jewish fables are blasphemy, yet incredibly, most Christians in the Western World believe them! The Jesuit scholarship has literally taken away their ability to think rationally! They blindly follow that which flatly contradicts the Word of God, without so much as asking a single question! *LET ME GIVE YOU AN ILLUSTRATION OF JUST HOW TREACHEROUS AND DEVIOUS AND IRONIC THE WORK OF THE JESUITS IS IN THIS RESPECT:* one of the few Church groups in the Western world that still holds the King James Bible as the only accurate translation we have in English, namely the Independent Baptists, is also one of the main perpetrators of this Jesuit Futurist doctrine on the end times. They are so rabidly Dispensationalist, that you cannot reason with them on these matters – such is the mixture of deception that is out there, due to the meddling of the Jesuits in all churches. Similarly, one of the most Protestant Churches in the world

today (or cult if you like) is the Seventh Day Adventists, which also teaches a number of serious errors. Everywhere you look there are contrasts of truth and error side by side, and confusion is everywhere! But this is no coincidence, since it has been the very purpose of the existence of the Jesuit Order since its foundation in 1534, to overthrow Protestantism and recapture the whole world under Roman rule, through Counter-reformation. **SO, NOTE CAREFULLY, THAT THE FUTURIST ERRORS UNDERLYING THE SDA'S AND ALL THE MAJOR CULTS, AND THE FALSE GOSPEL OF ARMINIANISM (WHICH IS ESSENTIALLY SALVATION BY WORKS), BOTH IN THE CULTS AND THE MAINSTREAM CHURCHES, ALL BEGAN IN THE FIRST 100 YEARS OF JESUIT COUNTER-REFORMATION, AND FLOURISHED IN THE 19TH CENTURY!** There are four great heresies which the Jesuit Counter-Reformation has used greatly to attack Protestantism (by Protestantism, I mean, Bible-based Christianity): *ARMINIANISM* (salvation by works, which agrees with Rome's doctrine); *FUTURISM*, which Ribera instigated, to hide the fact that Popery is the Antichrist; *THE CHARISMATIC MOVEMENT*, which has an unhealthy emphasis on the miraculous, as does the Church of Rome; and *MODERN BIBLES*, which are all translated from Rome's spurious manuscripts. And Futurism is the chief one we must continually wage war against as we study Bible prophecy. *THE PRESBYTERIAN HISTORIAN, J A WYLIE, OF THE 19TH CENTURY*, is quoted as saying of the Jesuits, "There was no disguise they (the Jesuits) could not assume, and therefore, there was no place into which they could not penetrate. They could enter unheard the closet of the Monarch, or the Cabinet of the Statesman. They could sit unseen in convocation or General Assembly, and mingle unsuspected in the deliberations and debates. There was no tongue they could not speak, and no creed they could not profess, and thus there was no people among whom they might not sojourn, and no church whose membership they might not enter and whose functions they might not discharge. They could execrate (i.e., sharply denounce) the Pope with the Lutheran, and swear the Solemn League with the Covenanter." *Such is the treachery of the Jesuits that they can, and already have, infiltrated practically all Churches, and blend like chameleons into the most unlikely fellowships. To put it very plainly, on the basis of centuries of past experience, the Church can say that the Jesuits can be defenders of some of the most important aspects of the faith, as long as they can get their foot in the door, and get access to the Church of God to work their deceptive works, be they ever so subtle – if they can deceive in the slightest measure, they will work like slaves to*

do so. But we must be every bit as determined and zealous to maintain God's Truth as they are to destroy it, so let us hear the Word of God, which tells us we worship Him Who is “both Lord and Christ” – (*Peter's sermon in Acts 2:36*), i.e. the reigning King Who is already crowned and upon His throne in heaven, where God's throne is according to Scripture, even as Peter preached in the inaugural sermon of the New Testament Church in Jerusalem! Why are so many so resistant to the plain fact that Christ has ascended the throne of God? Why do they hate the whole thrust of all Scripture which sets forth God's eternal purpose, to have His Only-begotten Son on His throne in heaven for ever (which was even stated clearly in *Psalms 2*)? Why and how, can they read these Scriptures, even in the King James Version, some of them, and then deny them in favour of Ribera's lies? – NB: But with all this deception so rife among the churches, let us not be alarmed or afraid of the Antichrist; let us be aware of his tactics, and know that we are safe if we stick to God's Word – because, “by their fruits ye shall know them”. Don't be afraid of those imposters, they reveal themselves by whom they serve. By God's grace, we have exposed many impostors over the years. True disciples of Jesus are known chiefly by their humility and honesty and, of course, sound doctrine, by the fact that they are based on Scripture alone, so the fake ones may pretend to be humble and pretend to know a lot of doctrine, but it is their dishonesty that usually gives them away. NB: Jesuit trained pastors bear the marks of the Jesuits – the Jesuit motto is, “The end justifies the means”, which means that they are fundamentally dishonest. When you discuss a point of Scripture and sound doctrine with them, they will avoid questions, deny facts, and make excuses for their errors. *Don't ignore these tell-tale signs! As Jesus said, “By their fruits ye shall know them”.*)

3 And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and *there was* a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

4 And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold. (*THE 24 ELDERS NO DOUBT REPRESENT THE DEPARTED SAINTS IN HEAVEN.* In *1 Chronicles 23 & 24*, we see that in David's reign over Israel, there were 24,000 priests for “the work of the house of the Lord.” He also divided the whole priesthood into 24 courses on a roster system. We might also note that there were twelve patriarchs, sons of Jacob, the twelve tribes of Israel, and in the New Covenant Jesus

chose twelve apostles – in *Revelation 21*, these twelve apostles are shown to be the foundation of the Church, or the eternal city of God: *21:14*, “And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.” This is also confirmed by *Ephesians 2*, “19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” *THE NUMBER 12 SPEAKS OF GOD'S GOVERNMENT, OR GOD'S RULE. THIS IS WHY OUR ANCIENT SYSTEM OF LAW PROVIDES FOR JUDGMENT BY A JURY OF TWELVE MEN*, who swear upon the Word of God to tell the truth, “So help me, God!” Our nation is entirely based on Scripture, but evil men and women in high places continue to lie about this and deny the fact. But the reference to the priesthood seems to be an important main point here as well, as these elders declare that the Lord has made them “kings and priests unto God.” *THIS IS THE PROTESTANT DOCTRINE OF THE PRIESTHOOD OF ALL BELIEVERS*: i.e. all believers are given direct access to God through the one Mediator, the Lord Jesus, our eternal High Priest. This exposes the gross error of a so-called 'priesthood' in some of today's Churches. Any man who is called a priest under the New Testament is an impostor. A priest is a mediator between God and man, and there were legitimate priests under the Old Testament, because they were symbolic of Christ Who was yet to come, but now, under the New Covenant, as Iain Paisley used to often say, “No priest but Christ!” And, “No Pope here!” *THESE “ELDERS” ARE ALSO CLOTHED IN WHITE RAIMENT, WHICH WE SEE IN 19:8 IS “THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF SAINTS”, I.E. THE IMPUTED RIGHTEOUSNESS OF CHRIST*, which is given to us by free grace, like the robe the father gave to his prodigal son when he returned, *Luke 15*. Our righteousness in which we stand before God, is not our own, it is Christ's righteousness imputed to us by grace alone. Remember, when Adam sinned, he and Eve hid themselves in the garden because they knew they were naked, but God graciously clothed them with skins (*Genesis 3*) – this is the same thing in symbol, God clothing His children in His own righteousness! *INCIDENTALLY, WE WOULD DO WELL ALSO TO NOTE THE WORK OF JESUIT SCHOLARSHIP IN CHANGING THE SCRIPTURES ON THIS VERY POINT*: In the ecumenical, pro-Roman Catholic bible, the *New King James Ver-*

sion, produced by Protestants and Catholics together, their devilish manipulation of Revelation 19:8 says, “the fine linen represents the RIGHTEOUS ACTS of the saints,” whereas the true Scriptures (AV) say, “the fine linen is the RIGHTEOUSNESS of saints.” We are not clothed in our own righteous acts - we are clothed in the God-given, righteousness of Christ, imputed to us! BUT THIS IS PURE ROMAN CATHOLIC INDOCTRINATION IN THE NKJV, INJECTING THE FALSE GOSPEL OF SALVATION BY WORKS INTO THE SCRIPTURES! DON'T USE THE NKJB, IT WILL DESTROY YOUR MIND! For background on this, just google the names “Martini” and “Ablondi.” If you use modern bible versions, including the NKJV, you are helpers of the Jesuit Counter-Reformation! May God grant you repentance. And for those pastors who insist on using Rome’s Bibles, may God remove them from their places of influence and bring them to their knees to acknowledge His Words only, and God willing, give them an honest heart to renounce every aspect of Roman Catholicism, the false religion of the Antichrist!)

5 And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings and voices: and there were seven lamps of fire burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. (Here we have again the “seven Spirits of God,” depicting the all-seeing, all-knowing, all-powerful eternal Spirit, Jehovah!)

6 And before the throne *there was* a sea of glass like unto crystal: and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, *were* four beasts full of eyes before and behind.

7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second beast like a calf, and the third beast had a face as a man, and the fourth beast was like a flying eagle.

8 And the four beasts had each of them six wings about *him*; and *they were* full of eyes within: and they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

9 And when those beasts give glory and honour and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth for ever and ever,

10 The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying,

11 Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for thou hast created all things, and for thy pleasure they are and were created. (**WE MIGHT WELL NOTE THAT THE NUMBER 4 SPEAKS OF THE WORLD – ‘four winds’, ‘four points of the compass’, ‘four corners of the earth’ – and, since these 4 beasts give glory to the Creator of all things, we see that THIS PICTURES ALL CREATION WORSHIPPING GOD THE CREATOR, AND THAT IS**

THE END RESULT IN GOD'S KINGDOM! That has been the essence of the gospel from the moment of Christ's birth: as Isaac Watts put it, "Joy to the world, the Lord is come. Let earth receive her King! Let every heart prepare Him room, and heaven and nature sing!" In heaven, before the throne of God, there is no Eastern religion or Western religion, but from north, south, east and west, all creation worships Him Who is the Creator! They cast their crowns before Him, acknowledging that all they have is due to the sovereign grace of Him Who created them, gave them eternal life, and breath and strength, and that in themselves there is nothing good or worthy of praise. That is why it is an evil thing to be proud of anything we have done – NB: to say, "I am proud of my achievements, is the same as saying, "I did this. God had nothing to do with it! Give me the praise!" Which of course, is blasphemy! And the modern, Popish bibles also promote pride, whereas the KJV calls pride 'sin'. Do the research! Be enlightened, and be liberated by God's Truth! *THE PROPHET EZEKIEL HAD A SIMILAR VISION OF WHAT HE CALLED "FOUR LIVING CREATURES,"* which is interesting, because John calls these "four beasts," but in Ezekiel our translation calls them "creatures," indicating they are living or created beings, which is exactly what the number 4 signifies – the created world, the things God has given life to (Note: in English, "beasts" and "living creatures" are different words to describe the same thing): *Ezekiel 1, "26 And above the firmament that was over their heads was the likeness of a throne, as the appearance of a sapphire stone: and upon the likeness of the throne was the likeness as the appearance of a man above upon it. This was the appearance of the likeness of the glory of the LORD. And when I saw it, I fell upon my face, and I heard a voice of one that spake."* **NOTICE EZEKIEL USES THE TERM 'LIKENESS'** – the likeness of a throne, the likeness of a man – like John, he is seeing a vision, not necessarily an actual viewing of something real. *THESE VISIONS ARE HIGHLY SYMBOLIC.* Whatever other meaning may be contained in Ezekiel's vision, there can be no doubt that it pictures Christ exalted above the earth, seated upon the throne of God, and all the earth giving Him glory and worship as The Creator! How lame is the alternative view of the Futurists, who try to interpret, and some even have the fantastic idea that Ezekiel's vision of the glory of God is of a modern aeroplane! Aren't you thankful that Jesus said that the Scriptures testify of Him, not of modern inventions and conflicts among the nations who reject Him! **THIS IS THE CHRISTIAN CONFESSION IN A VISION: "Jesus is the Lord – i.e. Jesus is Jehovah! And**

Jesus reigns!” (1 Corinthians 12:3). The descriptions of the living creatures and the beasts are similar to that of the cherubims which adorned the temple, and all that adorned the temple was symbolic, in some way, of Christ and His eternal kingdom. So we have symbolic visions and symbolic numbers, but all speak of Christ and His glory and His everlasting kingdom.)

May the Lord help us to rejoice in His Truth, which is wonderfully and clearly set forth in the Scriptures (and so often in symbol, as it is in *The Revelation*), and to avoid the spurious inventions and imaginations of men, no matter how popular they may be, and to hold fast to what the Scriptures actually say – that this is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass, and he sent and signified *it* by his angel unto his servant John”! Let us rejoice in Christ alone, for as He said Himself, all the Scriptures testify of Him! Amen.

Footnote:

FRANCISCO RIBERA – JESUIT SCHOLAR

FATHER OF MODERN FUTURISM

(one of the great heresies of the modern era among Protestants)

The following is an excerpt from Wikipedia (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francisco_Ribera), and the information contained in this quote can be sourced from Encyclopaedia Britannica as well:

APOCALYPSE COMMENTARY

In order to remove the papacy of the Catholic Church from consideration as the Antichrist (as an act of countering the Protestant Reformation)^[citation needed], Ribera began writing a lengthy (500 page) commentary in 1585 on the *Book of Revelation* (Apocalypse) titled *In Sacrum Beati Iohannis Apostoli, & Evangelistiae Apocalypsin Commentarij*, **proposing that the first few chapters of the Apocalypse apply to ancient pagan Rome, and the rest he limited to a yet future period of 3½ literal years, immediately prior to the second coming.** During that time, the Roman Catholic Church would have fallen away from the pope into apostasy because of the Reformation cry stating that "the papacy is the seat of the true and real Antichrist." (Martin Luther, Aug. 18, 1520). Then, he proposed, **the Antichrist, a single individual**, would:

- Persecute and blaspheme the saints of God
- Rebuild the temple in Jerusalem
- Abolish the Christian religion
- Deny Jesus Christ
- Destroy Rome
- Be received by the Jews
- Pretend to be God
- Kill the two witnesses of God

- Conquer the world.

To accomplish this, Ribera proposed that the 1260 days and 42 months and 3½ times of prophecy were not 1260 years as based on the year-day principle (Numbers 14:34 and Ezekiel 4:6), but a literal 3½ years, hence preventing the arrival of the deduction of (i) the 1260 years.

OTHER WORKS

- *Vida de la madre Teresa de Jesús* (1590), a work of hagiography.^[3]
- *In epistolam B. Pauli apostoli ad Hebraeos commentarii* (1600).^[4]

FUTURISM

Futurism (Christianity) is the proposal that the *Book of Revelation* does not bear the application to the Middle Ages or the papacy, rather the "future" (more particularly to a period immediately prior to the Second Coming). The *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology* (1997) states that Ribera was an Augustinian amillennialist, whose form of futurism proposed that only the introductory chapters of "Revelation referred to ancient Rome, and the remainder referred to a literal three and half years at the end of time. His interpretation was then followed by Robert Bellarmine and the Spanish Dominican Thomas Malvenda.^{[2][5]}

Thomas Brightman, in particular, writing in the early 17th century as an English Protestant, contested Ribera's views. He argued that the Catholic use of the Vulgate had withheld commentary from the *Book of Revelation*, and then provided an interpretation avoiding the connection with the [Papacy](#) put forward in the [historicist](#) point of view.^[6]

.....

The above history is especially important for all Christians to be aware of, because ignorance of this one fact, has been highly instrumental in the subverting of almost the entire Protestant / Evangelical Church, and cementing in the mind of the average believer, a fantastic, science-fiction style approach to Bible prophecy, and a departure from the basic principles of understanding plain Scripture. All Scripture is gospel! If we remember this, we'll not be fooled by those who deny this and invent their own interpretations.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION

EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL THROUGH THE REVELATION.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 9th June 2019.

In *chapter 5* the vision continues:

AS WE BEGIN, LET US OBSERVE THAT HE WHO, IN THE FIRST CHAPTER, IS CALLED “Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, ...the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty”, “he that liveth, and was dead; and, alive for evermore,” and has “the keys of hell and of death”, Who has the seven stars in His right hand, and walks in the midst of the seven candlesticks, now in Chapter 5, IS ABOUT TO OPEN A BOOK SEALED WITH SEVEN SEALS! This is nothing more or less than the Lord Jesus presented as being the Almighty and Eternal God, Who created all things visible and invisible, Who “upholds all things by the word of his power, Who rules all creation, Who has been seated on heaven’s throne for about 2,000 years as God manifested in the flesh, the Only-begotten Son of God, and Whose kingdom shall have no end! And the number seven, which features in so much of this, symbolically underlines His perfection and sovereign power and rule over all things, as the Lord God Almighty!

*LET US NOTE THAT THIS CHAPTER, LIKE ALL **THE REVELATION**, LIKE ALL PROPHECY, IS A REVELATION OF HIM, AND THEREFORE WHAT WE READ HERE, AS WE DO IN ALL SCRIPTURE, IS JUST PURE GOSPEL – THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST! If you’ve been reading any commentary on Bible prophecy which has any other purpose than a gospel purpose, (the purpose of revealing Jesus Christ in all His glory), if it is claimed to be a special key to understanding the times and interpretation of events unfolding, then what you have been reading is not of God. Because **The Revelation** is the gospel of Christ – it is not something other than the gospel of Christ. Don’t be deceived by the false teachers and false prophets who tell you otherwise.*

CHAPTER 5

“AND I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

2 And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?

3 And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

4 And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon.

5 And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof.

6 And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. (*SEVEN, GOD'S NUMBER OF PERFECTION, HERE SIGNIFIES that Christ (the Lamb) is the all-powerful, all-seeing, all-knowing, omnipresent (everywhere at once) Jehovah – the Eternal, Almighty God!*)

7 And he came and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne.

8 And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four *and* twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints. (*NOTICE HOW OUR PRAYERS PLAY A PART IN THE GREAT OUTWORKING OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD! Let us pray fervently always, and never give up! In fact, at our recent federal election, the prayers of the saints have made a visible and tangible difference to the whole nation – because all goodness and decency, every vestige of Christianity, and our very national foundations on Christ and the Word of God, were on the verge of being completely destroyed by the social re-engineering of the left wing, Marxist, and anti-Christian reprobates, forcing upon us 'gender diversity', climate change, and all sorts of evil lies which seemed to be gaining momentum, but thank God, He has heard the prayers of His saints, and intervened. But let us not be so foolish as to think the battle is over or that we have won, or that the government delivered to us on 18th May is actually good – thank God it is better than the alternative! But the insidious forces of darkness are also redoubling their efforts to do more harm, so let us pray all the more, and continue to hope in our God alone, for something far better, because what we have at present is just not good enough! The fact that we must squarely face, is this – that the present situation does not honour the Lord Jesus – so let us continue to pray and labour, so that He might be glorified and be pre-eminent in all things!*)

9 And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;

10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth. *(MANY, WHOSE MINDS ARE FILLED WITH FUTURIST HERESY, CANNOT SEE THE KINGDOM OF GOD AS ANYTHING ELSE BUT A SPECIAL, FUTURE REIGN OF THE SAINTS WITH CHRIST AT JERUSALEM, A SO-CALLED MILLENNIUM ON EARTH, BUT LET US BE HONEST AND STICK TO THE TEXT – LET US SEE HERE THE GLORY OF THE RISEN AND REIGNING CHRIST UPON HIS ETERNAL THRONE: This scene is obviously just after Christ's ascension to heaven, because they all ask who is worthy to open the scrolls which declare God's future plans and purposes, and it is at that moment that the Lamb is declared to be the one. Notice that the Lamb is “in the midst” of the throne, the beasts and the elders, depicting the fact that Christ shares His Father's throne, and the redeemed saints share His throne also, as “kings and priests unto God”! This, we noticed last week, was the very thing mentioned by Jesus in His letter to the Church at Laodicea (Revelation 3),* 20 Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me. 21 To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne. 22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the church – *THIS IS CHRIST REIGNING WITH HIS SAINTS! NB: THIS CANNOT BE SOME 2,000 YEARS AFTER THE FACT OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION! What are we to believe? The lies introduced by the Jesuit Ribera in 1590, that the tribulation and the Antichrist are all yet future things, that the kingdom of God has to do with the Jews at Jerusalem and not the Christian Church all over the world? That Christ is not reigning yet? Is heaven (according to John's vision here) occupied by idiots who have been there 2,000 years and longer, and haven't woken up yet to the fact that the crucified and risen Christ, the Redeemer of all mankind, has been upon His Father's throne all this time! What nonsense these doctrines of devils are, that the Jesuits have taught the whole Church! No! That is not what we see here at all! THE SCENE IS THIS: John is weeping, that nobody can open the decrees of God! The departed saints above are saying, “We have just come from a 'hell on earth' where we have been crucified, burned alive, beheaded, starved and tortured to death, and we cry out to our God and our Father for justice and vengeance and righteous judgment! And here is a lamb, “as it had been slain,” an unlikely candidate if we are looking for help”. And it*

is at this juncture, that the Lamb is declared to be the “root of David”, i.e. literally Jehovah, David's God, David's Maker! This Lamb is King of kings and Lord of lords! He is worthy! He has redeemed us by His own blood! He has made us, who were sinners, kings and priests unto our God! And ALL HEAVEN IS IN AWE AND WONDER, FOR THE LAMB IS ABOUT TO BEGIN HIS EVERLASTING RULE AND REIGN UPON HIS FATHER'S THRONE WHICH THE PROPHETS HAVE TALKED ABOUT FROM THE BEGINNING – NOTE JUST A FEW: How the “seed” of the woman would “bruise the serpent's head,” GENESIS 3:15; how the Father would “set His Son upon His holy hill,” (PSALM 2), and His decree concerning this Son: “Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. 8 Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. 9 Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. 10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him”; how that all this is now fulfilled; including the prophecy of ISAIAH 9, “Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called, Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, and the Prince of peace”; Likewise the fulfilment of EZEKIEL'S vision of “the likeness of the glory of the Lord”; likewise of what ISAIAH saw, “IN the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple. 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly. 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory” ISAIAH 6. THIS IS THE MOST DRAMATIC SCENE IMAGINABLE, A LAMB APPEARS IN HEAVEN, “AS IT HAD BEEN SLAIN,” DEPICTING LITERALLY A MAN UPON THE THRONE OF GOD! THIS IS NOTHING BUT THE CORONATION OF THE KING OF KINGS!) 11 And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;

12 Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing.

13 And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. (***THE WORSHIP IS OF GOD AND THE LAMB! IT SHOWS THE WONDER OF “GOD... MANIFEST IN THE FLESH” FOR OUR REDEMPTION. THIS VISION DOES NOT MAKE CHRIST INFERIOR TO GOD, BUT PUTS HIM, THE “MAN CHRIST JESUS,” OUR MEDIATOR, ON THE SAME LEVEL AS GOD, BECAUSE HE IS GOD – as John tells us plainly in the opening Words of his Gospel, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (JOHN 1:1), the discrimination between Christ and the Father here is only to identify Christ's unique Person and work of redemption! Let us remember that “him that sitteth upon the throne,” is, in reality, Jehovah, God in three Persons, and if we keep in mind that the vision is not real but symbolic, it is not hard for us to understand. JOHN SAW A LAMB, BUT CHRIST IS NOT LITERALLY A LAMB – this is a vision, but if the vision is so awesome that we cannot comprehend it, what must the glory of the reality be!***)

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four *and* twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.” (In Chapter 4, the apostle had been asked to “come up hither” *and see* “things which must be hereafter.” CHAPTERS 5 & 6 RECORD A GLORIOUS VISION OF THE DECREES OF GOD ALMIGHTY BEING OPENED, THE FUTURE EVENTS BEING ORDERED AND DECLARED, BY THE EXALTED AND REIGNING CHRIST IN HEAVEN, ORDERING ALL THE EVENTS WHICH ARE TO UNFOLD ON EARTH – this depicts in symbol, the literal fulfilment of the words of Scripture which say that Jesus of Nazareth is “the Lord from heaven” (1 CORINTHIANS 15), and, “I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion” (PSALM 2), and as the visions proceed, to the four horsemen, the trumpets and vials of wrath poured out, we will see that this also is Christ ruling the nations, “dashing them to pieces like a potter's vessel.” THIS IS THE LAMB AS RULER AND JUDGE: HE HAS SEVEN HORNS, HE IS ALL-POWERFUL! HE HAS SEVEN EYES, HE SEES AND KNOWS EVERYTHING, EVEN EVERY DARK CORNER OF THE EARTH. What fools men on earth are who think they can hide from Him, ignore Him, oppose Him, discard His Law, ride roughshod over His Holy Words! 'Big brother' flexes his muscles on earth, and struts in his pomp and pride, condemning those who dare to stand for righteousness, but by God's grace, we know the infinitely Bigger Brother Who sits and reigns on heaven's throne! Well might we sing with all the redeemed, “Crown Him with many crowns, the

Lamb upon His Throne. Hark! How the heavenly anthem drowns all music but its own; Awake my soul and sing, of Him Who died for thee, and hail Him as thy Matchless King through all eternity!”)

If this is the grand subject of The Revelation, that Jesus Christ is enthroned in heaven to rule over all creation for ever, then how should we live? What should be our attitude to the Commandments of God and to every Word of Scripture?

May God give us grace, as redeemed and pardoned sinners, to love Him, to live for Him, and serve Him faithfully, and to declare His glorious Words to all people, and to teach our families likewise! Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL
THROUGH THE REVELATION.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 16th June 2019.

CHAPTER 6

THE LAMB OPENS THE SEALS OF GOD'S DECREES FOR TIME AND ETERNITY

*As we come to the 6th chapter we see the Lamb begins to open the seals. Remember, this is the Lamb who has “seven eyes,” “the seven Spirits of God,” He walks in the midst of the “seven candlesticks,” i.e. the seven Churches, and He has in His right hand, “seven stars,” which are the “angels (i.e. messengers, or ministers) of the seven Churches.” All these “sevens,” the number seven being God's divine signature and seal upon His works, are highly symbolic of the fact that Christ, the Lamb, is Lord of all, He is the Eternal Word of God, the Alpha and Omega, He is Jehovah manifest in the flesh for the redemption of His people, He is the great Head of the Church, (we see that He has central place, upon the throne of God, in the midst of the saints and all creation, the same throne He occupied with the Father and the Spirit before the world was – NB, in Jesus prayer as High Priest of all His own elect in **John 17**: “5 And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was.”) – Now He is gone back where He always was, now He ascends the throne as both God and man!, and it is He, and He alone, who opens the seven seals, i.e. to Him alone belongs the prerogative to oversee everything in nature, to order all the events of history, of nations, wars, famines, and all that comes to pass in the earth!*

By way of illustration, let us consider,

BUSYBODIES CONTRASTED TO THE SOVEREIGN RULE OF ALMIGHTY GOD:
Maybe you have had the experience in life, maybe in the workplace, on the sports field, perhaps even in the Church, that there just seems to be that one 'gifted' individual who has the amazing capacity to not only take care of his or her own business and duties, but is somehow able to have such a bird's eye view of everything else, that he or she seems to take on almost a God-like duty of care over you, knows just where you are up to, and what you should be doing next, like a mother hen clucking around her chickens? These are highly gifted people! Most of us are struggling just to do our own duty and mind our own business, but these gifted souls (how, God only knows!) seem almost able

to read your mind, know where you are up to now, and what you ought to be doing in the next 5 minutes! In fact, some of them would push you out of the way and do your work for you, but something just restrains them from going that far – but they keep checking on you and from time to time say, “No, do this!” Or No, do that!” Or, “Why are you doing it that way?” They are what you might call obsessive, compulsive minders of everybody else's business. The Bible calls them “busybodies in other men's matters” (1 Peter 4:15). This is man (or woman) usurping the role of God, basically 'lording it over others.' These things are in the Scriptures for our instruction. Another picture comes to mind, of a man I knew many years ago who had chooks in his back yard, and every day he would let the chooks out of the pen and then walk around after them, chasing them here and there, and going, “Shoo! Shoo!” And one day a work mate said to me, “You know that old neighbour of yours, he's a funny fellow, he lets his chooks out to run in the yard every day, and then he spends all day camp-drafting them round the yard!” He knew where every chook was. He just kept following them round, and he just couldn't leave those chooks alone!

WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THAT FALLEN MAN'S GREATEST SINGLE CHARACTER TRAIT IS AN INBUILT INCLINATION TO USURP THE PLACE OF THE ALMIGHTY. In other words, man wants to be God! This was the Devil's attitude from the beginning: ISAIAH PROPHESED OF HIM IN ISAIAH 14, 12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! *how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. ***SO, ADAM FOLLOWED LUCIFER, AND MEN BECAME LITTLE GODS, AND SO THE MOST BASIC ATTRIBUTE OF THE SINNER IS DESCRIBED IN TWO WORDS – PRIDE AND ARROGANCE: PRIDE BECAUSE HE WANTS TO BE NUMBER ONE; ARROGANCE BECAUSE HE WANTS TO BE ABOVE OTHERS.*** Well those two little stories, of real life experience, for what they are worth, are a snapshot of human nature for us to consider, fallen and imperfect human nature, that is, and fallen man's greatest single character trait is an inbuilt inclination to usurp the place of the Almighty – that is what caused the fall of man in the first place in Eden: Eve took it upon herself to overrule both God and her husband, and then Adam fell in line with Eve and did likewise (**Genesis 3**), and here we are

about 6,000 years later, trying to deal with more disorder and chaos and misery than you can poke a proverbial stick at. **BUT THANK GOD THERE IS REDEMPTION IN JESUS FOR THOSE WHO ARE HIS.**

THANK GOD THAT WHEN WE TURN TO THE SCRIPTURES AND LOOK AT THE LORD JESUS, OUR REDEEMER, WE FIND THAT, ALTHOUGH HE IS HUMAN, HE IS INFINITELY MORE THAN THAT, AND THERE IS NOTHING IMPERFECT ABOUT HIM AND HIS SOVEREIGN RULE OVER ALL THINGS. He is absolutely divine. He is not fraught with the frailties of fallen human nature. He doesn't meddle in matters that are not His own business – **all things are His business. He is also without sin.** And that is what qualified Him to die as our Substitute and bear the penalty of our sins. **Jesus is no busybody, and no usurper, but He is very busy as the true Lord from heaven,** because He knows everything about us, even down to knowing our thoughts before we think them! He disapproves of our every sin, and yet He graciously gives us space to live our lives, and make our own decisions, He even allows us to make wrong decisions, but He is also watching closely, even as a loving mother watches over her baby, ready to deliver us out of every danger. But let us remember that He not only watches lovingly over His own children, but He watches over all creation, even over the wicked as well. **And WHEN HE DEEMS IT NECESSARY TO INTERFERE, THEN ALL THE WORLD SHOULD FEAR! HOW INTERESTING, HOW IRONIC, THAT THE WICKED REJECTORS OF CHRIST'S RULE, THE SELF-RIGHTEOUS AND SELF-ASSURED, DARE TO JUDGE THE LORD JESUS AS A BUSYBODY, (ESPECIALLY WHEN WE REMIND THEM HE HAS AUTHORITY OVER THEM), BUT THEY ARE THE BUSYBODIES AND USURPERS!** For this man is the Lord, Jehovah! “Who will say unto him, What doest thou?” (**Job 9:12**); Or, what professor, on hearing what He has to say, would dare to say as the Jews did, “How knoweth this man letters, having never learned? (i.e. having never learned from us!)” (**John 7:15**); Or, “We will not have this man to reign over us” (**Luke 19:14**); Therefore, as Paul said, “Hath not the potter power over the clay?” (**Romans 9:21, Isaiah 64:8**); “Is it not lawful for me (Him) to do what I (He) will with mine (His) own?” (**Matthew 20:15**), because since He made all things, it is clear that He owns all things. **WHAT A CONTRAST WE SEE BETWEEN THE POTTER AND THE CLAY!** What an infinite difference between the creature and the Creator, especially when, in his fallen state, man, who was created out of dust, presumes to dictate to the Creator, and re-write His Laws, and to question His right to do this or that, man who has the audacity to tell us daily, that “our governments and our courts are secular,”

– i.e. outside God's jurisdiction – that these matters have nothing to do with Him, that He should not be brought into our worldly affairs! What right does Jesus have to claim worship in our courts and parliaments? What right does He have to claim a mere tenth of our income? (But it is generally accepted that the government – the secular government – has the right to take 10% GST off the top, not to mention a multitude of other taxes, in all probability making more like 50% of all our earnings). Why should Jesus be brought into the school class room? What right does He have to teach our children? Yet our children must be force-fed Darwin, Freud, Al Gore, Sodom, and even the Devil himself! Some of these people, with this sort of attitude, are in for a rude awakening, in the day when their eyes are opened to see reality! Then they will see the 'gentle Jesus' face to face, and discover he is much more than gentle, they will get the full taste of His wrath, an aspect of His glorious nature that the false teachers duped them into thinking has no place in Him, and they will fall on their faces and be ashamed of themselves! **THE DAY OF THE WRATH OF THE LAMB WILL COME WHEN HE JUDGES THE WICKED. IN FACT THAT DAY IS ALREADY PRESENT, EVEN IF THEY CANNOT SEE IT.** What do I mean by saying the day is already present? **ACTUALLY, THE DAY IS NOT ONLY PRESENT, BUT IT IS QUITE LATE IN THE DAY, BECAUSE JESUS BEGAN TO OPEN THE SCROLLS OF GOD'S DECREES AND DEALINGS WITH THIS WORLD NEARLY 2,000 YEARS AGO!** So that those who think they exclude the Lord Jesus from their worldly affairs are the greatest, blindest, most ignorant fools imaginable, because even while they make such boasts, He is trampling them under His feet! Their very ignorance and foolishness is proof of this. (Bob Hawke has just been given a hero's send-off by the whole nation, and even men who hated him have gone on and on about what a great Australian he was, but has he been given a hero's welcome into heaven? Or was it an evil blasphemer's welcome into everlasting fire in hell? I don't know for sure, but, as far as I know – he didn't show any signs of repentance while he was on this earth!) As I say, Jesus is daily trampling the wicked under His glorious feet! Even while they laugh at Him, He is laughing at them – See Psalm 2 – but somebody would say, "That is not the Jesus I know! That is not the Jesus we have been taught in Sunday School! That is not the Jesus of the New Testament!" Oh, yes, it is! And if you don't believe it, just sit back and read *The Revelation*, and hang on to your seat, because this is called **The Revelation of Jesus Christ!**

LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD! THE LAMB IS WORTHY TO OPEN THE SEALS, HE IS GOD ALMIGHTY! He “was in the beginning with God, and He was God” (**John 1:1**)! Does He have a right to be involved in every detail of every matter in heaven and earth? Yes, He does! He created it all, and He upholds it all with the Word of His power, and He will be the Judge of all in the last day (**John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:3, John 12:48**)! Let all creation praise Him! For He alone is worthy of praise! **BUT FAR FROM BEING A MENACING, INTERFERING BUSYBODY, THE LORD JESUS, WITH ALL HIS INFINITE POWER, IS ALSO INFINITELY GRACIOUS AND WISE AND THOUGHTFUL TOWARDS ALL CREATION.** He is the Good Shepherd to all His people. Somebody distributed an email about the wonder of birds which are mates for life, and how a bird was injured, struck down by a passing motorcar, and its mate came back to feed it in the middle of the road, and grieve over it when he found it dead and gone for ever. What a tragic sight! But Jesus said to His own disciples, (**Matthew 10**), “29 Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. 30 But the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows.” How many really believe His Words? How many really believe He is involved with the life of every little bird? I know we all struggle with the evils that the Lord allows to continue, but we need to keep our eye on the 'big picture,' we need to look to our infinitely big God and Creator, to the infinitely big and complete redemption that is in Christ, and remember that He also is going to restore the whole creation!

So just how refreshing it is to know that it is the Lord Jesus Who controls all things, including the enemies and persecutors of His Church, and that is one of the main themes of *The Revelation*.

CHAPTER 6

AND I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals, and I heard, as it were the noise of thunder, one of the four beasts saying, Come and see.

2 And I saw, and behold a white horse: and he that sat on him had a bow; and a crown was given unto him: and he went forth conquering, and to conquer.

3 And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see.

4 And there went out another horse that was red: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to take peace from the earth, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword.

5 And when he had opened the third seal, I heard the third beast say, Come and see. And I beheld, and lo a black horse; and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand.

6 And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say, A measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny; and *see* thou hurt not the oil and the wine.

7 And when he had opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, Come and see.

8 And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him. And power was given unto them over the fourth part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

9 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: ***(NOTICE, THESE ARE “SOULS,” NOT BODIES. They are the souls of the departed saints in their present state in heaven now – after their physical death, but before the resurrection. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS ‘SOUL-SLEEP.’ SOUL-SLEEP IS A FALSE DOCTRINE. When people say, “After I’m dead, I feel nothing”, they are terribly wrong! Jesus taught through the story of Lazarus and the rich man, and in other Scriptures, that there is consciousness for the departed soul, whether he is in heaven or hell – see Luke 16. LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD – THESE “SOULS” IN REVELATION 6 ARE DEPARTED SOULS IN HEAVEN, STILL AWAITING THE RESURRECTION OF THEIR BODIES!)***

10 And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? ***(The Lamb opens four seals and releases four powers into all the world Notice there are four, an earthly number – they are of this world and operate in this world: They represent God's instruments of judgment or wrath: a conquering king, war, famine, and death, which is followed by hell. They all have to do with the temporal judgments of the wicked, on earth throughout time, as all people and nations are affected from time to time, by these four powers (FOUR CONQUERORS: WAR, FAMINE AND DISEASE, AND DEATH), and the end result of them all is death, and hell follows. THIS DOESN'T SPEAK SO MUCH OF DEALINGS WITH THE PEOPLE OF GOD, BUT THE REST OF MANKIND, AND THESE FOUR HORSES DEPICT THE EXPERIENCE OF ALL HUMANITY. Some see the first horse as Christ and the conquering power of His heavenly kingdom in the earth, but I think the white horse is the***

Antichrist, the figurehead and instigator of all conquering powers and tyranny on the earth, because when you have some idea of the incredible network and machinery of the Roman Antichrist, with its false Church, the “Mother of harlots”, which “commits fornication with the kings of the earth,” when you know the treacherous and insidious work of the Jesuits, manipulating the world economy, controlling international banking, fomenting the wars involving practically all nations, the deliberately engineered famines and so-called 'population control', the 'toppling' of governments, the assassination of world leaders, not to mention the infiltration of all churches, governments and judiciaries, and secret societies, and the fact that this same prophecy teaches us that “all the world” follows this beast, all “whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world” (13:8), and much more, then it is easy to see the all-encompassing power of the Antichrist bringing all these woes upon the whole earth – IN SHORT THE ANTICHRIST IS GOD'S MAIN INSTRUMENT OF JUDGMENT AND DECEPTION IN THE EARTH, the wicked do not live in a vacuum or a morally neutral state, they are all following and worshipping the beast, either actively or passively, and yet being deceived and destroyed by that same beast as well. Only in Christ is there safety! DESTRUCTION AND ULTIMATELY DEATH, IN THIS WORLD, HAPPENS TO ALL, BUT UNLESS WE ARE IN CHRIST, THE END RESULT IS HELL: “It is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment” Hebrews 9:27. AN AMERICAN SEVENTH DAY ADVENTIST PASTOR, BILL HUGHES, HAS WRITTEN TWO CONCISE AND POWERFUL LITTLE BOOKS: “The Enemy Unmasked” and “The Secret Terrorists.” In them he has presented historical evidence gleaned from many sources, which show the involvement of the Jesuits in all these things. Among many other things, he quotes a letter written on 15th August 1871, by Albert Pike, who was the leading man in the Illuminati in America, a leading Freemason and Jesuit. Pike's letter outlines the plan of the Jesuits to bring about control of the whole world through World War I, World War II, and World War III, which we now know as ‘The War on Terror’. HUGHES' 10TH CHAPTER OF “THE ENEMY UNMASKED” IS ENTITLED, “THE WAR ON TERROR WAS PLANNED 135 YEARS AGO”! It tells how the plan to have conflict between Islam and the Zionists is part of the big plan to control the whole world. Many other authors over the years have documented these things, and Hughes quotes some of them. It is not one man's opinion, but a thorough compilation of historical facts and evidence, proving beyond any doubt, the Jesuits' involvement in almost every strategic event among the

nations of the world, since the founding of the Jesuits in the 1500's. (I'm not promoting Seventh day Adventism, but I give Bill Hughes his due – he is right about the Jesuits!) ONE IMPORTANT LESSON IN ALL THIS IS, DON'T PLACE ANY TRUST IN THE MEN AND INSTITUTIONS OF THIS WORLD! THEY ALL BELONG TO ANTICHRIST, NOT CHRIST! Don't think for a minute that, when most of our leading politicians, judges, and even pastors, are trained by the Jesuits and their helpers, that you can influence them with any kind of moral reasoning! (Not that you shouldn't try as God gives opportunity, we are here as God's witnesses – we are required to speak and to expose evil, not only to seek lost souls). But don't look to changes of government for help, the Lord Jesus is your only recourse! He is your only help in this world. Many gullible Christians think that if you love everybody and do the right thing, all will be rosy in this world – that is a lie, it contradicts the very Word of God: “In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33), but Jesus went on to say, “But be of good cheer; I have overcome the world!” HENCE WE READ ON TO SEE THE OUTCOME FOR THE SAINTS. WE HAVE SEEN THAT THE END OF THE WICKED IS DEATH AND HELL, BUT THEN WE SEE THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN, (because although the judgment for the wicked at death, is straight to hell, for the saints, it is straight to heaven, “to be with Christ, which is far better.” That is our goal. That is our destiny, not to overcome the wicked at their own game, but to stand for Christ against them while we live, and then “fly away” (Psalm 90) as Moses said, to a better world!)

11 And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled. *(This is the R.I.P., Rest In Peace, we look forward to with Christ in heaven – it is not our bodies resting in the grave as many mistakenly think – how can you call the rotting of a corpse ‘rest’?, but our rest is our souls’ resting in heaven! And then, before too long, the great day of the final judgment, and in that day, we shall see the Lord's ultimate vengeance upon all His enemies – for that is what the saints in heaven are waiting for and pleading for.)*

12 And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, and, lo, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became as blood;

13 And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind.

14 And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places.

15 And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains;

16 And said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb:

17 For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand?"

SO WE SEE THAT WHEN THE LAMB OPENS THE FIRST 6 SEALS, THOSE DIVINE DECREES ARE 4 HORSES WHICH DEPICT HIS TEMPORAL JUDGMENTS IN THE EARTH; the 5th seal reveals the departed souls in heaven waiting for the Lord's vengeance; and the 6th seal speaks of the final judgment at the end of the world, and it is the Lord Jesus Who is ruling and ordering all these things, for, as Paul said (1 Corinthians 15:25), "He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet." This is going on as we speak, and it has been going on ever since Christ ascended into heaven to be crowned King of kings and to sit upon heaven's throne!

HOW MANY CHRISTIANS TODAY ARE DECEIVED BY THE JESUIT RIBERA AND THE DISPENSATIONALISTS, INTO BELIEVING THAT ALL THESE JUDGMENTS OF GOD HAVE NOT YET BEGUN, BUT WILL ONLY BEGIN TO HAPPEN AFTER A SUPPOSED 'RAPTURE OF THE CHURCH'? How many of these are struggling to cope with the reality of life on earth, with the devastation of families breaking up, children being led astray, the devastation of drugs and alcohol, financial ruin, and debilitating sickness, not to mention wars and famines and plagues, really happening all over the world, all the time!? Because according to Kenneth Copeland, you should be prospering, and according to Tim LaHaye, things are going to be astronomically worse during the 'tribulation', but don't be fooled by these money hungry, charlatan, false teachers, nor the likes of Yongi Cho, the great man of faith, the false prophet and false teacher, pastor of the largest church in the world, who was imprisoned for embezzling \$12m. Let us reject their lies and hear the Word of God! God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ, and He reigns over all creation, and he is bringing His enemies under His feet, even now, for (1 Corinthians 15), "25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. 26 The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death."

Amen!

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL
THROUGH THE REVELATION.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 23rd June 2019.

Now in chapter 7, we see the protection of the saints on earth while the judgments (depicted by the four horsemen) are being carried out. This is not a special time of tribulation yet to come; it is what has been happening since Christ ascended to heaven's throne! True to the whole nature of this book of prophecy, and according to its own introduction, it is for the blessing of the Church as we all go through tribulation until the Lord returns – NB: Revelation 1:

THE Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass; and he sent and signified it by his angel unto his servant John:

2 Who bare record of the word of God, and of the testimony of Jesus Christ, and of all things that he saw.

3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.

Hence, Chapter 7 continues, like the other chapters of The Revelation, to encourage the saints on earth, as it has done for 2,000 years, and its symbolic nature is evident, just as stated in the introduction of the first chapter!

CHAPTER 7 – THE SEAL OF GOD UPON ALL HIS ELECT PEOPLE

AND after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. *(This chapter shows what happens to the saints while all these destructive forces, depicted by the four horses, are being unleashed upon the world. Remember, when we studied Revelation 20, we saw this protection of the saints depicted in a different way: 20, “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.” ***NOTICE, WHEN THE WICKED ARE JUDGED IN THE EARTH, THE END RESULT IS DEATH AND ETERNAL PUNISHMENT IN HELL, BUT THAT IS NOT THE END OF THE RIGHTEOUS – THE RIGHTEOUS ARE ALREADY PROTECTED AGAINST THE SECOND DEATH. For the righteous, the elect children of God, FIRSTLY, THERE IS A SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION, A NEW BIRTH, WHICH MAKES US ETERNALLY ONE WITH THE LORD, AND MAKES US IMMUNE FROM THE JUDGMENTS OF GOD.***

IN OUR TEXT (REVELATION 7) WE HAVE TWO PICTURES (PROPHETIC VISIONS) OF THE PROTECTED SAINTS OF GOD – THE 144,000 AND THE GREAT MULTITUDE: Our text teaches us that as mortal beings we still die physically, we still are subject to disease, famine, war etc., according to God’s purposes and times, but when the judgments of God come in this world, as well as being sometimes protected even against the temporal dangers, we are spiritually and eternally protected against the wrath of God. And here, the redeemed, i.e. all the saints, “all Israel” (Romans 11:26), is pictured, first by the mystical “144,000,” and then by the “great multitude ... clothed in white robes,” and they all have God’s seal of ownership upon them, and are all under God’s protection. Note the parallel between this scene in ch 6-7 and the scene in ch 20: in both cases you see “souls”, (not bodies), of the saints, i.e. souls in heaven awaiting the resurrection, and in both cases, they are protected from God’s wrath and judgment. God’s seal is upon His people, so that they are not subject to His wrath! MOST PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT THE SINKING OF THE TITANIC, BUT HOW MANY KNOW WHAT IT WAS ALL ABOUT? Most believe it was a tragic accident, but Bill Hughes, drawing on much documented fact, shows how the sinking of the Titanic was a deliberate Jesuit plot, carried out with the express purpose of murdering three of the richest men in the world, men so powerful they could have prevented the Jesuits’ taking control of world banking, and thereby, control of Protestant and free America. It was almost a perfect murder plot, but men who love the truth have exposed it. One reason it was so clever, was that the Jesuits made sure

that both Catholics and Protestants alike went down with that ship, just to cover their tracks, just so it wasn't too obvious that the Protestants were their real target! THIS IS A WONDERFUL ILLUSTRATION OF HOW THE LORD HAS RELEASED HIS FOUR HORSES OF DESTRUCTION – in the case of the Titanic, the first and second horses, the force of the Roman Antichrist conquering and taking away peace and making war in the earth – but this was all the work of God – death and hell followed for some, but not all: SOME OF CHRIST'S ENEMIES WERE TAKEN DOWN TO HELL IN THAT EVENT, AND SOME OF THE PEOPLE OF GOD WENT STRAIGHT TO PARADISE, AND THEIR PRAYERS FOR VENGEANCE ARE LARGELY ANSWERED ALREADY, AS ALL THOSE INVOLVED IN THIS PARTICULAR PLOT ARE NOW DEAD AND GONE, AND WHERE HAVE THEY GONE? No doubt, those Jesuits, and their co-conspirators of that day, are now like Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord with a kiss, as it is written, and WAS WRITTEN of Judas even centuries before he was born, by the prophet David, Psalm 109 (Take note of these words, because this is how the Lord and His prophets think of traitors and betrayers!), “HOLD not thy peace, O God of my praise; 2 For the mouth of the wicked and the mouth of the deceitful are opened against me: they have spoken against me with a lying tongue. 3 They compassed me about also with words of hatred; and fought against me without a cause. 4 For my love they are my adversaries: but I give myself unto prayer. 5 And they have rewarded me evil for good, and hatred for my love. 6 Set thou a wicked man over him: and let Satan stand at his right hand. 7 When he shall be judged, let him be condemned: and let his prayer become sin. 8 Let his days be few; and let another take his office. 9 Let his children be fatherless, and his wife a widow. 10 Let his children be continually vagabonds, and beg: let them seek their bread also out of their desolate places.”

DAVID GOES ON, BUT THIS WHOLE PSALM IS A PROPHECY OF THE DEMISE AND THE JUDGMENT OF JUDAS, WRITTEN CENTURIES BEFORE THE FACT! SO, ACCORDING TO THE REVELATION, THE SAINTS CRY OUT ON EARTH FOR GOD'S JUSTICE, AND IN HEAVEN THEY CONTINUE TO DO SO, BUT THEIR SOULS ARE SAFE (BOTH ON EARTH AND IN HEAVEN), BECAUSE THEY ARE SEALED WITH THE ETERNAL SEAL OF GOD – THEIR ETERNAL DESTINY WAS ALWAYS TO BE HEAVEN AND THE PRESENCE OF GOD – GOD WROTE THEIR NAMES IN HIS BOOK OF LIFE, THEN HE SECURED THEIR PARDON AND FREEDOM AT CALVARY, THEN HE CALLED THEM AND SEALED THEM WITH HIS OWN SPIRIT. As Paul put it in Romans 8, 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as

sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. ***THIS IS THE DOCTRINE OF CALVINISM, OR IN A BETTER WORD, GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY – i.e. that God actually brings all things to pass by His own power and for His own glory and purposes. Arminians will not accept this glorious doctrine. They must have man's free will, they cannot accept a God Who is literally in charge of all things, including every step that men take, and every sparrow which falls to ground, as Jesus put it. They deny God His absolute sovereignty over all creation. But don't be afraid to use the term 'Calvinism'. It is merely a word to describe God's sovereignty as the most fundamental doctrine undergirding all other doctrines. Calvin just happened to be God's champion whom He raised up in the days of the Protestant Reformation, when the Roman Antichrist had hidden the Words of Scripture from the people and hidden the doctrine of God's sovereignty. But the doctrine of God's sovereignty was championed long before Calvin, by the apostle Paul – he was the apostle God raised up in those apostolic days of the founding of Christianity, to teach God's sovereignty very plainly. And the doctrine of God's sovereignty teaches us that when God chooses His own elect children, He never forsakes them – they are eternally safe in His hand! Jesus Himself made this plain in JOHN'S GOSPEL – 10: 26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. 27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: 28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. 29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. 30 I and my Father are one. It is the Sovereign Lord God Almighty, not the little puny god of the poor deluded Arminians and Roman Catholics, Who puts His seal on His own children and does not let the enemy have them! Don't you love this doctrine! Don't you love this Truth which makes you free! Free and safe in His Almighty Hands! And this doctrine has a ring of truth about it for all who are genuine mothers and fathers – what mother or father would not fight to the very end for their children? This glorious doctrine of God's sovereignty was championed by John Calvin, the theologian of the Protestant Reformation, in 1536 when, at the age of 26, he began a work called The Institutes of the Christian Religion'. If you want to read of the enormous advancements of***

God's Truth, achieved during the Reformation, read Calvin's Institutes of the Christian Religion, and be reminded of the doctrine of God's sovereignty, that He is truly in charge of all things, and that His salvation is something He has bought and paid for on behalf of all His elect, and not one of His elect children shall perish!)

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: *and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel*.....

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and *about* the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, *be* unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. (THIS IS THE SAME AS THE 'MILLENNIUM' OF CH 20, IT IS THE SAINTS' REIGNING WITH CHRIST, EVEN NOW, AND FOR EVER! NOT FOR 1,000 YEARS, BUT FOR EVER! THE 1,000 YEARS IN REVELATION 20 IS A SYMBOL OF FOR EVER, AND HERE IN CHAPTER 7 IS ANOTHER VISION OF THE SAME GOSPEL TRUTH ABOUT THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN.)

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. ***(Just as the perfect number (7 churches) indicates that here in the Revelation, Jesus speaks to the whole Church, the entire number of God's elect from every age and every nation, likewise THE NUMBER 144,000***

IS A SYMBOLIC PICTURE OF THE WHOLE CHURCH OF GOD, DRAWING ON THE IMAGERY OF THE TWELVE TRIBES OF ISRAEL, GOD'S OLD COVENANT PEOPLE – REMEMBER, ISRAEL AND THE OLD COVENANT ARE ALWAYS SYMBOLIC OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH. THIS IS TRUE ALL THROUGHOUT SCRIPTURE. As everything Old Covenant was a prophetic picture of the New Covenant, so the 144,000 represent the whole Church, and the Church is pictured twice here, firstly as the 144,000, secondly as the “a great multitude which no man could number.” THIS IS A CASE OF WHAT IS CALLED 'PARALLELISM' IN HEBREW WRITINGS: whereby the same truth is told twice, using different figures of speech – you see this often in the Psalms. Away with the ridiculous literalism of the Futurists and Dispensationalists, who say these are literally 144,000 Israelites who will evangelise the earth after the Christian Church is taken up in the 'rapture!' The Jesuits have poisoned their minds with popish fantasies since the days of Ribera in the 16th century, so that they cannot think rationally or understand the plain Truth of Scripture. Incidentally, it is interesting that the Jesuits began in 1534, and in 1536 Calvin wrote his 'Institutes' – aren't God's sovereignty and God's providence marvellous doctrines for us to observe in their outworking! But COMPARED TO THE FANTASIES OF THOSE WOLVES IN SHEEP'S CLOTHING, THE TRUTH OF THIS SYMBOLIC PROPHECY IS STRAIGHTFORWARD: 12 is God's number for government or God's order in this world (3 x 4), and 1,000 is a very large number, a number you don't count on your fingers and toes, a number which figuratively represents infinity – hence 12,000 is symbolic of an astronomical number of people under God's order, then multiplied by the 12 tribes of Israel, 144,000 is the astronomical number of God's people, being from every tribe, a prophetic picture of all the elect of God from all generations and all nations! What an obvious and simple way God has depicted His elect in this vision, compared to the fantasies about a literal 144,000 Jewish evangelists who evangelise the world after the Christian Church is gone up to heaven – What utter nonsense! NOT ONLY ARE THE NUMBER AND THE TWELVE TRIBES SYMBOLIC IN THIS CONTEXT, BUT THE SEAL IS ALSO SYMBOLIC – GOD'S PEOPLE ARE SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT, NOT A TATTOO. LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD: Ephesians 1:13-14, “after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 4:30, “30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” (GOD'S ELECT, CONTRARY

TO JESUIT AND DISPENSATIONALIST PROPAGANDA, DO NOT HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT BEING TATTOOED ON THE FOREHEAD OR THE RIGHT HAND, OR RECEIVING A SILICON CHIP – ALL THIS NONSENSE IS IRRELEVANT TO THE PROPHECIES OF SCRIPTURE! The prophecies speak of a SPIRITUAL SEAL OF GOD upon His elect and a SPIRITUAL SEAL OF THE ROMAN ANTICHRIST on those who follow him. In any case, the “mark of the beast” is specifically described in Revelation 13: “16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: 17 And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. 18 Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” This is not some mystery! It is the number 666, which is the number of the name of the beast – i.e. ‘The Vicar of the Son of God’, the Pope’s official title – ‘Vivarius Filii Dei’ in Latin, which in Roman numerals equals exactly 666! SO, IF, AS THE JESUIT PROPAGANDA FOLLOWERS CLAIM, THAT THE MARK OF THE BEAST WAS TO BE A LITERAL MARK, THEN IT COULD ONLY BE THE LITERAL NUMBER ‘666’, IT COULD NOT BE A SILICON CHIP OR SOME OTHER NONDESCRIPT OR MYSTERY THING! Note – the Devil thrives on mystery! Hidden things, secret knowledge, secret societies! But God’s truth is plain as the nose on your face! We are told exactly what the mark is – the number 666. But if we can just understand (according to Scripture, as we are already told), that the vision is symbolic, like all the other visions, then the mark also is symbolic, i.e. IT IS SPIRITUAL, THE ‘MARK’ IS THE SPIRITUAL MAKEUP OF THE PERSON WHO FOLLOWS THE BEAST, THE MARK ON THE HEAD AND THE RIGHT HAND MEANS THE PERSON HAS THE MIND AND THE WORKS OF THE BEAST, whereas, “we have the mind of Christ”, Paul says, and our ‘mark’ or ‘seal’ is the Holy Spirit within us, and the Spirit of God gives us the mind of Christ and enables us to do the works of Christ – it really is as simple as that! And so, the person who is eternally sealed with the Spirit of Christ, and eternally joined to the Eternal Spirit of God, can never receive the mark of the beast – once you are given, by the grace of God, His own Spirit within you, you cannot suddenly change from that eternally settled position! You have the mind of Christ, therefore you cannot abandon Him and take on the mind and works of the Antichrist! It is impossible! As Jesus said, “By their fruits ye shall know them” – i.e. bad men have bad minds and do bad deeds; good men have good minds and do good deeds. Followers of Antichrist have his mind and do his deeds; followers of Christ have His mind and do His deeds.

“By their fruits ye shall know them”. *There is a terrible delusion on this very point, among the wider evangelical and charismatic churches, especially in this modern self-centred age – a false doctrine that says God loves the sinner but hates the sin. This is a lie! The Truth is, as Blind Freddy can see and read in the Scriptures, that God hates both sin and sinners, and He only loves His own chosen children – the rest He intends to punish in everlasting hell fire! That is why men are known by their fruits – you are either a sheep or a goat, you cannot be something in between! You must be sure you are a sheep and not a goat! You must examine yourself, and prove whether you are in the faith, as Paul said (2 Corinthians 13:5).*

So the Lamb has opened 6 seals, revealing His judgment of the wicked in the earth, and the protection of His saints, and the rest of His saints in heaven, as they await the glorious resurrection when all souls are to be brought before His judgment seat. Truly this is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants things which must shortly come to pass,” things which are now well under way, things “signified” (i.e. symbolised) which show the fulfilment of the gospel being worked out through all the centuries until the Lord returns, which prove the gospel of Christ, that God hath made this Jesus whom they crucified both Lord and Christ, and that to Him every knee shall bow. May God give us grace to fully enjoy His Words of Truth and encouragement to the saints, and to confirm this testimony to our own generation. Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)

THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION

EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL THROUGH THE REVELATION *Continued The Lord's Day 30th June 2019.*

CH 8 & 9 – THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS REIGNING WITH CHRIST

*As we come to **chapter 8**, we see the number “7” appear strongly again, with the opening of the “seventh seal”, and the appearance of “seven angels” with “seven trumpets,” through to **chapter 10**, where the “seventh angel” introduces the “seven thunders.” All this continues to underline the fact that the Lamb, the risen and reigning Christ, is issuing every divine decree and ordering all things that come to pass in heaven and earth, and it keeps REMINDING US OF THE FACT THAT THE REVELATION IS SYMBOLIC, NOT LITERAL, AND THAT IT IS SPIRITUAL, NOT POLITICAL OR HISTORICAL – i.e. while it does mention historical points here and there, its main thrust and purpose is that it teaches general gospel truth throughout, therefore it is relevant to the whole Church in all places and all times to the end of the world.*

CHAPTER 8

AND when he had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour.

2 And I saw the seven angels which stood before God; and to them were given seven trumpets.

3 And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer *it* with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

4 And the smoke of the incense, *which came* with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand.

5 And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar, and cast *it* into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. *(Again we see, by the incense offered with the prayers of all saints, just before the seven trumpets begin to sound, THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE “PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS” IN THE UNFOLDING OF THESE MIGHTY EVENTS.*

The Lord has graciously involved His people in His mighty acts throughout the ages, especially through prayer: WHEN THE LORD WAS READY TO

DESTROY SODOM FOR ITS WICKEDNESS, HE MOVED ABRAHAM TO PRAY FOR HIS NEPHEW LOT AND THE WHOLE CITY OF SODOM, so that Lot and his two daughters were delivered from the city before the fire fell; WHEN ISRAEL WAS IN BONDAGE IN EGYPT UNDER A CRUEL PHARAOH, THE LORD HEARD THE CRY OF HIS PEOPLE BECAUSE OF THE HARD BONDAGE and He sent Moses to deliver them while God's judgments were poured out on Egypt, and Moses continued to intercede for his people all through their journeys in the wilderness; WHEN DANIEL WAS IN CAPTIVITY WITH THE PEOPLE OF GOD IN BABYLON, THE LORD MOVED HIM TO INQUIRE INTO THE PROPHECIES OF JEREMIAH and seek understanding of the 70 years' captivity and the ultimate deliverance of the Israelites from Babylon; THE ENGLISH POET TENNYSON is often quoted for the famous line, "More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of." Tennyson was right. ONLY ETERNITY WILL REVEAL WHAT WAS WROUGHT IN TIME BY THE PRAYERS OF THE SAINTS, by God literally working with His people, both on earth while they live, and in heaven after their departure. LET US NOTE ALSO THAT THIS IS NO BASIS FOR THE ROMAN CATHOLIC ERROR OF PRAYING TO THE SAINTS IN HEAVEN OR WORSHIPPING THEM! The saints in heaven pray to the Lord, as our text shows, but we do not pray to them! These departed saints are not mediators between us and God, for (1 Timothy 2:5-6) "5 For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; 6 Who gave himself a ransom for all." But surely this simple fact, of the saints in heaven participating through prayer in the unfolding events on earth, is an important aspect of what Scripture calls the reign of Christ and His saints – of which the beasts and the elders sang, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth" (5:9-10), so we see that the saints reign with Christ, both in life and death, i.e. through prayer they share something of His reign upon heaven's throne! This is the true meaning of the 'millennium' which is spoken of in ch 20 – THE REIGN OF THE SAINTS WITH CHRIST FOR 1,000 YEARS IS NEITHER A LITERAL 1,000 YEARS, NOR IS IT ON EARTH, NOR IS IT AFTER CHRIST'S RETURN BUT BEFORE IT, all of which is plainly revealed in the text. Let us thank God for such a privilege, and make the most of our opportunities for prayer! Those who say that the reign of Christ and His saints from heaven is not already happening now, have obviously never considered what it is that is going on in heaven now, or how it could be, that we are to reign when there

are no wicked left on earth to reign over (if, as they claim, this reign is to occur after the Lord's return)! But here we see it plainly revealed that the departed saints are resting from their weary labours, are worshipping God, and interceding for the situation which continues on earth at the same time! Those who swallow the Jesuit Futurist and Dispensationalist lies have clearly never considered that according to Scripture, Christ is already reigning – even now – and that Christ reigns for ever, but the reign of His saints over the earth does have an end; it will end at the end of the world, because after the end of the world and the judgment of all flesh, there will be no longer any brethren on earth to intercede for, and no wicked on earth to intercede against, as there are now! But right now, Christ and His saints in heaven are reigning over the earth! And it is a present reality which the false teachers of our days are denying the churches the blessing of understanding. Here is tremendous encouragement for the saints on earth: so often we are disappointed with the goings on in this world, the ungodliness that seems to prevail on every side, but our prayers are ascending to the very throne of God, our groans and sighs, our tears and griefs, they are not in vain, but, alongside the prayers of the departed saints in heaven, our prayers on earth actually determine many of the divine purposes unfolding on earth from day to day. Let us read on and see just how glorious and how powerful this reign of Christ and the saints is!)

7 The first angel sounded, and there followed hail and fire mingled with blood, and they were cast upon the earth: and the third part of trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up.

8 And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea: and the third part of the sea became blood;

9 And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea, and had life, died; and the third part of the ships were destroyed.

10 And the third angel sounded, and there fell a great star from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of waters;

11 And the name of the star is called Wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters, because they were made bitter.

12 And the fourth angel sounded, and the third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third

part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise.

13 And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

CHAPTER 9

AND the fifth angel sounded, and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth: and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit.

2 And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace; and the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit.

3 And there came out of the smoke locusts upon the earth: and unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power.

4 And it was commanded them that they should not hurt the grass of the earth, neither any green thing, neither any tree; but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads. ***(AGAIN WE ARE REMINDED OF THE PROTECTION PROVIDED FOR US IN CHRIST, so that, while we may suffer in this world, we are not suffering as objects of God's wrath, but God's wrath is being directed at a rebellious world on a daily basis. Many modern commentators say that we are in an 'age of grace' and there is no wrath until the end of the world and the final judgment, and God loves everybody equally, and patiently waits for all the wicked to repent, but this is a lie. The OLD TESTAMENT PROPHET AND PSALMIST DAVID UNDERSTOOD GOD'S WRATH AGAINST THE WICKED (Psalm 7), "God judgeth the righteous, and God is angry with the wicked every day," and SPEAKING OF THE NEW COVENANT TO COME, DAVID ALSO PROPHESED OF CHRIST'S HEAVENLY REIGN OVER THE EARTH, "I have set my King upon my holy hill of Zion," (Psalm 2), and he declared that reign of Christ from heaven to be one of vengeance upon the wicked, as well as protection and blessing for His own people, "10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. 11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. 12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." So, clearly, yet again, we see the Revelation is about Christ's reign, in heaven, with the departed saints, as He pours out His wrath upon the earth, and at the same time, protects His saints on earth, as they suffer great tribulation.)***

5 And to them it was given that they should not kill them, but that they should be tormented five months: and their torment *was* as the torment of a scorpion, when he striketh a man.

6 And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it; and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them.

7 And the shapes of the locusts *were* like unto horses prepared unto battle; and on their heads *were* as it were crowns like gold, and their faces *were* as the faces of men.

8 And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as *the teeth* of lions.

9 And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron; and the sound of their wings *was* as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle.

10 And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were stings in their tails: and their power *was* to hurt men five months.

11 And they had a king over them, *which is* the angel of the bottomless pit, whose name in the Hebrew tongue *is* Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath *his* name Apollyon.

12 One woe is past; and, behold, there come two woes more hereafter.

13 And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar which is before God,

14 Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates.

15 And the four angels were loosed, which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men.

16 And the number of the army of the horsemen *were* two hundred thousand thousand: and I heard the number of them.

17 And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them, having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth, and brimstone: and the heads of the horses *were* as the heads of lions; and out of their mouths issued fire and smoke and brimstone.

18 By these three was the third part of men killed, by the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths.

19 For their power is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails *were* like unto serpents, and had heads, and with them they do hurt.

20 And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not of the works of their hands, that they should not worship devils, and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood: which neither can see,

nor hear, nor walk: *(The burning of Notre Dame comes to mind. God has used Moslems to attack idolaters all over the world, but have they repented?)*

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts. *(I want to say at this point that I am not attempting to interpret all the individual bits and pieces of these prophecies. Those who are of the Historicist school of thought will teach virtually the whole politics of Europe and the Middle East out of these verses of Scripture. They will tell you where Mohammed and Napoleon fit in, the French Revolution, and the liberation of Jerusalem by General Allenby, and that all this is so vitally important to God's programme, because they claim that unless Jerusalem is controlled by the Jews, Christ cannot return, because they claim that the prophets predict that, according to Zechariah 14, Christ will come to the Mount of Olives and He will occupy an earthly throne in Jerusalem for 1,000 years. All this is, of course, complete and utter nonsense, and it has no basis at all in Scripture, it is mere fantasy, as we have already seen by our earlier studies in The Revelation and related Scriptures (even if we look at this rationally and without spiritual insight, we can see that their ideas are conjecture at best, without a shred of proof of their wild conclusions. They have merely snipped pieces of prophecy out of many and varied places in Scripture and put them all together like a fantastic work of art!) – But with both rational and spiritual wisdom, we can see that CHRIST HAS ALREADY COME TO THE MOUNT OF OLIVES, AND MOST OF THOSE PROPHECIES ARE ALREADY FULFILLED AS EVEN THE APOSTLES SHOW US IN VARIOUS PLACES, AND WE ARE NOT WAITING FOR ANYTHING WHATSOEVER TO OCCUR IN THE POLITICS OF THIS WORLD TO ENABLE CHRIST TO RETURN – He could come at any moment, and what happens or doesn't happen in Jerusalem, has nothing to do with Christ's return and the end of this world – the Old Covenant, its city, its temple, and its people, are no longer central to God's kingdom (And for those who just cannot accept this, let them read Hebrews, where the great apostle Paul has spelled it all out for them, if only they can believe it)! LET ME UNDERLINE AGAIN, THE PURPOSE OF THE REVELATION – IT IS NOT TO DELVE INTO THE POLITICS AND POWERS OF THIS WORLD; IT IS THE REVELATION OF JESUS CHRIST! It is not given to us so we can predict future politics and power struggles on earth, or to interpret present ones, but to see the present reality of the eternal kingdom of God, with Christ already seated upon heaven's throne, ruling and reigning with His saints! Much is made (by false teachers) about the idea that Christ must reign for 1,000 years, and I have*

explained this already many times, that according to Scripture, THE 1,000 YEARS OF REVELATION 20 IS NEITHER LITERAL NOR ON EARTH, but with this mania of the 1,000 years and a rapture of the saints before it, being the only thing many can see, they are blinded to the fact that we are told plainly in Scripture that Christ reigns for ever, not merely for 1,000 years! NB: 11:15, “And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.” THIS IS WHAT THE KINGDOM OF GOD MEANS, THAT SINCE CHRIST ROSE AND ASCENDED INTO HEAVEN, HE BEGAN TO REIGN ETERNALLY! AND IF YOU DO NOT BELIEVE THIS, YOU BELIEVE ONLY HALF A GOSPEL, BECAUSE THIS IS THE GOSPEL – it means that Jesus is the Lord, He is Christ, He is King, and He is reigning now and for ever! So, by all means, read various commentaries on these prophecies and enjoy them for what they are worth, as you would enjoy a good book or a good movie, and some of them have their place, and may well contain some accurate understanding of world events here and there, and have provided a great degree of comfort to the Church through the ages, but they are like the proverbial “personal testimony” - “Look what Jesus did for me! Isn't He wonderful? He'll do the same for you.” - But that is not the gospel! Stories and books and personal testimonies provide a momentary emotional lift, but they are not the gospel of Christ, and only “the gospel of Christ is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth” (Roman 1:16)! AND THAT IS ONE REASON WHY CHURCHES WHICH HAVE MAJORED ON EXPERIENTIAL TESTIMONIES ARE IN SPIRITUAL DECLINE. It matters little what Jesus has done for you and me. What matters is Who He is, and that is what true Christian testimony is all about! As I have just mentioned, this is the Christian confession, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, not merely that He is my Lord! Because, whether He is my Lord or not, matters very little, what really matters is that He is The Lord Jehovah! And whether I am saved or not, He is still The Lord God Almighty! The gospel is about Him, not about me!!! And to preach Jesus Christ, is not to preach that He is a Saviour to all who will turn to Him for help, although that is true, but the gospel is this: Jesus Christ is the Lord Jehovah, and to Him every knee shall bow, and He requires your worship! It is not to say, “You have a choice to follow Jesus,” but, rather, “You have no choice but to follow Him, because if you do not follow Him, you will justly perish in eternal hell fire.” SO WHAT AM I SAYING ABOUT INTERPRETATIONS OF THESE PROPHECIES? I AM SAYING, DON'T LOOK FOR POLITICAL DETAIL ABOUT THE NATIONS ON EARTH, DON'T IMAGINE YOU

CAN PREDICT FUTURE EVENTS! LOOK FOR CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM, CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH! THAT IS WHAT THE REVELATION IS ALL ABOUT! So I want to say again in conclusion, that The Revelation is not literal and political; it is symbolic and spiritual – The Revelation is the gospel of Christ in symbol – that is why it is called “The Revelation of Jesus Christ”!) May God work His mighty wonders again and bless this generation with the Revelation of Jesus Christ! May He enlighten us by His written Word to understand that we can triumph with Him over all the enemies while we live on earth, and more so when He takes us to our rest in heaven, so that even while our bodies are decaying in the grave, our souls are rejoicing and reigning with Him! Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION
EIGHTHLY THE SEVENS & OTHER SPECIAL NUMBERS FEATURE ALL
THROUGH THE REVELATION.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 7th July 2019.

***THE CHURCH IN TRIBULATION CEASING NOT TO TEACH AND PREACH THE
BITTER/SWEET GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST***

As we touch on some main points of interest arising out of our text (Revelation 10 & 11), let us BEAR IN MIND THAT THE REVELATION, ACCORDING TO THE INTRODUCTION IN THE FIRST CHAPTER, IS TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS SYMBOLIC AND SPIRITUAL, AS OPPOSED TO LITERAL AND POLITICAL, i.e. that THE REVELATION IS LITERALLY THE GOSPEL IN SYMBOL, as it relates to God's people in this world, from Christ's first advent to His second advent at the end of the world.

CHAPTER 10

AND I saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, clothed with a cloud: and a rainbow *was* upon his head, and his face *was* as it were the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire:

2 And he had in his hand a little book open: and he set his right foot upon the sea, and *his left foot* on the earth,

3 And cried with a loud voice, as *when* a lion roareth: and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices.

4 And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices, I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not.

5 And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth lifted up his hand to heaven,

6 And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things which are therein, that there should be time no longer:

7 But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the prophets.

LET US NOTE THAT THIS SECTION OF THE PROPHECY LOOKS FORWARD TO THE JUDGMENT AT THE END OF THE WORLD, AND AGAIN, THE NUMBER '7' SIGNIFIES THE PERFECT PLAN OF GOD COMPLETED, but remember, it is the

apostle John, who is still living in the latter part of the 1st century, who is receiving this prophecy, and now suddenly the focus changes, John is reminded of what is the present priority on earth – he and his friends of like precious faith and of like calling, on earth, must fulfil their own calling and preach the gospel.

JOHN DIDN'T KNOW THAT NEARLY 2,000 YEARS WOULD PASS AND STILL WE WOULD BE WAITING FOR THE LORD'S RETURN! Nor do you and I know how long yet before that day, so just as John needed to apply himself wholeheartedly to the task at hand, so do we today.

MANY HAVE THOUGHT THEY KNEW HOW NEAR THEY WERE TO THE LORD'S RETURN, BUT WERE MISTAKEN: Even 30 years ago, I heard many people, and many preachers and teachers, saying that the Lord's return was very near. Many were saying that He would come within 5 or 10 years. Then there was the 'millennium', the end of the 20th century, but the Lord still didn't come! And that is now almost two decades ago! AND MANY OF THESE PREACHERS ARE NOW DEAD AND GONE!

THEIR SUPPOSED FAITH IN THE LORD'S RETURN WAS NOT FAITH IN GOD'S WORD, BUT MERELY AN OBSESSION WITH THEIR OWN PRIVATE OPINIONS OR INTERPRETATIONS OF PROPHECY! Peter warns us that prophecy is not a matter of “private interpretation” – (2 Peter 1:20). Where would we be today, if the apostle John had been so foolish as to go off half-cocked at every imagination of his mind, and go on and on about how near he thought the Lord's return might be? Let us thank God that JOHN WAS A TRUE APOSTLE AND A TRUE PROPHET, AND HE WAS NOT CAUGHT UP IN THE MANIA AND FOOLISHNESS OF MINDLESS SPECULATION, BUT WHEN HE SPOKE, HE SPOKE THE TRUTH OF GOD, AND HE NEVER FAILED TO TEACH SOUND DOCTRINE! BUT WHEN WILL THE CHURCH OF OUR DAY LEARN? When will the Church return to the Word of God, and reject the false teachers and false prophets? When will the Church return to its duty and task, to “cease not to teach and preach Jesus Christ” (Acts 5:42), as the apostles did?

LET US SEE HOW JOHN WAS INSTRUCTED TO DO THIS VERY THING:

8 And the voice which I heard from heaven spake unto me again, and said, Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth.

9 And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book. And he said unto me, Take *it*, and eat it up; and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey.

10 And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter.

11 And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings.

TO PROPHECY IS TO SPEAK GOD'S WORD TO MAN, AND JOHN'S PROPHECYING WAS NOTHING MORE OR LESS THAN THE TEACHING AND PREACHING OF JESUS CHRIST, (AS WE HAVE ALREADY OBSERVED, EVEN THE REVELATION IS THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST IN SYMBOL)! And what was the outcome, the fruit, of this gospel preaching at Jerusalem and beyond? The sweet water of life, the gospel of Christ, was bitter to those who rejected it, and to some extent, it is even bitter to those who preach it, because of the awful results, because of the enmity it also stirs up against God, and the increase of wickedness and violence that follows. THE GOSPEL IS TRULY A TWO-EDGED SWORD – it wounds and heals those who receive it, but those who reject it, it wounds to death, and that death is eternal separation from God, eternal torment. I don't like the present realities of this world any more than others do, who are suffering and battling to survive, and reeling under the heavy blows of disease and pain and injustice. I don't like to wake up daily to all the woes of the world, the wars and famines and pestilences, the wickedness on every side, the wanton cruelty towards animals, and even towards defenceless children – these things grieve me daily, and make me long for a better world, a “new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness!” (2 Peter 3:13). And so we should grieve, but all too often, our greatest mistake is that we love this world too much. Thank God that He is so merciful that He makes us uncomfortable in this wicked world! THANK GOD THAT HE DOESN'T GIVE US ULTIMATE REST AND PEACE HERE, IN THIS FALLEN WORLD OF FILTH AND CONFUSION! THAT HE HAS SOMETHING FAR BETTER PREPARED FOR HIS CHILDREN! BUT THERE ARE MANY PROFESSING CHRISTIANS WHO SEEM TO LOVE THIS WORLD MORE THAN THEY LOVE THE WORD OF GOD – THIS IS A GREAT CONTRADICTION! Many professing Christians behave as if they are the centre of the universe, and that Christ is just a lackey to run about and get them all the things they want to enjoy, to make their sinful lives comfortable on this earth, and I suspect that they scarcely even think about a better world, they are so focused on this one. And many more seem to be

*able to lie and commit adultery as if God doesn't care! And why do professing Christians get away with such 'murder'? It is murder by the way. It is crucifying Christ again (Hebrews 6:6) and making a mockery of His name and His gospel and His unspeakable suffering on behalf of His people. But how can professing Christians so readily behave in this way, which contradicts the gospel of Christ and His eternal kingdom? It is because they have received a false gospel – a 'love gospel,' a 'gospel' which says Jesus loves everybody, but has very little to say about "sin and righteousness and judgment". But Jesus came to save sinners not the self-righteous, as He said Himself (Matthew 9:13). **THE CHURCH MUST STAND UP AGAIN AND PREACH THE GOSPEL IN THE FACE OF ALL THESE LIES AND CONTRADICTIONS AND BLASPHEMIES. We must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. May God give us grace to do so, for His glory and for the help of His people. But for all that, it will be a bitter/sweet experience, so long as this sinful world remains.***

CHAPTER 11

AND there was given me a reed like unto a rod: and the angel stood, saying, Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein.

2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles: and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. (**WHEN JESUS WAS STILL ON EARTH, HE TAUGHT HIS DISCIPLES WHAT THE FALL OF JERUSALEM WOULD BE LIKE: Luke 21**, “20 And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. 21 Then let them which are in Judæa flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let not them that are in the countries enter thereinto. 22 For these be the days of vengeance, that all things which are written may be fulfilled. 23 But woe unto them that are with child, and to them that give suck, in those days! for **there shall be great distress in the land, and wrath upon this people.** 24 And they shall fall by the edge of the sword, and shall be led away captive into all nations: and **Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles, until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled.**” **THIS IS WHAT JOHN ALSO IS SPEAKING ABOUT: THE DIVINE JUDGMENT OF JERUSALEM, WHICH OCCURRED IN 70 AD, JUST ON 40 YEARS AFTER THEY CRUCIFIED THE LORD. And in all probability, Jerusalem had already fallen at the time this prophecy was given to John (after 90 AD), and if this is so, then JOHN'S PROPHECY IS NOT PREDICTING**

THOSE EVENTS, BUT IS DRAWING ON THOSE EVENTS IN SYMBOL, to show how the whole world will have a similar experience in the centuries to follow, that as Jerusalem suffered an awful final judgment in 70 AD, so shall the whole world be judged in the end.)

3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days, clothed in sackcloth.

4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

WHAT IS A CANDLESTICK? AS WE HAVE SEEN IN REVELATION 1, IT REPRESENTS A CHURCH! HOW LONG WILL THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH PROPHESEY? ALL THE TIME OF THIS TRIBULATION ON EARTH UNTIL THE LORD RETURNS – this thousand two hundred and threescore days is the same 3 ½ years spoken of in other prophecies we have considered before: the same time as the symbolic 1,000 years in which Satan is bound (Satan was bound at Calvary!), and the same time the saints reign with Christ (Revelation 20); the same time as the symbolic 3 ½ years the Church is protected in the wilderness (Revelation 12); and the same time the Roman Antichrist, “the dragon”, persecutes the Church (Revelation 12) – it is the whole Christian era until Christ returns, because His Church never ceases to prophesy, never ceases to teach and preach the Lord Jesus until the end of the world.

John goes on to speak of these two witnesses...

5 And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed.

WHO ARE THEY, WHOM GOD PROTECTS IN THE EARTH, SO THAT EVEN THE HAIRS OF THEIR HEADS ARE ALL NUMBERED? HIS CHURCH! The disciples of Jesus – Matthew 10:30.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.

WHO ARE THEY ON EARTH WHO HAVE SUCH STUPENDOUS POWERS OVER THE EARTH? THE PREACHING, PRAYING, WORSHIPPING CHURCH OF CHRIST! HOWEVER, THE CHURCH’S POWER OVER THE EARTH IS NOT TEMPORAL BUT SPIRITUAL, ALTHOUGH IT HAS SOME TEMPORAL EFFECTS – BECAUSE THOSE WHO PREACH JESUS CHRIST ARE VINDICATED EVEN IN THIS WORLD. The gospel is preached and God confirms it, and He requires men to repent.

This is an awful power, and it is bitter-sweet to the experience of the Church, because the preaching of God's Word brings judgment as well as blessing. Those preachers who run about speaking of nothing but blessings are strangers to the Word of God, and very likely, strangers to God Himself! And they will never understand this prophecy, as the comfort of the Church that it is, as she is persecuted in this world for preaching and teaching Jesus Christ the Lord. Those who faithfully preach Jesus do suffer for it – ask Israel Folau if life is easy and prosperous and trouble-free for those who preach that men must repent of their sins and believe in Jesus if they are to escape the everlasting fires of hell!

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

WHO ARE THEY WHOM THE BEAST, THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE PAPACY, OVERCOMES AND KILLS? THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH! This is not a contradiction, that the Church is both protected and killed at the same time – the Church is physically killed by its enemies, but spiritually, it is eternally secure, safe in the Rock of Ages, and is always triumphant over its enemies in this world, no matter what the circumstances! We appear to this world to be losers, but in eternity we are winners. As Jesus put it, “Many that are first shall be last and the last first” – Mark 10:31.

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

JERUSALEM IS CALLED SODOM BY THE PROPHETS AND REBUKED FOR HER EGYPTIAN IDOLATRY (ISAIAH 1:10, EZEKIEL 22 & 23), BECAUSE OF HER UNFAITHFULNESS, AND IT IS JERUSALEM WHERE CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED: Christ lay dead in Jerusalem for three days and three nights before He rose again, His bride, the Church, was dead with Him, for He bore our sins, and that is the only reason for His death! Remember how God put Adam to sleep and made his wife out of his rib while he slept (Genesis 2) – in the same way, when Christ's body slept 3 days and 3 nights in the tomb, His Bride the Church was born out of His sacrificial death (Matthew 12:40). But His Church also continues to prophesy throughout her full term until He comes again, and throughout history, as Christian influence ebbs and flows, as Churches rise and fall, and prominent Christians come and go, and persecution even seems to almost destroy the Church in some places,

or as in our present day, it seems the Church has no power and no influence over an arrogant and hedonistic society, seems to have no power to stem the tide of militant feminism, militant homosexuality, an explosion of false doctrine and false cults, over self-willed and self-righteous governments and courts and other wicked institutions running roughshod over God's Word and blaspheming our Lord, so that to her enemies from time to time, the Church will appear to be dead and gone, but in the day of her resurrection she will be gloriously revived for all the world to see!

MANY MARTYRS HAVE BEEN TORTURED AND TORMENTED BY CHRIST'S ENEMIES ON EARTH, AND THEIR ENEMIES GLOATED OVER THEM, BUT LITTLE DID THEY REALIZE, BY KILLING THESE SAINTS, THEY ONLY SENT THEM HOME TO GLORY! Wycliffe, who gave England its first Bible, was so hated by the Roman Antichrist that his bones were dug up and burned long after he was dead, but even while Wycliffe's bones were being dug up, his soul was in heaven reigning with Christ, and in the resurrection morning, Wycliffe, who is known as the 'Morning Star of the Reformation,' will rise again with the whole Church and condemn its persecutors! And this is also true of the meanest of saints, because everyone who believes in Jesus is alive in Him, and He will raise them all up at the last day! (John 6)

9 And they of the people and kindreds and tongues and nations shall see their dead bodies three days and an half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.

10 And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth.

11 And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell upon them which saw them.

THROUGHOUT THE AGES, THERE HAVE BEEN TWO MAIN BODIES OF WITNESSES UNTO THE LORD – THE JEWISH OR ISRAELITE CHURCH OF THE OLD TESTAMENT, AND THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH WHICH EMPHASISES THE INCLUSION OF GENTILES, PEOPLE OF ALL NATIONS. Paul speaks in Romans 11 of “all Israel” (i.e. all the people of God – all the elect), symbolised by a “good olive tree,” of which the Israelites are the “natural branches” and the Gentile converts are branches of a “wild olive tree” “grafted in” to the Church of God. In Christ, under the New Covenant, the two have become one: Paul explains this to the Gentile Church at Ephesus: Ephesians 2:11-22, “11

Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. **14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one**, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for **to make in himself of twain one new man**, so making peace; 16 And **that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross**, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; 20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; 21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” ***THIS CHURCH, WHICH GOD HAS REDEEMED BY THE BLOOD OF HIS ONLY-BEGOTTEN SON, IS DECLARED BY HIM TO BE UNITED ETERNALLY TO CHRIST, LEGALLY AND SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING, DEAD WITH CHRIST AND RISEN WITH HIM! Galatians 2:20, “20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.” 2 Timothy 2:11-12, “if we be dead with him, we shall also live with him: 12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with him”. This is not to say that we must suffer in order to purchase blessings for ourselves – it is simply saying that we, God’s people shall suffer, but he reminds us that, after the suffering, we shall reign with Christ in heaven! In other words, “What if we suffer? If we suffer, we shall also reign with Him!” But by contrast, those who will not suffer with and for Christ, those who take His Words lightly, shall not reign with Him, but be judged by Him at the end.***

HOW MUCH BETTER IT IS TO ENRICH OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE GOSPEL WHEN WE READ THESE PROPHECIES, RATHER THAN TO BE HOPELESSLY CONFUSED BY THE FANTASIES OF THOSE WHO CLAIM TO BE EXPERTS IN INTERPRETING BIBLE PROPHECY AND WORLD EVENTS: e.g. all the speculation about who these witnesses are, if they are Enoch and Elijah to come back to earth to

preach in Jerusalem, if they are Peter and Paul to be raised from the dead to preach again in Jerusalem where they preached before and are now for ever departed from, into heaven itself! – what complete and utter nonsense these ideas are!

NOT ONLY IS THIS IDEA OF ELIJAH OR PETER COMING BACK TO EARTH BIZARRE, BUT IT FLATLY CONTRADICTS THE SCRIPTURES – 1 CORINTHIANS 15 SAYS PLAINLY THAT THE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD IS IN TWO PARTS ONLY: “Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming” – THERE IS NOBODY RAISED IN BETWEEN CHRIST’S RESURRECTION AND THE ONE GREAT RESURRECTION OF ALL AT THE LAST DAY, NO MENTION OF ELIJAH AND ENOCH HERE! But even the context here in Revelation 11 is clear – John is viewing a vision representing the goings on in heaven, and his attention is then turned to the task on earth, at the time, in the first century, where the gospel must be preached, and then the two witnesses are mentioned, which are already abundantly pictured in Scripture by the temple furnishings, and later in the epistles as we have seen. This is the Church! And the Church is crucified with Christ and risen again with Him! Hallelujah!

THE REVELATION IS SYMBOLIC! THESE WITNESSES ARE NOT TWO INDIVIDUAL PEOPLE! In times past, Bunyan's “Pilgrim's Progress” has been a popular book with Christians, an allegory written about the pilgrim journey of a Christian on earth, but I suggest to those who think Bunyan's book is so vital for us to read that they place it almost on a par with Scripture, How much greater is “The Revelation of Jesus Christ”! It is Holy Writ! It is perfect! It is inspired by God, every jot and tittle of it! THE REVELATION IS INFINITELY BETTER THAN ‘PILGRIM’S PROGRESS’, IT IS NOT A MERE MAN’S INTERPRETATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE (AS GOOD A MAN AS BUNYAN WAS) BUT THE REVELATION IS GOD’S OWN ALLEGORY OF THE PILGRIM’S JOURNEY, BOTH ON EARTH AND HIS DESTINATION AND GLORY IN HEAVEN. How much better it would have been, if the Church had been better schooled on The Revelation than in Bunyan, perhaps it would be better anchored to the Word of God, instead of running after more of the latest writings of men? And to those who say The Revelation is hard to understand, I say, Bunyan's work is harder! But it is also inferior! Let us hear the Word of God and cherish it above all else! NB: When we are baby Christians, the Lord does all sorts of miraculous little things for us quite often, to encourage us and reassure us He in with us – e.g. many years ago, when we were just new in the faith, we ran out of tomatoes, so we asked the Lord to provide. Somebody turned up

the same day and gave us some tomatoes! We were thrilled and gave God the glory. IN MANY WAYS THE LORD SPEAKS TO US THROUGH HIS PROVIDENCE, BUT THE LORD WANTS US TO KNOW THAT HE SPEAKS TO US PRIMARILY AND ALWAYS THROUGH HIS WRITTEN WORD, and when we realize this, we are no longer babies in the faith. Many run to and fro, looking for good books, looking for God to speak to them through men, but God would have them sit still and let Him speak to them through His own Words! And He does! And He says also, “Be still and know that I am God!” (Psalm 46:10). Will you hear the Word of God today? Or will you go on and on looking to the words of men? Even preachers do this – they cannot help themselves quoting this preacher and that expert. It makes me almost physically sick to see preachers do this. Will they ever learn? How can they teach the Church if their text is the words of men? God forbid it! It is time for change! It is time to speak God’s Words and not men’s. It is time to prophesy again!

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying unto them, Come up hither. And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud; and their enemies beheld them.

13 And the same hour was there a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell, and in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand: and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven.

14 The second woe is past; and, behold, the third woe cometh quickly.

15 And the seventh angel sounded; and there were great voices in heaven, saying, **The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; and he shall reign for ever and ever.**

IS CHRIST TO REIGN FOR 1,000 YEARS ONLY, AS OUR JESUIT INSPIRED EXPERTS OF TODAY KEEP TELLING US? Is He Who is King of kings and Lord of lords, to enjoy a mere 1,000 years, on an earthly throne, in Jerusalem, after the dust settles from the centuries of conflict between Jew, Arab, and Roman Catholic? The idea is absurd! It is more than absurd – it is blasphemy! And that is what the Reformers thought too. Quoting Calvin’s “Institutes”, “the Chiliasts arose (those who believe in a literal millennium – i.e. the reign of Christ on earth for 1,000 years), who limited the reign of Christ to a thousand years. This fiction is too puerile to need or to deserve refutation. The whole Scripture proclaims that there will be no end either to the happiness of the elect, or the punishment of the reprobate. Moreover, in regard to all things which lie beyond our sight, and far transcend the reach of our intellect, belief must either be founded on the sure oracles of God, or altogether

renounced. (Calvin is saying here that if you do not find this earthly millennium in Scripture, don't believe in it, renounce it – don't say it is a scholarly view that some hold, say it is false, it is not of God, because it is not found in Scripture!) Those who assign only a thousand years to the children of God to enjoy the inheritance of future life, observe not how great an insult they offer to Christ and his kingdom.)

16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God on their seats, fell upon their faces, and worshipped God,

17 Saying, We give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty, which art, and wast, and art to come; because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned.

18 And the nations were angry, and thy wrath is come, and the time of the dead, that they should be judged, and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great; and shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth.

19 And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament: and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail.

LET US CONCLUDE IN THE WORDS OF A LATER PART OF THIS PROPHECY, (Revelation 19:5-6), “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.” Amen. May God give us grace to fully receive The Revelation of the risen and reigning King, and the Church which is His bride, which will rise again when He returns to receive her, and to be strengthened with a refreshing of the revelation that God is with His Church, even as she suffers on earth, and bears the reproach of Jesus for preaching and warning sinners in His name! Amen.

THE REVELATION & END TIMES (Part 11)
THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION

Continued, The Lord's Day, 14th July 2019

Readings: Revelation 1:1-20, 22:7-21, 1 Corinthians 15:19-26

THE REVELATION AND END TIMES
A SUMMARY OF THE WHOLE STUDY

Today I want to begin with a brief word to all, and especially to those who have not had the benefit of following through the whole series of studies on this subject of End Times Prophecy and The Revelation over the past nearly twelve months – If you miss anything at all, if you are confused about anything at all, any aspect of this subject, please give attention to this summary today and (God willing) the second part next week, which will put it all together in a proverbial ‘nut-shell’, and give you a good understanding of the whole subject, and I urge you to request copies of this two-part summary, for any friends who may want help with the subject of End Times Prophecy as well. This is vital truth which the Church must understand, or be, by default, aiding and abetting the very Antichrist in His deception of the whole world!

As we come to this point in our study of *The Revelation*, and particularly this eleventh section, which I have called *The Symbolic Sevens of The Revelation*, we have reached the end of *chapter 11*, and some of the following chapters we have already studied in previous sections, since we began about a year ago, so at this point, I want to go over a brief outline of what we have done to date, just before going on to finish our study.

As an introduction to this study of ***THE REVELATION AND END TIMES PROPHECY***, we studied firstly, the subject of

1. ***THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE in 1 Corinthians 15.*** This was a perfect lead-up to our present study as it introduced some of the main elements of the study of 'Eschatology,' (i.e. 'Last Things' – commonly called 'End Times'). ***1 CORINTHIANS 15 ESTABLISHED FOR US AT THE OUTSET, THAT CHRIST IS UPON HIS THRONE IN HEAVEN NOW, THAT HE DID NOT HAVE TO WAIT 2,000 YEARS TO BE CROWNED KING OF KINGS (AS MANY FALSE TEACHERS CLAIM), but even as the apostles preached from the beginning, even in the first sermon by Peter on the Day of Pentecost, “God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ!” (Acts 2:36). Peter was saying that Jesus of Nazareth was already “Lord”***

i.e. Jehovah, the eternal God, but now this man was made “Christ”, i.e. God’s eternal, reigning King! SO, HERE, IN THE INAUGURAL SERMON OF THE NEWLY BAPTIZED-IN-THE-SPIRIT CHRISTIAN CHURCH, PETER PREACHED A RISEN AND REIGNING CHRIST! And according to *1 Corinthians 15:25*, He shall reign till all His enemies are under His feet, and His return marks the time of the general resurrection and the judgment of all mankind; this Scripture establishes that **CHRIST COMES AGAIN ONLY ONCE, AT THE END OF THE WORLD, NOT 3 ½ YEARS BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD, NOT 7 YEARS BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD, AND NOT 1,000 YEARS BEFORE THE END OF THE WORLD, BUT ONCE AT THE END OF THE WORLD, AND THEN, AFTER THE SAINTS ARE RAISED, WITH ALL THE REST OF THE DEAD – AS WE READ IN 15:24, “THEN COMETH THE END!”** Paul makes the doctrine of the resurrection very plain in this and the previous verse: “22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. 23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ’s at his coming. 24 **Then cometh the end...**” So, as Christ, the Firstfruits, is already risen, there is therefore only one physical resurrection of the dead to come, contrary to the popular false teachings! All this leaves no room for the prevailing heresies: the secret rapture (and resurrection) of the Church before a special time of 'tribulation', and a supposed 'millennial reign' of Christ and His saints, on earth, from a throne at Jerusalem, which (incredibly!) most of the evangelical churches of today maintain as essential doctrine! NB: THIS FALSE DOCTRINE OF THE 1,000 YEAR REIGN OF CHRIST ON EARTH NECESSITATES FURTHER RESURRECTIONS!! AND THAT CONTRADICTS SCRIPTURE AT EVERY POINT AT WHICH THE RESURRECTION IS MENTIONED, BECAUSE ONLY ONE RESURRECTION IS EVER MENTIONED IN SCRIPTURE!

We have also observed throughout our studies that those same prevailing heresies, (namely Futurism and Dispensationalism, which also tie in with Zionism), can be traced back directly to the work of the Counter-Reformation by the Jesuits, especially Francesco Ribera in 1590AD, whose basic outline of the interpretation of end times is held by most of evangelicalism today, hence the Roman Catholic Counter-Reformation has been so successful, as to overthrow essential apostolic doctrine, which had been revived during the Protestant Reformation, when the Scriptures were again given

a central and foundational place. Most of that apostolic and Protestant doctrine has already given way to shades of Roman Catholicism and Paganism, so that there is hardly a truly Protestant Church left in the earth today. Even many who maintain (largely) Reformed and Protestant doctrine, use the modern ecumenical Bibles produced in co-operation with the Church of Rome, and have discarded the old Authorised Version which stands alone as being untainted by Roman Catholic manuscripts and doctrinal manipulations. ***IN FACT, WE HAVE AN INCREDIBLE CONTRADICTION AMONG THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES OF TODAY:*** we have one stream of Churches, largely Baptist, who hold firmly to the King James Bible (the only English Bible produced by Protestant, Bible-believing scholars), yet they hold just as fast to the Jesuit Ribera's doctrines of the End Times; and the other stream is Reformed or Calvinistic Churches, which have generally a correct understanding of doctrine, including End Times doctrine, yet most of them have discarded the only Protestant Bible (the King James) in favour of the Roman-Catholic-approved modern Bibles! (SO, ONE GROUP OF CHURCHES HAS THE TRUE PROTESTANT BIBLE, BUT ROMAN CATHOLIC ESCHATOLOGY – THE OTHER HAS PROTESTANT ESCHATOLOGY, BUT HAS DISCARDED THE PROTESTANT BIBLE AND TURNED TO ROMAN CATHOLIC BIBLES!) And these two Church streams I speak of, which both have these glaring contradictions, are not the wishy-washy middle of the road liberal 'evangelicals,' but some of the most Protestant and Biblical Churches of our day! Hence, we observe how deep the deception runs, how insidiously Rome's Counter-Reformation Jesuits have pulled the wool over the eyes of the Protestants, and how desperate the need is today, for another Reformation which is thoroughly Protestant!

So, I HOPE YOU CAN SEE IN HINDSIGHT, IF IT WASN'T QUITE EVIDENT AT FIRST (A YEAR AGO), THAT BEGINNING WITH ***1 CORINTHIANS 15*** WAS ESSENTIAL TO A CORRECT UNDERSTANDING OF THIS WHOLE SUBJECT OF END TIMES PROPHECY. In fact, this one brief portion of Scripture is like the distilled pure spirit of End Times Truth, because our study of the resurrection in *1 Corinthians 15* immediately exploded the popular heresies, and set the scene for us to proceed on the basis of God's Truth, and to see that all the Scriptures agree on these matters of essential doctrine, that they are not matters of mere opinion or preference, but foundational to the Christian faith – **AND THE PREVAILING ERRORS ARE**

NOT ONLY CONTRADICTIONS OF THE TRUTH ABOUT END TIMES PROPHECY, BUT THEY ARE CONTRADICTIONS OF THE VERY GOSPEL OF CHRIST AS WELL! FOR EXAMPLE: CHRIST SAID HE WOULD COME AGAIN; HE DID NOT SAY HE WOULD COME AGAIN, AND AGAIN, AND AGAIN! CHRIST SAID HE WOULD COME TO JUDGE THE WORLD; HE DID NOT SAY HE WOULD JUDGE THE WORLD MORE THAN ONCE! But the Devil's agents have succeeded in deceiving the Church, by making End Times Prophecy a separate matter altogether from the rest of Bible truth, by focusing on a specialised field of study, narrowly confined to special verses here and there out of the prophetic books, and then forcing their own arbitrary interpretations on them, while ignoring the great wealth of gospel truth throughout Scripture – and the gospel truth throughout Scripture is the real key to understanding prophecy, and the good news to every believer on this subject is, that prophecy is easy to understand, if only you let it be interpreted by Scripture, not by the false teachers and false prophets. **AND HERE IS THE PERFECT TEST CASE – 1 CORINTHIANS 15:22-26 – JUST READ THESE FEW VERSES AND BELIEVE THEM, AND YOU HAVE A PERFECT UNDERSTANDING OF END TIMES PROPHECY (PROVIDED THAT YOU DON'T THROW THAT TRUTH OUT THE WINDOW, WHEN YOU TURN TO THE REVELATION AND OTHER PROPHETICAL BOOKS).**

In studying all *other* books of Scripture, I have normally begun at the beginning of the book and worked through to the end in order, but in this case, the subject of End Times is made so difficult by the many views and interpretations, and the **PREVAILING FALSE DOCTRINES OF FUTURISM, DISPENSATIONALISM, AND ZIONISM**, that some groundwork of basic doctrine was necessary at the beginning. By that, I mean that **THE MIND OF THE AVERAGE BELIEVER TODAY IS SO FULL OF POPISH PROPAGANDA, THAT IF YOU WERE TO TAKE A STUDY OF ANY PART OF *THE REVELATION* ON ITS OWN, WITHOUT FIRST DEALING WITH THE POPISH ERRORS, THE WHOLE EXERCISE WOULD BE ALMOST FUTILE, BECAUSE ALTHOUGH THE HEARERS MIGHT HEAR THE TRUTH, THEY WOULD TEND TO OVERRIDE IT BY THE ESTABLISHED PROPAGANDA IN THEIR MINDS, and so they would be robbed of most of the benefit of the study of this wonderful prophecy.** In saying this, I don't presume to judge the average believer as empty-headed and foolish, but I speak from many years of experience, and many years of grappling with these doctrines early in

my own study of the Scriptures, knowing how hard it is to cleanse the mind of many things just taken for granted because of what others believe, and not realizing at first just how widespread the errors are, and realizing that the Counter-Reformation work of the Jesuits, has pervaded practically the whole visible Church in one way or another! And, as I say this, make no mistake about it, if you study the viewpoints of those who do teach the errors I speak of, you will find that they have a very intricate system of argument from the Scriptures, (“wisdom is justified of all her children”), as do the cults, the Jehovah's Witnesses and the like, therefore it takes diligent and prayerful and patient determination, in searching all the relevant Scriptures, in order to be entirely free of the doubts and errors they put forth – to put it simply, the battle for God's truth is not won easily or cheaply! **THERE ARE MANY VERY CLEVER MEN WHO BELIEVE AND TEACH THESE ERRORS, BUT FOR ALL THEIR INTELLECTUAL ABILITY, THEIR REASONING IS FLAWED, AND THEIR ERROR IS A VERY SIMPLE ONE – THEY DO NOT RELY ON SCRIPTURE ALONE FOR THEIR FOUNDATION, BUT LEAN ON THE SCHOLARSHIP OF OTHER MEN.** This is a deadly mistake! Have you noticed that many people today don't seem to be able to think for themselves, or to think rationally? They are the product of generations of Jesuit training! This is the awful reality we face. But the good news about all this is that, if you approach the Scriptures with childlike faith that they are the very Words of God, and with an honest heart, then you will naturally question the popular propaganda and understand God's truth.

So, HAVING LOOKED AT *1 CORINTHIANS 15*, WE THEN BEGAN THE STUDY OF *THE REVELATION* IN THIS ORDER:

2. ***REVELATION 1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE REVELATION.*** In this we saw the foundation laid for our understanding, that *The Revelation* was “sent and signified by the angel” (***1:1***) - i.e. it was DELIVERED TO JOHN IN A SERIES OF VISIONS WHICH WERE NOT LITERAL, BUT SYMBOLIC, ALSO THEY ARE NOT TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL, BUT SPIRITUAL, (although there is obviously some historical truth in them), for the book gives its title by the opening words, “***The Revelation of Jesus Christ,***” and so we must not forget that, above all else, *The Revelation* is a gospel book, with Christ and His Church at its centre. We saw that the apostle JOHN WAS TOLD AT THE BEGINNING OF *THE REVELATION*, “**THE TIME IS AT HAND**” (***1:3***), AND THE SAME STATEMENT IS

MADE, WORD FOR WORD, AT THE END OF *THE REVELATION* IN **22:10** - “THE TIME IS AT HAND”, SO THAT THE ENTIRE *REVELATION* WAS GIVEN TO THE ENTIRE CHURCH FOR HER EDIFICATION, RIGHT THROUGHOUT HER PILGRIMAGE ON EARTH, FROM THE MOMENT JOHN RECEIVED THESE VISIONS, THROUGH TO THE END OF TIME – **HOW ELSE COULD *THE REVELATION* BE A GREAT BLESSING TO THE CHURCH? HOW COULD *THE REVELATION* BE A BLESSING TO A CHURCH WHICH THE FUTURISTS AND DISPENSATIONALISTS SAY IS ALREADY GONE TO HEAVEN?!!!** Therefore it was not a prophecy that, as some claim, was to be sealed up and not understood until just before the end of time (many cult groups and false teachers have risen up in the last 100 years or so, claiming to have that special revelation to unlock the mysteries of Bible prophecy, but the Truth has been generally understood by the true Church from the beginning); nor did *The Revelation* apply only to the immediate time in which it was given, and have no relevance for future generations, as others claim – No! It was meant to be thoroughly understood by the whole Church throughout her whole course in history: **1:3, “3 Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein,”** hence, *every believer* who reads this prophecy is blessed, whether it was those of the seven Churches of Asia in the first century to whom it was first addressed, the martyrs of the Middle Ages, or believers in Australia today, or anyone in between. Hence, it has nothing to do with the modern fantasies about the supposed rebirth of the nation of Israel, or any other conflict of modern day nations, or silicon chips in the hand or forehead, but it is all about the general conflict and triumph experienced by the Church through all her centuries of time, until the end of time, and most importantly, it is about the Head of the Church, the risen and reigning Christ, with Whom the departed saints are already reigning even now!

3. ***REVELATION 22 – THE COMING OF THE LORD.*** By going from the first chapter straight to the last, we were able to see very early in our study, that THE THEME OF THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST IS CENTRAL THROUGHOUT *THE REVELATION* FROM BEGINNING TO END. Christ had gone up into heaven in a cloud (*Acts 1*), and the Church was, from that day forward, to expect Him to come again in like manner. We observed that, IN KEEPING WITH THE INTRODUCTION IN *CHAPTER 1*, THE LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA IN *CHAPTERS 2 & 3*, AND WITH *1*

CORINTHIANS 15 ON THE RESURRECTION, CHRIST IS EXPECTED BY ALL, TO COME AGAIN, ONCE, TO JUDGE THE QUICK AND THE DEAD, THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE UNRIGHTEOUS – there is no 'programme' as many claim, to be worked through, so that all sorts of pieces of the chronological puzzle must be in place before Christ can return, but Christ is enthroned in heaven now, and Christ shall come again, to judge the world, and to take all His people to Himself for ever. And as “no man knoweth the day or the hour” (*Mark 13:32*), all, from the apostles down to this day, have been taught to live in expectation of that sudden appearing of the Lord.

LET ME UNDERLINE FOR YOU, HOW FUNDAMENTAL THIS BELIEF IN THE ONE RETURN OF CHRIST AND THE ONE RESURRECTION OF THE DEAD HAS BEEN, TO THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH, FROM EARLIEST TIMES – IN THE WORDS OF WHAT IS CALLED, THE APOSTLES’ CREED:

From The Book of Common Prayer, 1662 (Church of England),

*I believe in God the Father Almighty,
Maker of heaven and earth:*

*And in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Ghost,^[b]
Born of the Virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified, dead, and buried:
He descended into hell;
The third day he rose again from the dead;
He ascended into heaven,
And sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty;
From thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.*

*I believe in the Holy Ghost;
The holy Catholick Church;
The Communion of Saints;
The Forgiveness of sins;
The Resurrection of the body,
And the Life everlasting.
Amen.*

*The words of this creed date to about 390AD, over 1,200 years before the Church of England put it in the prayer book. Here is concrete evidence that a creed, held by the Church world-wide, for about 16 centuries, confirms the **Reformed doctrine of Christ’s once return, and one resurrection of all the dead at that time!** How incredible is it then,*

that this basic doctrine has been subverted by the Jesuits and Futurists, so that most of so-called Protestant Churches today no longer believe this basic gospel Truth!

4. **MATTHEW 24 – THE FALL OF JERUSALEM AND THE END OF THE WORLD.** We saw that, as they looked upon the magnificent temple at Jerusalem, THIS ENTIRE DISCOURSE OF JESUS TO HIS DISCIPLES, WAS ABOUT THE FALL OF JERUSALEM, WHICH WAS TO OCCUR JUST 40 YEARS LATER IN 70 AD, AT THE HANDS OF THE ROMAN ARMIES, and all the warnings and instructions about that time were for the Christians in Jerusalem and Judaea, and had nothing to do with the Lord's return at the end of this world, except as a passing mention, and as a type and shadow of what the end of the world would be like. And while the disciples at the time expected that the fall of Jerusalem would be one and the same thing as the Lord's return and the end of the world, this was not to be the case, yet it *was* the end of *that* world; it *was* the end of the Old Testament world, its temple, its ritual, and its people. **NOTICE JESUS' PLAIN WORDS WHICH QUALIFY THE WHOLE DISCOURSE AT THAT TIME: “ALL THESE THINGS SHALL COME UPON THIS GENERATION” (Matthew 23:36), and “This generation shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled” (Matthew 24:34). This is not a matter of interpretation! All that I have said about this point is clearly stated in Scriptures, and in such a clear fashion, that a child can understand it!** But you have to be brave to say so, because very few people believe it today. And this reveals the awful fact, that very few read the Scriptures carefully and prayerfully, and very few pastors are “apt to teach” God’s Word, as God, through Paul, requires his elders to be (*1 Timothy 3:2*)! This is quite alarming! But in everything there is cause and effect – and (apart from the Devil himself), the Jesuits are the primary cause of this, so that in modern times, the whole scheme of interpretation focuses on an imagined 3 ½ year period at the very end of time, rather than applying the prophecies, as they were intended, to various historical events, from the time of the apostles, right through church history. And I repeat: when the Revelation was given, it was spoken of as “things which must shortly come to pass” (*Revelation 1:1*), and here, where Jesus spoke of the fall of Jerusalem in *Matthew 24*, He spoke to a generation that he said, “shall not pass, till all these things be fulfilled”. And as I continue to remind you, it was the Jesuits who

invented a convoluted scheme of interpretation, to overthrow this plain truth.

LET ME UNDERLINE HERE THE MOST IMPORTANT FACT, THE MOST IMPORTANT REASON THE CHURCH IS CONFUSED ABOUT END TIMES PROPHECY— it is not because the Scriptures are hard to understand – it is because people read parts of Scripture which tell the plain truth, and they say in their hearts, “This cannot be true”, so they read another part of Scripture, which confirms the same truth, and again, they say in their hearts, “But this cannot be true, because it is not what the Church teaches!” And so, they just give up on receiving the truth of Scripture, and leave themselves in the treacherous hands of the ‘experts’ – and they don’t know that these ‘experts’ are the Jesuits, and Jesuit-trained pastors – fake pastors! And some of them, even fake Christians!!!! How else can it be, that they are incapable of reading the plain English of the Word of God, men who are supposedly “apt to teach” God’s Church? You can’t have it both ways – either these men are apt to teach, or they are not. Either they speak the truth, or they teach lies, by twisting and turning the Scriptures to suit the prevailing Jesuit propaganda they’ve been trained on!

Quote from Wikipedia on the Jesuit scholar Francesco Ribera:

In order to remove the papacy of the Catholic Church from consideration as the Antichrist (as an act of countering the Protestant Reformation)^[*citation needed*], Ribera began writing a lengthy (500 page) commentary in 1585 on the *Book of Revelation* (Apocalypse) titled *In Sacrum Beati Ioannis Apostoli, & Evangelistiae Apocalypsin Commentarij*, proposing that the first few chapters of the Apocalypse apply to ancient pagan Rome, and the rest he limited to a yet future period of 3½ literal years, immediately prior to the **second coming**. During that time, the Roman Catholic Church would have fallen away from the pope into **apostasy** because of the Reformation cry stating that "the papacy is the seat of the true and real Antichrist." (Martin Luther, Aug. 18, 1520). Then, he proposed, the **Antichrist**, a single individual, would:

- Persecute and blaspheme the saints of God
- Rebuild the temple in **Jerusalem**
- Abolish the Christian religion
- Deny **Jesus Christ**
- Destroy Rome
- Be received by the Jews
- Pretend to be God
- Kill the two witnesses of God

- Conquer the world.

Futurism (Christianity) is the proposal that the *Book of Revelation* does not bear the application to the **Middle Ages** or the papacy, rather the "future" (more particularly to a period immediately prior to the Second Coming). The *Dictionary of Premillennial Theology* (1997) states that Ribera was an **Augustinian amillennialist**, whose form of futurism proposed that only the introductory chapters of "Revelation referred to ancient Rome, and the remainder referred to a literal three and half years at the end of time....

TO SUMMARISE RIBERA'S WORK, ON THE MOST IMPORTANT POINTS, LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY:

- ***It was Ribera who decided that the 3 ½ years, the 42 months, and the 1260 days of various prophecies are to be a literal period of only 3 ½ years, not the many centuries of Church history that had commonly been believed by the Church until then;***
- ***It was Ribera who decided that that 3 ½ year period would not begin until just before Christ's return;***
- ***It was Ribera who decided that this 3 ½ year tribulation doesn't affect most of the Church and that the Antichrist was irrelevant to most of Church history and that this Antichrist or "beast" could not be the Pope; it was Ribera who decided that the temple in Jerusalem had to be rebuilt before Christ could return!***

And all of this is lies, and contradicts the plain truth of God's Word, and was never widely believed by Protestants until less than 100 years ago!

LET ME ALSO SUMMARISE THE MAIN POINTS WE HAVE RECAPPED ON THIS MORNING:

- 1. The resurrection, according to 1 Corinthians 15, is part and parcel of the gospel of Christ, which is what that chapter is all about; it is one event at the return of Christ, at the end of this world;***
- 2. The Revelation is given in symbol. It is to be understood as symbolic and spiritual, not political and historical, but the very gospel of Christ, as it applies to the Church throughout all history, and that its time was "at hand" the very day it was given to John;***
- 3. The coming of the Lord, spoken of in Revelation 1 and also in Revelation 22, is the one event at the end of this world, when Christ returns once to judge the quick and the dead, which the creed has***

stated from earliest times, and the Church has always believed, until the Jesuit Ribera changed all that with the Counter-reformation, and;

- 4. Ribera's cunning scheme of interpretation in 1590 set up the whole programme of end times prophecy, as per its most popular form today, but it was a vain attempt to convince the world that the Pope has not been the Antichrist of the Scriptures for many centuries until now. And even the focus on Jerusalem and the Jews in Bible prophecy is all the invention of Ribera; it is not found in Scripture!*

SHALL WE HEAR THE WORD OF GOD? OR SHALL WE FOLLOW THE MINDLESS CROWD, TAUGHT BY THE JESUITS, BY THE VERY ANTICHRIST HIMSELF, and learn their ways of manipulating and twisting every Word of Scripture until it has no rational meaning at all? And I put to you the sad and awful fact, that people who follow them, cannot even read plain English, and do not believe the Word of God! These studies are proof of this fact, and they contain information from Scripture which is undeniable to any sane and honest person. These Truths are not negotiable! These doctrines are not the opinions and interpretations of men! Let us hear the Word of God and, by God's grace, receive it in godly fear.

1 CORINTHIANS 15,

19 If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.

20 But now is Christ risen from the dead, *and* become the firstfruits of them that slept.

21 For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead.

22 For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive.

23 But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

24 Then *cometh* the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.

25 For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet.

26 The last enemy *that* shall be destroyed *is* death.

Amen. Let us look forward eagerly to that day, in the joy of knowing that Jesus is reigning now with His saints, He is putting all His enemies under His feet, and soon even death shall be gone for ever, on that glorious day of the resurrection, when he returns, once, at the end of this world, according to the Scriptures!

Continued the Lord's Day, 21st July 2019.

In our summary of this series of studies on End Times and The Revelation, thus far, we have looked at:

FIRSTLY, THE RESURRECTION OF LIFE (1 CORINTHIANS 15) – There is to be only one resurrection, of all mankind, at the end of the world, when Jesus returns.

SECONDLY, INTRODUCTION TO THE REVELATION (REVELATION 1) – The Revelation is symbolic and spiritual, not literal and historical – It says so in the opening verses.

THIRDLY, THE COMING OF THE LORD (REVELATION 22) – Jesus is to return once, at the end of the world, not many times to deal with many peoples and dispensations, as the Futurists falsely claim. All the Scriptures agree on this, and at the end of *The Revelation*, as in the beginning of it, He says, “The time is at hand”, and He also says again, “Behold, I come quickly!” Thus, *The Revelation* is addressed to all Christians throughout the whole Christian era, that they all might expect the Lord's return at any time.

FOURTHLY, THE FALL OF JERUSALEM AND THE END OF THE WORLD (MATTHEW 24) – Jesus spoke exclusively of the fall of Jerusalem here, not of world events many centuries later. The world that ended in 70 AD was the Jewish world of the Old Testament, and the false religion of the Jews, by the most awful judgment of God upon any people since the world began. He said to His disciples, “This generation shall not pass till all these things be fulfilled”. And the “abomination of desolation” (*Matthew 24*) is the Roman armies – “Jerusalem compassed with armies” (*Luke 21:20*).

5. REVELATION 20 – THE MILLENNIUM. We observed that this chapter is the only place in Scripture where the 1,000 years (i.e. 'millennium') is mentioned, and therefore, the only place in Scripture where we can establish our doctrine of the millennium from. MANY FOOLISH CLAIMS ARE MADE ABOUT THIS SUPPOSED 'MILLENNIUM' BASED ON OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECIES WHICH HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE SUBJECT! And we see in *Revelation 20*, which does speak of the millennium, that, **contrary to the popular following of the Jesuits and Dispensationalists, THE MILLENNIUM IS NEITHER ON EARTH, NOR IS IT LITERALLY 1,000 YEARS, BUT IT IS THE ENTIRE PERIOD OF TIME IN WHICH THE DEPARTED SAINTS IN HEAVEN REIGN WITH CHRIST UNTIL HE COMES AGAIN TO RAISE THE DEAD AND JUDGE THE WORLD.** *Revelation 20: 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. ***John saw “the souls” of the saints, not their resurrected bodies! THE PLACE OF THE DEPARTED SOULS OF THE SAINTS IS HEAVEN, NOT JERUSALEM!!! NOTE THIS WELL: IF YOU JUST RECEIVE THE SIMPLE TRUTH OF THE GOSPEL, THAT SAINTS DIE AND GO STRAIGHT TO HEAVEN, YOU WILL NEVER BE FOOLED BY THE MUMBO JUMBO AND MENTAL GYMNASTICS OF THE JESUITS’ FALSE DOCTRINE ON END TIMES! And, “they lived and reigned with Christ”, THEY DID NOT LIVE AGAIN AND REIGN, THEY CONTINUED TO LIVE AND REIGN AS DEPARTED SOULS IN HEAVEN! WHY ELSE WOULD JOHN SPECIFICALLY SAY HE SAW “THE SOULS OF THEM”? He doesn’t even say he saw ‘souls who had been beheaded etc’. he says he, “saw the souls of them...”! And contrary to popular heresy, the Word does not say they were raised again to life, but simply that they lived!*** This is in perfect agreement with the gospels (that the moment we are born of the Spirit of God, we are alive eternally in Christ! – “THEY LIVED AND REIGNED...!”), and it agrees with all of Christ's parables about the judgment being one event at the end of the world, not a series of events at various times *before* the end of the world. Speaking of those who were enjoying this reign with Christ, John said, ***“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” (20:4). There were dead people (physically) but they were spiritually alive in heaven! THIS “FIRST RESURRECTION” HE SPOKE OF IS A SPIRITUAL RESURRECTION which culminates in what Paul called, “to depart and to be with Christ,” (Philippians 1:23).*** And because all the saints depart into heaven at different times, it is impossible to state the length of that reign in one figure, so, *obviously*, in God's wisdom, a **symbolic number of 1,000 years** has been employed for the purpose of the vision – remember, the whole *Revelation* is “**signified**,” i.e. delivered by the angel in **symbolic** form!

Hence, according to Scripture, the ‘millennium’ is neither a literal 1,000 years, nor is it on earth! It is spiritual and in heaven! This is undeniable, if Scripture is your only text – it is only when men follow other men

(namely the Jesuits), instead of Scripture, that confusion and false doctrine and false prophecy prevail, as they do today!

6. **ISAIAH 2, HEBREWS 1 – THE LAST DAYS.** *Isaiah 2:2-4*, “And it shall come to pass **in the last days**, *that* the mountain of the LORD’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. 3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” It really is incredible how many of God's people are fooled by the prevailing views on this prophecy – MOST PEOPLE SIMPLY ACCEPT THE PREVAILING FALSE DOCTRINE, THAT THIS IS SPEAKING OF THE SO-CALLED 'MILLENNIUM,' A SO-CALLED PARADISE ON EARTH FOR 1,000 YEARS AFTER THE LORD'S RETURN, BUT NOTHING COULD BE FURTHER FROM THE TRUTH! As I have mentioned, THE ONLY PASSAGE OF SCRIPTURE WHICH EVEN MENTIONS A 'MILLENNIUM' IS **REVELATION 20**, AND IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH A PARADISE ON EARTH, AND NEITHER DOES THIS PROPHECY OF **ISAIAH 2** – IT SIMPLY SPEAKS OF THE NEW COVENANT IN SPIRITUAL TERMS, AS DO ALL THE PROPHETS! **THIS SPEAKS OF THE FIRST COMING OF CHRIST, NOT THE SECOND!** We also observed the plain statement of Paul in the opening of his epistle to the Hebrews: *Hebrews 1:1-3*, “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 **Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son**, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; 3 Who being the brightness of *his* glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.” **All these Scriptures speak of one and the same thing – the New Covenant in Christ, the final revelation of God, the “mystery of Godliness” revealed!** Paul speaks of this mystery in a number of places. Let us observe his comment in *1 Timothy 3:16*, “16 And without controversy **great is the mystery of godliness**: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto

the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.” Whether it is the prophet Isaiah, predicting that Christ would come to Mount Zion (i.e. the earthly Jerusalem) and visit His people as “God ... manifest in the flesh”, preaching the Word of God from Jerusalem, or whether it is the apostle Paul, looking back on Christ's finished work, and declaring Him to be the final revelation of godliness, or as John put it, “the Word made flesh,” (*John 1:14*), we see clearly from all the Scriptures, that the “last days” are not something we can wonder about, whether they have begun, or how soon they will come upon us, but that **WE HAVE BEEN IN THE LAST DAYS FOR 2,000 YEARS**, even since Christ first appeared and began to speak personally to His people as “God ... manifest in the flesh,” and when He appears again, the last days shall be finished. **God 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son....!**

NB: THIS ONE TINY PORTION OF SCRIPTURE, HEBREWS 1:1-3, TELLS US PLAINLY WHAT THE LAST DAYS ARE – THE DAYS ARE THE NEW COVENANT IN CHRIST – THE LAST DAYS ARE CHRISTIAN ERA! THERE IS NO NEED FOR ANYBODY TO WONDER OR TO BE CONFUSED ABOUT THE LAST DAYS– JUST READ THE BIBLE AND BELIEVE IT! Hebrews 1:1-3, “GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son.... The Christian era is the culmination of all the ages of all God’s purposes, and when Christ returns, then it is the end of time! The Church has known this for 2,000 years! Just look at the way the years are numbered – A.D. – Anno Domini – the year of our Lord! And how long has the Church sung, “When the trumpet of the Lord shall sound, and TIME SHALL BE NO MORE”?

THE LAST DAYS BEGAN AT THE FIRST ADVENT OF CHRIST (Isaiah 2:1-5, Micah 4:1-2, Joel 2, Acts 2); They are the end of the Old Covenant and the beginning of the New – in short, they are the whole Christian era! Hebrews 1, GOD, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, 2 Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son. The last days are the days of Christ, but also days of apostacy (backsliding of the Church) and the rise of the Roman Antichrist, who shall continue to deceive and trouble the Church until Christ returns and destroys him (2 Timothy 3, 2 Peter 3, 2 Thesalonians 2). All this is what the Revelation is written about! And the 1,000 years is just another angel, another shapshot of the same era.

7. ROMANS 9-11 – ISRAEL IN THE LAST DAYS. PAUL GOES TO SUCH LENGTHS IN THESE FEW CHAPTERS TO SET FORTH PLAINLY THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NATURAL ISRAEL AND SPIRITUAL ISRAEL, *THAT IF ONLY SHE HAD READ WHAT PAUL HAS SAID HERE*, THE CHURCH COULD NEVER HAVE WIDELY ENTERTAINED THE IDEA OF A REVIVAL OF THE EARTHLY NATION OF ISRAEL – AND IF IT HAD NOT BEEN FOR THE RISE OF THE MILITANT ZIONIST MOVEMENT around the beginning of the 20th century, with its mania to revive the nation of Israel and rebuild the temple, (which incidentally, has been the main cause of most of the wars to this day). The old Christian Church, until the end of the 19th century, was so clear about the fact that the Old Covenant with Israel was ended, and had passed away as the New Covenant was instituted in Christ, that the whole Church at that time, judged by today's politically correct standards, would be called 'anti-Semitic!' Whereas the bulk of the evangelical Church of today has turned 180⁰ to become more Zionist than Christian! AND ALL THE RHETORIC ABOUT OUR SO-CALLED 'JUDAEO-CHRISTIAN' HERITAGE IS NOTHING BUT LIES AND HERESY! JUDAISM AND CHRISTIANITY ARE COMPLETELY AT ODDS WITH EACH ANOTHER – THEY ARE COMPLETELY INCOMPATIBLE! MODERN JUDAISM REJECTS CHRIST – IT IS OF ANTICHRIST! The Judaism of 2,000 years ago crucified Christ! Abraham was not like this – he believed in the promise of God to raise up a “Seed” Who would be His Saviour! THE “SEED” PROMISED TO ABRAHAM WAS JESUS CHRIST! PAUL SAYS SO IN ***GALATIANS 3:16!*** Abraham’s promise had nothing to do with Israel and Palestine! Wake up people! And hear the Word of God, not the lies of the Jesuits!! The “**all Israel**”, which Paul says shall be saved (***Romans 11:26***), is the same as the “Israel” throughout the Old and New Testaments, the “remnant,” the “elect,” not the natural Israelites but the spiritual, not the natural descendants of Abraham, but believers in Christ – neither Jew nor Greek but “all one in Christ Jesus” (***Galatians 3:28***), “28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither *is that* circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he *is* a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision *is that* of the heart, in the spirit, *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not of men, but of God” (***Romans 2:28-29***), and Jesus said to the Jews when they claimed to be children of Abraham, (***John 8***), “If ye were Abraham’s children, ye would do the works of Abraham. 40 But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. 41 Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said

they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, *even* God. 42 Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. 43 Why do ye not understand my speech? *even* because ye cannot hear my word. 44 Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. 45 And because I tell *you* the truth, ye believe me not. 46 Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? **47 He that is of God heareth God's words: ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God.** 48 Then answered the Jews, and said unto him, **Say we not well that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil?"** *That, brothers and sisters, is what Jesus thought of Judaism, and their final remark is what Judaism thinks of Christ! But if we are truly Christian today, we will make the same judgment of the Jews that Christ did – we will say they are "of their father, the Devil".*

Those who seize upon everything which can be seen as political and worldly, love to twist Paul's words, but they cannot be misunderstood, they are so plain, and so plainly agree with all other Scriptures, that the idea of God bringing in a New Covenant and making Christ central to everything after He has been made flesh and has been revealed to the world, and wrought the mighty redemption of His people, then to turn around and brush the risen and exalted Christ aside, to revive a carnal, earthly kingdom among the Jews for 1,000 years on earth, is grotesque and absurd, and is an insult to Christ! Put simply, there is no place for Israelites in the last days unless they are found in Christ. All Israelites who are not in Christ when He returns, or when they die, are destined for eternal hell fire – these are NOT God's people! God's people do not go to hell! **THERE IS NO PLACE FOR THE NATION OF ISRAEL OR ANY OTHER NATION TO BE CALLED GOD'S PEOPLE, SINCE CHRIST CAME TO SET UP THE NEW COVENANT, BUT ONLY THAT "HOLY NATION" WHICH IS THE PECULIAR PEOPLE OF GOD, WHO ARE IN CHRIST, WHO BELIEVE THE WORD OF GOD! (Deuteronomy 14:2, 1 Peter 2:9).**

8. ***Daniel 2, 7, Revelation 12, 13 – DANIEL'S VISIONS OF THE KINGDOMS OF THIS WORLD AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.*** While in captivity with the Jews in Babylon, the prophet Daniel was given special visions of the

kingdoms and times leading up to the first advent of Christ, and His establishment of His eternal kingdom, which would supersede all the kingdoms of men. The visions, in the form of beasts (or animals) and an image (or statue) with various parts, depicted four great kingdoms in this world, commencing from the Babylonian Empire of Daniel's day, to the Medo-Persian Empire which overthrew it, to the Grecian Empire which overthrew that in turn, to finally, the Roman Empire which would break up into ten kingdoms and morph into the Papal Roman Empire under the Popes. In the vision of the four beasts, the fourth beast, which represents the Roman Empire is not actually named, but it is described in detail as a beast with seven heads and ten horns. This same seven-headed and ten-horned beast is described in ***Revelation 12 & 13*** and is called a dragon, and is linked directly to Satan who is also called “the dragon”. And again, these prophecies have Christ and His eternal kingdom as the central focus – ***NB: DANIEL PROPHESED THAT UPON ALL THESE GREAT KINGDOMS OF MEN, DOWN TO THE ROMAN EMPIRE, CHRIST WOULD COME AND SET UP HIS ETERNAL KINGDOM: (Daniel 2:34-)*** “a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet *that were* of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. 35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth. 44 **AND IN THE DAYS OF THESE KINGS SHALL THE GOD OF HEAVEN SET UP A KINGDOM, WHICH SHALL NEVER BE DESTROYED:** and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, *but* it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. 45 Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold.” **HE ALSO PROPHESED IN DANIEL 7, OF THE COMING OF ANTICHRIST AFTER THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND THE COMING OF CHRIST TO DESTROY HIM:** “7 After this I saw in the night visions, and **BEHOLD A FOURTH BEAST**, dreadful and terrible, and strong exceedingly; and it had great iron teeth: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it: and it *was* diverse from all the beasts that *were* before it; and **IT HAD TEN HORNS**. 8 I considered the horns, and, behold, **THERE CAME UP AMONG THEM ANOTHER LITTLE HORN**, before whom there were three of the first

horns plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn *were* eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things. 9 I beheld till the thrones were cast down, and the Ancient of days did sit, whose garment *was* white as snow, and the hair of his head like the pure wool: his throne *was like* the fiery flame, *and* his wheels *as* burning fire. 10 A fiery stream issued and came forth from before him: thousand thousands ministered unto him, and ten thousand times ten thousand stood before him: the judgment was set, and the books were opened. 11 I beheld then because of the voice of the great words which the horn spake: I beheld *even* till the beast was slain, and his body destroyed, and given to the burning flame.” ***THIS IS LATER CONFIRMED BY PAUL IN 2 THESSALONIANS 2,*** “NOW we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and *by* our gathering together unto him, 2 That ye be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. 3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for *that day shall not come*, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; 4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God. 5 Remember ye not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? 6 And now ye know what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time. 7 For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth *will let*, until he be taken out of the way. 8 And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 *Even him*, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: 12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” *This is clearly the Papal Empire, the Roman Antichrist, with the popes claiming to stand in Christ's place as Head of the Church, as God on earth, and in Revelation 12 & 13, we see this beast persecuting the Church, but Christ will come again, at the end of the world, to destroy Popery, and cast it into the lake of fire.*

9. Daniel 9 – DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF 70 WEEKS TO THE MESSIAH THE PRINCE. This prophecy was all about the restoration of God's people, from captivity in Babylon to Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple and city, in preparation for the coming of "The Messiah The Prince." **THE SEVENTY WEEKS PLAY OUT IN HISTORY AS SEVENTY TIMES SEVEN YEARS (490), FROM THE DECREE OF CYRUS KING OF PERSIAN TO LET THE JEWS RETURN AND REBUILD, TO CHRIST'S FIRST ADVENT, AND THE FINAL "WEEK" (7 YEARS) WAS THE CONFIRMING OF CHRIST'S COVENANT TO ISRAEL, FIRSTLY FOR 3 ½ YEARS BY CHRIST HIMSELF UNTIL HIS DEATH, THEN ANOTHER 3 ½ YEARS BY THE APOSTLES AFTER HIS DEATH.** *Daniel 9:24-27*, "24 Seventy weeks are determined upon thy people and upon thy holy city, to finish the transgression, and to make an end of sins, and to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness, and to seal up the vision and prophecy, and to anoint the most Holy. 25 Know therefore and understand, *that* from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the Messiah the Prince *shall be* seven weeks, and threescore and two weeks: the street shall be built again, and the wall, even in troublous times. 26 And after threescore and two weeks shall Messiah be cut off, but not for himself: and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary; and the end thereof *shall be* with a flood, and unto the end of the war desolations are determined. 27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make *it* desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the desolate." **THE CLOSING VERSES OF THIS PROPHECY ALSO REACH AS FAR FORWARD AS THE DESTRUCTION (OR "DESOLATION") OF JERUSALEM IN 70 AD, BY THE ROMAN ARMIES, WHICH MARKED THE ABSOLUTE END OF THE OLD COVENANT PEOPLE AND INFLUENCE, AND THE JUDGMENT OF A PEOPLE WHO REJECTED THEIR MESSIAH, BUT AS WITH ALL PROPHECY, THE ULTIMATE FOCUS IS ON CHRIST AND HIS KINGDOM – i.e. the Old Covenant superseded by the New, the shadows of Old Testament ritual and symbol, being overwhelmed by the noon day sun of Christ Himself! THE FUTURISTS AND DISPENSATIONALISTS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE ERRONEOUS DOCTRINE OF THE JESUIT RIBERA, INSERT WHAT THEY CALL A 'GAP' OF 2,000 YEARS INTO THIS PROPHECY, and apply the words about the "prince" to the Antichrist instead of to Christ,**

which of course does violence to the plain language of this prophecy and others – THE WHOLE PROPHECY AND CONTEXT, IN THIS CASE, IS ABOUT CHRIST, NOT ANTICHRIST. And it is high time the Church woke up and discarded this false doctrine which focuses on Antichrist, and looked fully at Christ, Who is the Centre and Substance of all Scripture! But apart from that, why is it that grown men and women cannot read plain English in its context? Why is it that they insist on violently maintaining that black is white, when it comes to the Words of Scripture? Because Jesus said, in the parable of the sower, the good ground is an honest and good heart! Because people are dishonest in their reading of Scripture – NB: They are Jesuit-trained!

10. ***THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION.*** The symbolic nature of *The Revelation* is clear from *ch 1* – the seven candlesticks, the seven stars, the seven spirits of God, the 144,000 (*ch 7*), the 1,000 years’ reign of the saints with Christ in heaven (*ch 20*) and much more. *All the obviously symbolic numbers throughout, highlight the gospel nature of this book, showing God is with us, in our tribulation, and in our triumph over evil, till the end of time. This is the blessing of The Revelation!* But all those who insist on a literal interpretation, do violence to the Word of God and miss out on the blessing promised. But far worse than this, they are furthering the treasonous cause of the Jesuits!
11. ***Revelation 17 – MYSTERY BABYLON THE GREAT MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH.*** This chapter speaks also of the Roman “beast”, the “dragon”, the Papal kingdom, the “little horn” of *Daniel*, and of a woman who sits upon that beast. She is plainly revealed to be the Church of Rome (a Church which sits upon the Roman Empire! There can be no mistake about her identity: ***Revelation 17:3-6***, “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: 5 And upon her forehead *was* a name written, MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. 6 And I saw the woman DRUNKEN WITH THE BLOOD OF THE SAINTS, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” There is more to her description, but to anyone who knows anything about the Church of Rome, this

describes her in unmistakable detail, and the fact that she is the “mother of harlots” clearly indicates that **SHE AND HER OTHER HARLOT DAUGHTERS TOGETHER ARE THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT.**

This brings us back to the eleventh part of our study of *The Revelation and End Times Prophecy*, which we are about to complete shortly, God willing – *The Symbolic Sevens of The Revelation* (which is an overview of the whole Revelation, highlighting the significance of symbolic numbers, especially “7”). We saw at the beginning of the prophecy (*chapter 1*), that Christ “hath the seven Spirits of God” (**3:1**), that He “had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance *was* as the sun shineth in his strength.” ***And He explained to John the symbols: (1:20)***, “20 The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.” ***AND HE PROCEEDED TO DICTATE TO JOHN SEVEN LETTERS TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES***, INDICATING THAT, AS ALSO PAUL OBSERVED, (***HEBREWS 1:1***), IN “THESE LAST DAYS” GOD HATH SPOKEN UNTO US BY HIS SON.”

God willing, we shall complete our brief journey through the last few chapters, showing how wonderfully this symbolic and spiritual prophecy reveals Christ the Lord, and calls upon all men to receive and worship Him, but for now, may He alone be exalted, and all men be drawn unto Him, may God continue to speak through His Son, and build His own Church for His own glory, and may He give us grace to hear Him, and rejoice in Him and His glorious Words! And let us also, at this desperately needy time, a time of mass-confusion, pray for an awakening of the Church on a wide scale, in relation to the subject of *The Revelation and End Times Prophecy*, and in relation to the gospel of Christ itself, which is the subject of all Scripture!

THIS SUMMARY OF OUR STUDIES, WHICH I HAVE ABBREVIATED IN THE FORM OF A TWO-PAGE TRACT, HAS THE POTENTIAL (WITH GOD’S BLESSING) TO LIBERATE THE CHURCH FROM THE VERY ROMAN DARKNESS WHICH IT WAS LIBERATED FROM DURING THE REFORMATION 500 YEARS AGO. Let us continue to pray earnestly for such a liberation, because the need is enormous, as most of the Church today is deceived by the Antichrist, and is following the false doctrines of his Jesuit agents. Let us continue to pray for the breaking down of all Jesuit strongholds, wherever they have been established among the true churches of Christ! Let us continue to pray for the exposure and removal from

places of influence, all false teachers and false churches, that are paraded as Christian, and for much grace for God's people caught up in it, to obey the Word of God, by removing themselves from such places. May it be so for God's glory and the help of His people and our children! Amen.

Continued, The Lord's Day, 28th July 2019

Reading: Revelation 12

*As we continue to work through our study of THE SYMBOLIC SEVENS OF THE REVELATION, observing other symbolic numbers as well, after pausing last week to summarise all that we have studied so far in this whole series on *The Revelation and End Times*, we now come, in order, to some chapters of *The Revelation* which we have looked at to some extent already, and some chapters we have not yet covered at all. So, let us look for the Lord's promised blessing as we go:*

CHAPTER 12 – THE “WOMAN”: “CLOTHED WITH THE SUN, AND THE MOON UNDER HER FEET, AND UPON HER HEAD A CROWN OF TWELVE STARS: There are two women who dominate the visions of The Revelation – one is good and the other is evil – this is the good one. *She is the Church of God God's people, Some would say, the nation of Israel, and that is where the symbolic aspects come from, but in reality she is the entire Old Testament Church, which brought forth a child, Who is Christ:*

2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

HOW CAN WE SAY WITH CONFIDENCE, THAT WE UNDERSTAND THE MEANING OF THIS SYMBOLIC VISION? OR HOW CAN WE INTERPRET IT? As always, the only way is, not to be clever and interpret it ourselves, not to call somebody else clever and take on his or her interpretation, but to allow the Scriptures to speak and interpret themselves – one Scripture interprets another. And how do we know that this is the correct rule, which cannot be broken? **FROM SCRIPTURE, OF COURSE, AND “SCRIPTURE ALONE”, AS MARTIN LUTHER PUT IT.** *1 Peter 1: 20* Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. *21* For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake *as they were* moved by the Holy Ghost. **2 Timothy 3: 16** All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: **17** That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works. *Even from these two Scriptures alone, we learn that we must hear what God says, not what man says, and that the only way to hear what God says, is to go to the Scriptures. (Beware of those who say, “God spoke to me”, or, “God revealed to me...”! If you want to hear what God says – go to the Scriptures!)*

NEVER LET ANYBODY FOOL YOU INTO LOOKING ANYWHERE OTHER THAN THE WORD OF GOD, FOR ANSWERS TO ANY QUESTION ABOUT DOCTRINE, MORALITY,

OR LIFE IN GENERAL! The Protestant Reformation, in the 16th century, by Scripture alone, and by its revival of this Truth – **SCRIPTURE ALONE** – enlightened and liberated almost the whole world, until the Counter-reformation of the Jesuits, who, working for the Roman Antichrist, gradually deceived almost the whole world again, and almost brought the whole world again into the bondage of pride and the vanity of human ingenuity, by lauding the ‘experts’ and educating the masses by the ‘experts’, and following men instead of God. **AND HOW DO WE FOLLOW GOD AND NOT MEN? WE STICK TO THE WORD OF GOD, AND THE WORD OF GOD ONLY!** But many have followed men instead of God. Otherwise, how could it be, that multitudes of mainstream Churches in our day, have forgotten what the gospel is, and have forgotten what the Commandments of God say, and so many worship graven mages, and so many now live the way Sodom lived in the days just before her destruction? They are following men and not God, and they trample God’s written Words underfoot in order to do so.

YOU’D BETTER BELIEVE THAT STICKING TO SCRIPTURE ALONE, IS NOT ONLY WISE, BUT ABSOLUTELY ESSENTIAL AND NECESSARY TO PREVENT OUR UTTER DESTRUCTION AT THE HANDS OF AN ANGRY AND HOLY GOD! People say, “What has gone wrong with the world? The world has gone crazy. Why can’t the government see the problem? Why is there no justice?” The answer is one thing only – the people have all departed from The Word of God! The nations have departed from the Word of God! The Churches, yes, even the Churches, have departed from the Word of God! We have been saying this for decades, and people have thought we were just crackpots. But as every year passes, the world, and the churches, become more crazy and more corrupt. And still, they refuse to hear the Word of God. Does a Church or a preacher have to live and preach 120 years, as Noah did, to get through to their generation, to understand that they must hear and heed the Word of God or suffer dire consequences, that they must shun every other spurious source of wisdom, because every other source is evil, and is of the world, and the flesh, and the Devil, not of God? Actually, Noah’s 120 years of preaching didn’t convince his generation anyhow, did it? This generation has more of God’s Word than Noah’s did, but do you think it will respond any better? Noah’s message was not faulty – neither is ours, but the hearts of those who refuse to hear it are. **BE WARNED – ALL WISDOM, OTHER THAN GOD’S WISDOM FROM GOD’S WORD, IS EVIL! THIS WORLD IS EVIL! AND THOSE WHO FOLLOW THIS WORLD’S WAYS ARE EVIL! AND THEREFORE, THIS WORLD’S WICKEDNESS**

AND CRAZINESS ARE ALL PART OF GOD’S JUST JUDGMENT OF PEOPLE WHO HAVE REJECTED HIM AND HIS WORDS – GOD IS NOT FAILING TO SAVE THE WORLD, HE IS SUCCEEDING IN DESTROYING IT, AND HE IS ALSO SUCCEEDING IN SAVING HIS OWN ELECT CHILDREN OUT OF IT! IT IS INTERESTING THAT MOST FALSE RELIGION IS VAINLY TRYING TO FIX WHAT GOD IS DESTROYING, BUT ONLY ONE TRUE RELIGION RECOGNISES HIS TRUTH, AND KNOWS THAT THE CREATOR IS IN ABSOLUTE CONTROL OF ALL HIS CREATION, AND ALL THINGS ARE GOING ACCORDING TO HIS PLAN AND HIS WISDOM. AND THAT IS A MAJOR REASON FOR THE REVELATION – TO REMIND US THAT ALL IS GOING ACCORDING TO GOD’S PLAN, EVEN WHEN HIS PEOPLE ARE BEING BEHEADED, OR BURNT ALIVE, OR WHEN FALSE RELIGION SEEMS TO RULE, WE CAN READ THE REVELATION, AND OTHER SCRIPTURES TOO, AND BE REASSURED, OUR GOD IS ON THE THRONE! John, who gave us *The Revelation*, also drew a sharp distinction between godliness and worldliness, and showed that there is no middle ground between them: 1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. 16 For all that *is* in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever. 18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. 19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would *no doubt* have continued with us: but *they went out*, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.

IN THIS SAME SCRIPTURE, JOHN CONTRASTS CHRIST WITH ANTICHRISTS: What is different about these “antichrists”? Fundamentally it is one thing only – They have departed from the Word of God! THEY HAVE CEASED TO BE PROTESTANTS. WHAT IS A PROTESTANT? THE FIRST PEOPLE TO BE CALLED ‘PROTESTANTS’, WERE THOSE IN GERMANY IN 1529, WHEN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH HAD BECOME SO CORRUPT AND SO MILITANT, THAT IT THREATENED THE VERY EXISTENCE OF ALL THAT WAS TRUE AND DECENT IN GERMANY, AND THE PRINCES STOOD UP AGAINST POPERY. THEY FOLLOWED MARTIN LUTHER’S EXAMPLE AND STOOD ON SCRIPTURE ALONE, NOT ON THE SHIFTING SANDS OF POPISH TRADITIONS AND TYRANNY – A PROTESTANT STANDS ON SCRIPTURE ALONE, AND WILL NOT BE MOVED FROM THAT ONE FOUNDATION WHICH IS CHRIST! We cannot beg to differ with Christ and escape the just

label – Antichrist! Some will say, “Oh, don’t talk about Antichrist – that’s an extreme term, and anyhow, the Antichrist won’t appear until after Jesus comes to rapture His Church out of the world?” Says who? Says the Jesuit Ribera way back in 1590! Says the Roman Antichrist himself! Why? Because the Church of Rome departed from ‘Scripture alone’ well over 1,000 years ago! Nearly 2,000! The antichrists of John’s day departed from the true Church, because they had first departed from Scripture. The Antichrists of Luther’s day 500 years ago were likewise defined by the fact that they departed from God’s Word. And today’s Antichrists do the same.). Only what comes from God is good? Only Scripture is safe! You depart from ‘Scripture alone’ at the peril of your own soul, and to the destruction of your own children and nation! God help this generation to hear the Word of God before it is too late for them, as it was too late for those who refused to hear the preaching of Noah! “Scripture alone!”, Luther shouted, and by God’s grace, and by Scripture alone, he healed the world and struck a death-blow to Rome’s Antichrist. God help us to do so again!

THE IMAGERY OF THIS WOMAN IN REVELATION 12 IS NO DOUBT TAKEN FROM JOSEPH’S VISION OF THE SUN AND MOON AND ELEVEN STARS BOWING DOWN TO HIM IN GENESIS 37: 5 And Joseph dreamed a dream, and he told *it* his brethren: and they hated him yet the more.

6 And he said unto them, Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed:
7 For, behold, we *were* binding sheaves in the field, and, lo, my sheaf arose, and also stood upright; and, behold, your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

8 And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over us? Or shalt thou indeed have dominion over us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

9 And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed a dream more; and, **behold, the sun and the moon and the eleven stars made obeisance to me.**

10 And he told *it* to his father, and to his brethren: and his father rebuked him, and said unto him, What *is* this dream that thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee to the earth? 11 And his brethren envied him; but his father observed the saying. ***(Jacob knew immediately that the sun and moon and eleven stars represented Jacob and the whole house of Israel! – i.e. the whole family of God, and so it is clear – from ‘Scripture alone’ – that this also is the interpretation***

of the same symbols in Revelation 12! I say that this woman represents more than just the house of Israel, because, it is clear from other Scriptures, that from the beginning of the world, God had promised a man-child to be the Saviour of His people. He said to the serpent after he had tempted Eve (Genesis 3), 15 And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel. SO, THE SAME PROMISE OF GOD, TO THE FIRST WOMAN, WAS CONFIRMED TO ABRAHAM, ISAAC, AND JACOB, ALL THE WAY THROUGH TO THE WOMAN IN THIS VISION IN REVELATION 12, and so, God continues to remind His people that His plan for their eternal salvation is on track, no matter what the enemy does, no matter how fierce the battle, or how intense the suffering and tribulation.)

THIS IS GOD’S WISDOM. THIS IS THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE, BY SCRIPTURE ALONE.

3 AND THERE APPEARED ANOTHER WONDER IN HEAVEN... A GREAT RED DRAGON, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. (Revealing that this is the Roman Empire, and yet at the same time Satan himself, as we see a glimpse of the fall of Lucifer and his rebel angels)

4 And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born.

And v 9, And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

SCRIPTURE ALONE, INTERPRETS AND COMPLEMENTS OTHER SCRIPTURES – THE FALL OF LUCIFER WAS REFERRED TO BY WAY OF EXAMPLE, AS ISAIAH PROPHESED AGAINST THE WICKED KING OF BABYLON, IN ISAIAH 14, (It is not hard to understand, if only we will be faithful and compare Scripture with Scripture, and let God speak to us):

12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!

13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; **I will be like the most High.**

15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.

THIS IS AGAIN COMPLEMENTED SIMILARLY, BY ANOTHER SCRIPTURE, IN EZEKIEL'S PROPHECY AGAINST THE PRINCE OF TYRE. LIKE ISAIAH, EZEKIEL ALSO REFERS TO SATAN'S FALL, AS HE PROPHECIES THE FALL OF ANOTHER KING – EZEKIEL 28:

13 Thou hast been in Eden the garden of God; every precious stone *was* thy covering, the sardius, topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was prepared in thee in the day that thou wast created.

14 Thou *art* the anointed cherub that covereth; and I have set thee so: thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire.

15 Thou *wast* perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till iniquity was found in thee.

16 By the multitude of thy merchandise they have filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I will cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God: and I will destroy thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of the stones of fire.

17 Thine heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou hast corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee.

All the prophets are telling us that God deals with wicked men and rulers the same way He dealt with Lucifer's rebellion in heaven! Is this good news or what?! Does this encourage you when you see your own government turn against its people? When they bring in laws that destroy your children? Have no fear! The Lord is taking care of His enemies!

LUCIFER'S FALL WAS PREDICTED BY THE PROPHETS OF OLD, IT WAS CONFIRMED AND SEALED BY CHRIST'S TRIUMPH AT CALVARY, AND IT WAS CONFIRMED AGAIN, IN MORE DETAIL, BY JOHN IN THE REVELATION, that we all might know of Satan's defeat, and the defeat of all the angels who followed him – that we might sing with Luther,

And though this world, with devils filled,
Should threaten to undo us,
We will not fear, for God hath willed
His truth to triumph through us:
The Prince of Darkness grim,
We tremble not for him;

His rage we can endure,
For lo! his doom is sure,
One little word shall fell him.

SATAN TRIED TO MURDER CHRIST WHEN HE WAS A CHILD, AND HIS INSTRUMENT WAS THE ROMAN EMPIRE AND KING HEROD (Matthew 2: 13 And when they were departed, behold, the angel of the Lord appeareth to Joseph in a dream, saying, Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word: for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him. 14 When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: 15 And was there until the death of Herod....), so Jesus, even as a child, triumphed over all things, grew to manhood, carried out His earthly ministry in full by dying to redeem His people, and rose again and ascended to heaven's throne, to reign for ever!

THIS WORLD, SINCE THE FALL OF ADAM, HAS ALWAYS BEEN AGAINST ITS CREATOR AND GOD. It was predicted long before Christ appeared, that the rulers would oppose Him, but that He would destroy them all, that the Only-begotten Son of God would ascend to heaven's throne and rule the nations with a rod of iron – Psalm 2:

WHY do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?

2 The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, *saying,*

3 Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. (*This part spoke particularly of the time of Christ's trial and crucifixion.*)

BUT THE LORD ALWAYS HAS THEIR MEASURE:

4 He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision.

5 Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure.

6 Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion.

10 Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth.

11 Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling.

12 Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish *from* the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed *are* all they that put their trust in him.

EVEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THIS WORLD ARE, IN REALITY, SATAN'S DOMAIN, "the powers that be," that Paul says, "are ordained of God" (Romans 13:1), but remember, Satan is the "god of this world" (2 Corinthians 4:4),

so don't be surprised if we get opposition from our own governments, but Paul also says we should pray for them: 1 Timothy 2:1-4,

“I EXHORT therefore, that, first of all, supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks, be made for all men; 2 For kings, and for all that are in authority; that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. 3 For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour; 4 Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth,”

GOD’S MAIN PURPOSE IN THE PRAYERS OF HIS PEOPLE FOR RULERS IS STATED HERE: It is that the Church might live in peace, not harassed and destroyed by Satanic tyrants, and not that God wants to save every man, but because God saves all kinds of men, even some of those crooked rulers in Satan's domain! Remember, Saul of Tarsus was a Pharisee and a murderer, but God saved him and made him the greatest apostle and preacher of Christ; Henry VIII was a ruthless king but God moved him to do His will: William Tyndale, who gave us the first English Bible in print, when he was strangled and burnt at the stake in 1536, his last words were a prayer that God answered wonderfully – that the Lord would open the king of England’s eyes! And open them He did! The same Henry VIII, 2 years after Tyndale’s death, decreed that a Bible be kept in every Church parish in England; James I was King of England but God moved him to order the Hampton Court Conference which gave us the beloved King James Bible, and although Satan had the Jesuits and Guy Fawkes try to blow them all up at Westminster, his Gunpowder Plot, like Herod’s murderous plots against Jesus long before them, did not succeed. Let us take heart and seek God for His glorious saving acts again! His Word cannot be destroyed! Never let it be said that my God and Saviour is some long-haired, effeminate looking hippy who is powerless to stop the evil of this world! He is already reigning on heaven’s throne, and He laughs at His enemies as He brings them down! All glory to His wonderful Name! **THE BIBLE DOES NOT TELL ME OF AN IMPOTENT SAVIOUR**, it says this to the “kingsandjudges of the earth”, “Kiss the Son, lest He be angry and ye perish from the way.... Blessed are all they that put their trust in him!” And Revelation 12 agrees!!!

THE MAN CHILD OF THIS WOMAN WAS DIVINE – HE CAME FROM HEAVEN, AND HE RETURNED TO HEAVEN, HE WAS ALWAYS SAFE FROM HIS ENEMIES, AND HIS RULE IS SOVEREIGN AND EVERLASTING:

5 And she brought forth a man child, **who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron**: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

The world is doomed because it is foolishly fighting against God! The other day I had a comment from a man, who said when he heard my preaching, it made him pleased that he is an atheist. What an awful shock awaits this man! They laughed at Noah! They laughed at Christ and mocked Him! Why should they respect us more than our Master? But they will all find out in due time, Who it is that sits on heaven's throne. "Kiss the Son, lest He be angry...!" We can only warn them, we cannot save them. We can pray for them, that God might be merciful and save them as He has saved us.

THE CHURCH IS THEN "NOURISHED" "IN THE WILDERNESS" TILL THE END OF HER DAYS ON EARTH: (v14) for a figurative 1260 days or 3 ½ years. And the moment Satan was cast down, a triumphant shout went up, 10 ...Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night.

11 And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death.

AS THE ETERNAL DESTINY OF THE ELECT WAS SEALED BY THE SHEDDING OF CHRIST'S BLOOD FOR THEM, SO WAS THE ETERNAL DESTINY OF SATAN SEALED AT THE CROSS!

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

The cross of Jesus Christ is the triumph of the saints, yet they all must suffer tribulation in this world, which is Satan's domain.

THE MAJORITY OF PERSECUTION SUFFERED BY THE CHURCH IN THIS WORLD, IS AT THE HANDS OF GOVERNMENTS AND RELIGIOUS AUTHORITIES, EVEN AS IT WAS WITH CHRIST OUR LORD HIMSELF! NOTICE WHAT THE DRAGON DOES (HE IS THE ROMAN POWER).

13 And when **the dragon** saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man *child*.

14 And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent.

15 And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood.

16 And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.

17 And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

*That dragon is alive and kicking still. The remnants of the Roman Empire and it's "little horn", its "man of sin", the Pope, still hate God's Word and those who follow it. Their hatred is expressed in some very cunning ways, they don't strangle and burn those who distribute the Bible today (at least not in the Western world anyway), but by siding with false religion, e.g. Islam and other Eastern religions which deny Christ the glory due to Him, they subtly sway public opinion by the infiltration of the Jesuits into every institution on earth, every educational institution, every government, every major church, every seminary that trains pastors, every activist group that attacks good governments and Protestant values the world over, and most insidious of all, they are involved in the changing of the Scriptures – which is why one of our most important and vehement messages is that we must maintain the tried and true King James Bible – all who depart from it are siding (wittingly or unwittingly) with the Roman Antichrist himself. May God help us to stand as He has helped Luther and Tyndale and many others! Let us remember that "the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds" (2 Corinthians 10:4), and that the chief weapon we have is "the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Ephesians 6:17). **By God's grace, let us keep it!***

Let us rejoice that we are counted worthy to suffer for Christ in this world, and let us rejoice that this world is not our home, but we have a mansion prepared for us which is so glorious in the presence of God for ever, that we cannot imagine it, that it has to be shown to us in visions of streets of gold and gates of pearl and so on. Amen.

Continued, the Lord's Day, 4th August 2019.

CH 13 – THE BEAST

There are some who try to be clever and interpret all the various visions of these beasts as different entities, but they only complicate the simple truth that is plainly written. Some claim the final beast is Israel, some say Islam, some say the USA, but this is all speculation, and it is all wrong.

*WHEN WE TURN TO SCRIPTURE ALONE, WE FIND THAT DANIEL SPOKE OF FOUR BEASTS, and only one “little horn” after the fourth beast, which would be destroyed by the Ancient of Days. The fourth beast, the one after the Grecian Empire, is the Roman Empire, the little horn is the final power in the earth, and it arises immediately after the Roman Empire (**Daniel 7**); TURNING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT FOR FURTHER INSTRUCTION, WE FIND: Paul said the “man of sin” was soon to appear (**2 Thessalonians 2**); John said the “last time” the time of the Antichrist, had come (**1 John 2**); and ALL THE PROTESTANTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES RECOGNISED WHO THIS BEAST AND LITTLE HORN WAS – it was very easy for them: all they had to do was read the Scriptures and open their eyes and look around them! But it seems, in our times, most people have stopped doing that. But thank God, there is a “little flock” here and there, a believing soul here and there, who appreciates God’s Word as God’s Word!*

SO, HERE IN REVELATION 13, IS ANOTHER GLIMPSE OF THE SEVEN-HEADED, TEN-HORNED BEAST, THE ROMAN EMPIRE, WHICH IS TRANSFORMED (FROM THE DAYS OF EMPEROR CONSTANTINE, AROUND 312 AD) FROM A STRICTLY PAGAN EMPIRE TO A SO-CALLED 'CHRISTIAN' EMPIRE, BUT THE PAPAL EMPIRE IS NOT REALLY CHRISTIAN BUT A PAGAN-CHRISTIAN BLEND. It is merely the Pagan Roman Empire with a change of clothes, for the Pagan idolatry remains in the Church of Rome (with the Pagan image of Jupiter rebadged as St Peter, and the mother and child image of Baal and Ashtoreth rebadged as Jesus and Mary), and she continues to have temporal rule over the world, and to persecute the Church, exactly as the Scriptures tell us.

THERE IS AN AWFUL IRONY ABOUT THE DECEPTIVE NATURE OF THIS INSIDIOUS ROMAN BEAST (AND THIS IS THE MAIN APPLICATION OF THIS CHAPTER FOR US TODAY) IF YOU HAD LIVED IN THE MIDDLE AGES, YOU MIGHT SAY THAT THE MOST AWFUL THING ABOUT THE CHURCH OF ROME AND ITS SYSTEM OF POPERY, WAS ITS SHEER BRUTALITY AGAINST ALL DISSENTERS, PARTICULARLY ALL WHO LOVED THE

SCRIPTURES, BUT TODAY THIS “BEAST’S” MOST DANGEROUS AND EFFECTIVE WEAPON IS ITS PROPAGANDA! – the majority of Christians today are looking for some grotesque and wicked person to arise in the future, who will rule the world (this futuristic Antichrist is supposed to be such an evil person, the like of which the world has never seen in all its history – of course the idea is just ridiculous – but take note, this generation is gorging itself on the most ridiculous fantasies of science fiction, watching movies and playing video games about vampires and extra-terrestrial beings, about intergalactic travel – you name it! Just turn on the TV, any night, and you will hardly find a sensible programme to watch. This generation is just completely nuts! Therefore, deceiving this generation is a breeze. In fact, it is already deceived, it is already ‘gone a million’! The Devil is laughing all the way to hell, at a generation which he doesn’t even need to deceive any more, because it is deceiving itself – willingly!), and so, **AN INSANE, WILLINGLY DECEIVED GENERATION, WHICH HAS NEITHER COMMON SENSE NOR RATIONAL THOUGHT PROCESS, CANNOT SEE WHAT EVERYBODY COULD SEE 100 YEARS AGO – I.E. THAT POPERY HAS BEEN FULFILLING THIS PROPHECY OF THE BEAST, TO THE LETTER, FOR SOMETHING LIKE 1500 YEARS!** In fact, it is the very deceitfulness of the Pope’s ‘missionaries’, which has convinced the gullible that the Antichrist and the so-called tribulation, are all yet future – as I have mentioned many times over the years, **FRANCESCO RIBERA, IN 1590, INVENTED A FANTASTIC FUTURISTIC SCHEME OF INTERPRETATION OF BIBLE PROPHECY, WHICH NONE OF THE PROTESTANTS ACCEPTED AT THE TIME, BUT, HEY PRESTO!, MOST PROTESTANTS DO TODAY!** That is the power of the insidious propaganda of the Roman Antichrist, as it even largely controls all the major media and governments of the world, and the entertainment industry as well! How? Very simply, we call it ‘propaganda’, but they call it ‘education’!!! Just as, in the beginning, when the Serpent spoke to Eve, God called it ‘temptation’, but the Serpent called it ‘wisdom’ and ‘knowledge’ (see Genesis 3). **And the Jesuits have been the Serpents chief instruments of deception in the world for the past 485 years! Don’t take my word for this – Just read the history for yourself.**

TODAY, MANY OTHERWISE SOUND PROTESTANTS, HAVE ACCEPTED THE FUTURIST BIBLE PROPHECY PROPAGANDA OF THE JESUIT RIBERA! So that, even the most ignorant and irreligious people today, seem to know something about this futuristic beast or Antichrist, which the Bible says nothing about, and the Christians have gone for it as

well – in fact, the very reason the whole world thinks it knows about the beast, is because the Christian churches have, for many years now, abandoned the Word of God and the simple faith of their Protestant forefathers, and have taken on board the Vatican’s lies and propaganda instead of sound doctrine! Pastors think they know something when they come out of seminary or Bible college, but they have not been studying the Scriptures, at least, not with an open mind, so their minds are full of college propaganda, not the Word of God! EVEN SOME OF THE MOST REFORMED AND PROTESTANT CHURCH GROUPS TODAY ARE NOW SAYING THAT POKERY IS NOT THE ANTICHRIST SPOKEN OF IN BIBLE PROPHECY, THEY LOOK FOR SOMETHING ELSE TO EMERGE – THEY HAVE ABANDONED THE FAITH OF THEIR FOREFATHERS! SOMEBODY WILL SAY, “YOU ARE EXAGGERATING TO THE POINT OF MADNESS!” AND I SAY, “WAIT AND SEE. THESE CHURCHES MAY HAVE ABANDONED THE WORD OF GOD ON WHAT SOME THINK IS AN INSIGNIFICANT POINT, OR A DEBATABLE POINT, HERE AND THERE, BUT THE REALITY IS THAT THEY HAVE STOPPED TREATING THE WORD OF GOD WITH DUE REVERENCE, AND THAT WILL BE THEIR ULTIMATE DOWNFALL! THE DAY WILL COME WHEN THEY WILL BE GONE, AND THE VICTIMS DECEIVED BY THEM WILL NUMBER IN THE MILLIONS”. What is wrong with the majority of professing Christians today, that they have no ears to hear the plain Truth of Scripture, but are ‘all ears’ when the Antichrist himself is spruiking his devilish wisdom?

Only this past week, as I was walking I came across a brother who was so full of the latest conspiracy news, and so obsessive with his subject matter, about what is happening around the world, that I could hardly get a word in edgewise, but I did manage to at least challenge him to consider, instead of all the evil that is supposedly going to happen to us, that Christ is exalted and is ruling the nations from heaven – but of course, the few Words of Truth I spoke to him were ‘water on a duck’s back’. But you know what the most amazing thing about the blindness of these people is? ALL THE THINGS THEY LOVE TO SPEND HOURS TALKING ABOUT, ARE NOT THINGS THAT ARE ACTUALLY HAPPENING, NOR ARE THEY THINGS THE BIBLE TEACHES US TO GIVE ANY HEED TO, THEY ARE THINGS WHICH SOMEBODY WHO IS SUPPOSED TO BE IN THE KNOW, IS PREDICTING? – YES, PREDICTING! THEY ARE FUTURE THINGS!! CAN YOU BELIEVE THIS? IT IS HUMAN OPINION AT BEST, BUT REALLY, IT IS JUST FANTASY! How can humans being be so foolish? How can Christians be so foolish? To spend most of their time waffling on about what they vow and declare IS GOING TO HAPPEN, while ignoring what the Bible says we ought to be doing and believing? And the things they claim to know, so well, that

they must ram it down your throat every time you see them, are just things they have read or heard from somebody else! Can you believe this? How can a believer throw Scripture aside, and be so consumed with sheer propaganda, and propaganda that has no credibility or substance whatsoever, PROPAGANDA THAT IS NOTHING BUT LIES AND MALICIOUS INVENTIONS OF THE JESUITS 400 YEARS AGO, PROPAGANDA THAT OUR PROTESTANT FOREFATHERS FOR CENTURIES WOULD NOT ACCEPT, PROPAGANDA THAT THE HISTORY BOOKS STILL SHOW, WAS THE DELIBERATE COUNTER-REFORMATION WORK OF THE JESUITS, IN ORDER TO OVERTHROW THE TRUTH THE PROTESTANTS WERE PREACHING 500 YEARS AGO? The prophecy 'nutters' have been predicting this future stuff for decades, about how there are prisons being built, and guillotines to cut our heads off, about a peace treaty that is to be signed with Israel, about the rebuilding of the temple in Jerusalem. But none of this nonsense is mentioned in Scripture, and even if the intentions of the wicked New World Order people are to do all this, who is to say that all this **must** come to pass? These gullible ones are like a football team that spends all its time studying the opposite team and forgets how to play the game of football!!!! **BUT WHERE IS GOD IN THE WHOLE MINDSET OF THESE SELF-PROCLAIMED PROPHECY EXPERTS? WHERE IS THE RISEN AND REIGNING CHRIST, KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS? I TELL YOU WHAT – THEY DO NOT KNOW SUCH A CHRIST; THEY DO NOT KNOW SUCH A REIGNING KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS! THIS IS THE AWFUL REALITY AMONG MANY PROFESSING CHRISTIANS TODAY!** Be warned, brothers and sisters! And be informed, the Roman Antichrist already has these people eating out of his devilish and deceitful hand! By God's grace, let us hear the Word of God and not the word of stubborn and stupid men! I'm sorry – I just have to call them what they are. Some of these men are elders and pastors of churches, some of them preach and lead Bible studies, and have no idea what sound doctrine is! Let me make it loud and clear – these men are not only stubborn and stupid, they are dangerous as well, and they are without excuse, because all that they need to know and understand is in the Scriptures, and has been known and taught by the true Church for centuries! **LOOK AT THE WESTMINSTER CONFESSION OF THE 1600'S! LOOK AT THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND'S ARTICLES OF RELIGION OF THE 1500'S!** The Pope was the Antichrist then and he still is today!

TODAY, MANY OTHERWISE SOUND PROTESTANTS, WHILE ARGUING OVER MINOR POINTS OF DOCTRINE, HAVE ACCEPTED THE

ROMAN ANTICHRIST’S CHANGES TO THE SCRIPTURES, UNDERMINING THE VERY FOUNDATION OF THE PROTESTANT FAITH!

*Let me illustrate this point with yet another up-to-date, real life experience in this past week, showing how foolish and gullible and dangerous many of our Protestant brethren are: There was a little article online, which mentioned the Reformed Baptist Confession of 1689 and The Westminster Confession of 1647, there were even arguments about which confession came first! How can anyone be serious about this, when the Baptist Confession came decades after the Presbyterian one, and is almost word-for-word with it, except a few bits that the Baptists didn't agree with? Anyway, in the comments which followed, a little debate ensued between the Baptists and the Presbyterians, which predictably descended into a point-scoring game on the subject of water baptism. **THERE ARE TWO AWFUL IRONIES ABOUT THIS DEBATE BETWEEN THE REFORMED BAPTISTS AND THE PRESBYTERIANS: FIRSTLY, THE BIBLE PLAINLY DOWNGRADES THE IMPORTANCE OF WATER BAPTISM, in the light of the gospel itself. Paul literally takes the Church to task over this: 1 Corinthians 1,** “12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. 13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? 14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; 15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. 16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. 17 **FOR CHRIST SENT ME NOT TO BAPTIZE, BUT TO PREACH THE GOSPEL”** – Can you see what Paul is saying here? He is chastising the Church about sectarianism! They were like: I was baptized a Presbyterian! I was baptized properly as a Baptist! But Paul is saying – You have forgotten the gospel of Christ to argue about water baptism! And water baptism does not save your soul! **SECONDLY, BOTH CAMPS IN THIS DEBATE – BOTH THE REFORMED BAPTISTS AND THE PRESBYTERIANS, MOST OF THEM, HAVE ABANDONED THE TRIED AND PROVEN AND PRESERVED WORDS OF SCRIPTURE – IN SHORT, THEY HAVE REJECTED THE KING JAMES BIBLE, to claim that the modern versions produced in conjunction with Popery, are far more accurate! Here is the awful irony – some of the very best of Christians and the purest of churches we have today, are eating out of the hand of the Roman Antichrist, and are actually on the way out, as Christian churches – and in this awful state, they think they are clever! I have no hesitation in saying that, if Jesus was to stand in the midst of the Reformed Baptists and Presbyterians today, he would say, (Mark 9:19),***

“O faithless generation, how long shall I be with you? how long shall I suffer you?”

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR US TO BE REMINDED OF THESE THINGS AGAIN AND AGAIN? *Because, by the grace of God, we must “earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints” (Jude 3) – not contend for some vain sectarian controversy, which has nothing to do with that faith which was once delivered to the saints! Not contend for the opinion of some deluded and conceited person, who thinks he knows what is definitely going to happen in the future! Why must we rehearse this again and again? Because even some of those who are thought to be exemplary Christians, are deceived, and they are also busybodies, deceiving others with their pride-filled propaganda, telling others what they THINK they know, when they know nothing at all, compared to the Scriptures. Why? Because these people are so headstrong, so opinionated, so obsessed with nonsense, that you can’t get a word in edgewise to even help them see the simple Bible Truth that their parents and grandparents knew well. But they continue on their wayward path and lead others down that path as well. WHY MUST WE REHEARSE THESE THINGS? BECAUSE THEY ARE IN YOUR FACE EVERY DAY OF THE WEEK. THEY ARE THE SERPENT’S SATANIC ATTACKS ON THE SAINTS EVERY DAY, AND THE CHURCHES ARE SWALLOWING IT ALL! God forbid that we should relax, that we should think it doesn’t matter, when the Antichrist himself is wreaking havoc among the saints, when the wolves are tearing the flock of God to pieces, and the saints are believing his lies, and are proud of it! And to me, the most awful thing about this is: this is not saintly behaviour; this is not indicative of those who believe the Scriptures; this is not characteristic of those who say they have the Spirit of Christ, the Spirit of honesty and integrity, the Spirit of Truth, the Spirit which is supposed to make them teachable. In short, I fear for the souls of those who are so easily deceived, but more than that, they are almost determined not to hear the Truth. God’s people, generally speaking are those who, like the Bereans, search the Scriptures daily to see if what Paul said is true, but not these people! They search among the garbage tip of this world’s sensationalist media, they search among the stinking decay of modern college professors who are invariably trained by Jesuits, they search among the opinions of other like-minded brethren, but it is beyond them to open the Bible and ask a simple question that any child could ask.*

WHY DO I REMIND YOU OF THESE THINGS?

BECAUSE WE SHOULD BE REJOICING THAT THE REVELATION TELLS US PLAINLY, WHAT THIS “BEAST” IS, THIS “LITTLE HORN”, THIS POWER, WHICH ARISES OUT OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE, PERSECUTES AND DECEIVES THE CHURCH, THIS POWER THAT WAS EMERGING EVEN IN JOHN’S DAY, THAT SHALL CONTINUE HIS DIABOLICAL WORK UNTIL JESUS COMES AGAIN TO DESTROY HIM. AND WHAT MOST CHRISTIANS, AND EVEN MOST PREACHERS, ARE SAYING ON THIS SUBJECT, IS NOTHING LIKE WHAT THE SCRIPTURES SAY, BUT IS THE PURE PROPAGANDA OF THE ROMAN ANTICHRIST!

LET US HEAR THE WORD OF GOD:

THE BEAST IS A PERSECUTOR OF THE CHURCH:

7 And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them: and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations.
The Roman Church has been doing this for many centuries.

THE BEAST IS A DECEIVER OF THE WORLD:

8 And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.
The Roman Church is the greatest deceiver in the world, and has been for nearly 2,000 years!

THE DURATION OF THE BEAST’S POWER IS LIMITED: Verse 5, power was given unto him to continue forty *and* two months. ***This is the same figurative 3 ½ years depicting the whole tribulation of the Christian Church on earth, until Christ returns. Hence in 12:12,*** “Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time,” – ***2,000 years is not long compared to eternity. The Dragon’s wrath will not be for long, but the reign of the saints with Christ is unending!***

THE PURPOSE AND APPLICATION OF THE BEAST’S POWER IS LIMITED – BECAUSE OUR GOD IS SOVEREIGN, ALL-POWERFUL, AND ALL-WISE: the Papal Roman Empire, backed by the wrath of Satan, is being allowed by God to rage in the earth, but over and above all this rage, we must realize this is not just an evil which has free rein – it is literally GOD’S INSTRUMENT IN THE EARTH TO CAPTURE AND LEAD ASTRAY THOSE WHO HATE HIM, and beside this, the Lord takes His saints home to heaven to rule with Him and enjoy everlasting peace, even those whom the Lord has allowed this system to persecute and murder. People often marvel at what a

*terrible, cruel place this world is, and there seems to be no logical answer. And the callous simplistic answer of the Arminian Baptists and the like, that God gave man a free will, and it is man's fault that all the evils are happening, is only a half-truth, it just doesn't fully explain it. **No! WHAT ABOUT THE INNOCENT VICTIMS, THE BABES THAT ARE SLAUGHTERED, THE INFANTS THAT ARE BEATEN TO DEATH, OR HANDED OVER TO PAEDOPHILES? WHAT ABOUT THE AWFUL CRUELTY TO ANIMALS? NONE OF THIS CAN BE EXPLAINED BY A SIMPLISTIC – ‘MAN HAS A FREE WILL!’ NO! WHAT ABOUT GOD? WHERE IS HE WHEN ALL THIS IS HAPPENING? IN FACT, NOT ONLY IS THE ‘FREEWILL’ IDEA WRONG, BUT THE OPPOSITE IS TRUE – MAN, WHO IS DEPRAVED AND BORN IN SIN, IS A CAPTIVE OF SATAN, THE “GOD OF THIS WORLD”, AND IS INCAPABLE OF FREE WILL, SO THAT, ALL MAN’S SUPPOSED ‘FREEWILL’ IS NOTHING BUT THE WILL OF SATAN! THE ONLY PEOPLE WITH FREE WILL ARE THOSE CHRIST HAS LIBERATED AND MADE ALIVE FOR EVERMORE!** The Sovereign Lord God has a master plan, and it is perfect, even if we cannot fully comprehend it, even if we don’t like it. But here in these chapters of Scripture, we get a glimpse of His wisdom, that God's people, although they may suffer unjustly in the world, are taken home for ever to God's glorious kingdom, even to reign with Christ, and all that is in this world, has an end to it, and though Satan may rage for a time, he shall burn for eternity, and his followers with him!*

PAUL FULLY UNDERSTOOD THIS ASTRONOMICAL CONTRAST BETWEEN THIS TEMPORAL WORLD AND ITS TEMPORARY SUFFERINGS, WITH THE ETERNAL KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HE COMFORTED THE CHURCH WITH THESE INSPIRED WORDS: ROMANS 8, 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with *him*, that we may be also glorified together.

18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.*

19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope,

21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.

23 And not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body.

THE IDENTITY OF THE BEAST IS REVEALED: WE HAVE THE PRIVILEGE OF KNOWING WHO THE “MAN OF SIN” IS by, among other things, the “number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six” (13:18), “THE NUMBER OF HIS NAME” (v 17), the very number of the Pope's title, 'THE VICAR OF THE SON OF GOD' (LATIN: VIVARIUS FILII DEI – THE ROMAN NUMERALS EQUAL EXACTLY 666). People scoff when we say these things, and they claim that the Catholic Church is not near as evil as we make out, but they are wilfully ignorant of the plain facts of history, and of all the treacherous goings on in the world, even today, by that same Satanic power. We only have to look at the current news about this Satanic Church's continuing protection of paedophile priests, and the slithering serpentine answers given by high officials of the Church of Rome, when questioned about these things. We only need a cursory knowledge of certain events in history, how the Church of Rome, spearheaded by her Jesuits (who are gaining respectability today as 'educators' and 'missionaries'), who, it is well-known, have assassinated presidents, and continue to overthrow governments, and have done so in the past, fomenting wars, manipulating world finances, E.G. THE CASE OF QUEEN ELIZABETH I, UPON WHOSE LIFE THE JESUITS MADE MANY ATTEMPTS, INCLUDING THE SPANISH ARMADA WHICH GOD BLEW AWAY WITH A STORM, and also on KING JAMES I, AS THE KING JAMES BIBLE WAS IN ITS VERY PLANNING STAGE, AT THE HAMPTON COURT CONFERENCE, CONVENED BY THE KING IN 1604 – THEY SET UP THE GUNPOWDER PLOT OF GUY FAWKES – 5TH NOVEMBER 1605 – A FAILED ATTEMPT TO BLOW UP BOTH THE KING AND PARLIAMENT OF PROTESTANT ENGLAND. GOD THWARTED THEIR PLANS BECAUSE, HE WOULD HAVE HIS HOLY WORD TO BE TRANSLATED, PUBLISHED, PREACHED, AND DEFENDED BY A NATION WHICH FEARED HIS HOLY NAME! CAN YOU SEE WHY THE WHOLE ROMISH WORLD TODAY IS SO CONSUMED WITH A HATRED OF GREAT BRITAIN AND THE KING JAMES BIBLE? You have to be wilfully and fundamentally dishonest in order to consider these things insignificant, and in order to consider they are not the fulfilment of the Scriptures, to the very letter! “FOXES BOOK OF MARTYRS” accounts of the PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS UNDER QUEEN “BLOODY MARY,” WHEN HUNDREDS WERE BURNT ALIVE FOR THEIR CHRISTIAN TESTIMONY, IS AN

EXAMPLE OF THE FULFILMENT OF THE SCRIPTURE, (12:11), And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. *Many say with a sort of fatalistic zeal, that things must get worse and worse, and we cannot stop it, because it is all written in prophecy – what a devilish lie this is, and what a debilitating effect it has on the Church! These lies and propaganda rob the Church of her faith for the battle.*

THESE PROPHECIES ARE WRITTEN SO WE MAY UNDERSTAND AND OVERCOME THE EVIL! AND IF WE UNDERSTAND CORRECTLY, WE WILL KNOW THAT THIS IS NOT ABOUT A SPECIAL TIME OF UNIMAGINABLE EVIL YET TO COME, BUT IT IS GOD'S COMMENT ON THE WAY THE WORLD REALLY IS, AND HAS ALWAYS BEEN SINCE CHRIST WAS CRUCIFIED! Here is our God at work, and, our testimony of our God and Christ causes us to triumph – when God entered into the battle with His people against the Spanish Armada, and finished that Popish Armada off with a mighty storm which wrecked their ships, England struck a special medal with the inscription, “God blew and they were scattered!” BUT WHERE IS THE FAITH OF ENGLAND TODAY – HER GOD HAS NOT CHANGED, BUT SHE HAS STOPPED BELIEVING HIS WORD! HER MINISTERS OF STATE ARE SATAN'S MINISTERS, saying, “Our government is secular and our society is multicultural (multifaith).” And **MANY OF HER MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH ARE SATAN'S MINISTERS** as well, saying, “We need more women bishops,” and, “Let us welcome people of all faiths,” and, “Let us not judge homosexuals but rather embrace them and include them.” And our **QUEEN, ELIZABETH II, BOWS DOWN TO THE POPE, WHEREAS ELIZABETH I FOUGHT AGAINST HIM AND HIS ARMIES, AND WOULD RATHER HAVE DIED THAN BOW BEFORE THAT “MAN OF SIN”!** And all the colonies are the same – it makes you shudder to see what Canada and New Zealand are like today! – and we wonder why we are not blessed, why suicide is one of the leading causes of death. And people say, “The world is in chaos, but it must happen, because it is written.” **RUBBISH! The same Scriptures upon which Elizabeth I, Francis Drake, and Walter Raleigh, and Tyndale, and thousands of others acted in faith, are still with us today, and the promises of God are all still “Yea and Amen in Christ,” if only we will believe them!**

God be merciful, and give His Church eyes to see, and ears to hear what the Spirit says to the Church, through the written and preserved Words of God, and courage to renounce all the wicked deceits of the “beast”, which is none other than Popery, as our grandfathers knew very well! Amen.

The Lord's Day, 25th August 2019.

Continuing through the final chapters of The Revelation, observing the basic symbolic meanings of the text, which according to the introduction in Chapter 1, is given for the blessing of the Church in all ages till the end of the world.

CH 14 – THE LAMB AND THE REDEEMED – AND I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount Sion, and with him an hundred forty *and* four thousand, having his Father's name written in 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 I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: 3 And they sung 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.

WE HAVE SEEN ALREADY (IN CH 7) THAT THE 144,000 ARE A FIGURATIVE VISION DEPICTING ALL THE REDEEMED: In Romans 11:26, Paul calls the whole Church of God “all Israel”. Some say the 144,000 are the redeemed out of the nation of Israel, and the mention of them as “firstfruits unto God and the Lamb” might suggest this, but there is sufficient evidence to show they are a figure of the whole Church, as I have covered previously in dealing with ch 7. There is no place for the nation of Israel in God's future plans – the idea is repugnant to the whole New Testament revelation of Christ. The Old Covenant was about Israel – the New is about Christ alone! All the Scriptures are about Christ, not Israel!

THEN IMMEDIATELY THERE ARE TWO OTHER VISIONS: ONE OF AN ANGEL WITH THE GOSPEL TO BE PREACHED ON EARTH, AND ANOTHER SAYING “BABYLON IS FALLEN!” We might well note that it was the faithful preaching of God's Word by the Protestant Reformers, especially Martin Luther in 1517, which broke the power of Papal Rome! You could say that Babylon fell, as a direct result of Luther's preaching, yet she has risen up again by the subtillies of the Jesuits for nearly 500 years afterwards (IGNATIUS OF LOYOLA FOUNDED THE JESUITS AND THE COUNTER-REFORMATION THE SAME YEAR MARTIN LUTHER'S FIRST GERMAN BIBLE WAS PRINTED – 1534!), AND SO ROME'S FALL IS NOT YET COMPLETE. But the ‘writing is on the wall’, as we see now, how she is in damage-control, a world-wide church with world-wide scandals! Just this week Cardinal Pell has been denied his appeal against conviction on paedophilia. Some cry “Injustice!” But, guilty or not, who could defend this ring-leader in the most heinous

criminal organisation in the world? It is already public knowledge that Pell was a Bishop who participated in the standard Roman Catholic practice of moving paedophile priests from parish to parish to avoid justice. Babylon has sown the seeds of her own demise. But the true Church today must be as Luther was in his day, and expose this evil beast for what it is and give it no place to hide!

THEN THE TEXT PRONOUNCES AN AWFUL JUDGMENT OF HELL FIRE UPON ALL THOSE WHO FOLLOW THE BEAST AND RECEIVE HIS MARK, AND THE REAPING OF THE EARTH'S HARVEST IS MENTIONED. 14 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. 15 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. 16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.

We say that war is an awful thing, and so it is, but have we considered that WARS ARE ONE OF THE CHIEF MEANS BY WHICH GOD IS WORKING HIS PURPOSES AND JUDGMENTS IN THE EARTH? This has been indicated back in Ch 6 where war is depicted as one of the four horses released into the earth for judgment upon mankind. Above all this we see Christ on a cloud, i.e. Christ ruling and reigning from heaven, possibly even Christ coming again on the clouds. The previous verse provides much comfort for believers, and shows that in the midst of the trials and the judgment of the wicked, they are assured of a mansion up yonder and eternal rest with the Lord: 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 labours; and their works do follow them.

THIS IS NOT A SPECIAL COMMENT ABOUT A SPECIAL TIME IN GOD'S FUTURE PROGRAMME, BUT THE PRESENT COMFORT OF THE GOSPEL TO ALL BELIEVERS HERE AND NOW! Often times, people think the end of the world is upon them, but even in the most awful circumstances, some have hope in Jesus, beyond this world and its chaos and pain! People are afraid of death, if they don't know Christ our Saviour, Who conquered sin and death and hell for us. The Word of God gives us certain hope in the face of death, and a faith that actually looks forward to departing and being with Christ, as Paul put it (***Philippians 1:23***)!

CH 15 – GOD’S PERFECT JUDGMENTS – *Note in the opening verses, the mention of “seven angels” and “seven last plagues,” speaking symbolically of the perfect plan of God, and His perfect and just judgments. Here is really just more of the same – the righteous judgments of God in the earth, and the saints triumphant in heaven, singing with harps:* 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, Lord God Almighty; just and true *are* thy ways, thou King of saints. 4 Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for *thou only art* holy: for all nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy judgments are made manifest. **THE SONG OF MOSES IS RECORDED IN EXODUS 15**, “I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea,” *a song which rejoices in God at the overthrow of Egypt's Pharaoh and his army, after holding Israel captive for centuries, and THE SONG OF THE LAMB IS MENTIONED IN REVELATION 5 as the saints in heaven sing*, “Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; 10 And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.”..... 6 And the seven angels came out of the temple, having the seven plagues, clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles. 7 And one of the four beasts gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever. **THESE MIGHTY JUDGMENTS ARE ONGOING IN THE WORLD TODAY. Let us not lose sight of the heavenly perspective of all things.** *It is a common error of believers today, to be settled down in the earth and enjoying pleasures, which are only temporal – but the promises of God are not about prosperity in this world, but eternal prosperity in the kingdom of heaven! We should be looking forward to departing and being with Christ, which Paul says is “far better” (Philippians 1:23). Nevertheless, the Lord does deliver us from many evils and dangers while we are in this world as well. We can count on His promises when we are in need. How else could we go on? GOD’S HELP IS VERY REAL. Psalm 46:1, GOD is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Psalm 50, 14 Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the most High: 15 And call upon me in the day of trouble: I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me. Let us rejoice in these promises!*

CH 16 – MORE SEVENS – MORE PERFECT JUDGMENTS OF GOD: *Here the sevens appear again, with seven angels pouring out the seven vials*

of God's wrath upon the earth. This symbolically underlines the fact that God is judging the earth, with His perfect and just judgment: AND I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth. 2 And **the first** went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell **a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.** 3 And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead *man*: and every living soul died in the sea. 4 And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. 5 And I heard the angel of the waters say, **Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shalt be, because thou hast judged thus.** 6 **For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets,** and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO GET CAUGHT UP IN TRYING TO UNDERSTAND EVERY WORD OF THESE KINDS OF VISIONS, AS MANY HAVE DONE. Men come up with weird and wonderful ideas, and convince themselves that they have special insight, and they do violence to all Scripture with their wild interpretations, but as always with such prophecies, we must look primarily for the symbolic meanings revealed elsewhere in Scripture, (if not in the immediate context), and seek a spiritual understanding of the prophecy, and as we prayerfully read the Scriptures, the Lord, from time to time, gives us glimpses of further insight or applications of these things, (Remember that from the first chapter, the blessing of God is promised to all who read the prophecy, and as the whole message is spiritual, rather than literal, the applications to individual Christians are endless in every age, BUT DON'T MAKE THE MISTAKE OF THINKING THAT BECAUSE GOD HAS SHOWED YOU SOMETHING FROM A PARTICULAR PROPHECY, THAT THAT IS THE INTERPRETATION OF IT! IT APPLIES IN MULTITUDES OF WAYS TO ALL BELIEVERS IN ALL AGES – IT IS GOD'S ETERNAL AND EVER-PRESENT COMFORT TO HIS CHURCH IN THE WILDERNESS!). The one thing obvious here is that God is judging the earth, particularly those who follow the Roman Antichrist, those who engage in his form of idolatrous worship of images, who reject the plain Truth of the gospel of Christ and the Word of God, who live distinctly worldly and ungodly lives while claiming to worship Christ and are part of this great ecumenical beast, and those who have persecuted God's people who stand for His Truth and righteousness.

IT IS DIFFICULT TO BE SURE OF THE EXACT KINDS OF JUDGMENTS BEING ADMINISTERED, BUT THE ALL-IMPORTANT THING IS THAT CLEARLY, THEY ARE BEING ADMINISTERED, AND GOD'S JUSTICE IS BEING POURED OUT IN THE EARTH, CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF. How many people do you speak with who claim they avoid the Churches because they think our God is not judging the wicked, that they see no justice in the world? It is time for the Church to understand that He really is judging the wicked day by day, and to know how to teach these people God's Truth. God is not sitting on a cloud with His hands folded! He is actively administering justice even now, in ways many cannot or will not accept! You have the case of paedophile priests who have been protected by the Roman Catholic Church, (and it is not only the Roman Church either), who seem to have escaped justice, but many are in hell now, burning for all eternity; a good man may die of cancer or a heart attack, and an evil man may die the same way, but the spiritual manners of their death are poles apart! In the same aeroplane crash, one man may be taken straight to hell and another straight to be with Christ – this is so simple and profound, but unbelievers cannot accept it, and believers need to be reminded of it!

IN KEEPING WITH THE WHOLE OF THE REVELATION, THESE PARTICULAR VIALS OF WRATH ARE JUST ANOTHER WAY OF SHOWING CHRIST REIGNING WITH HIS SAINTS, EVEN NOW, FROM HEAVEN, and that we are not to look for some time to come, which some suppose will be more like a science fiction movie, than the reality of the way God deals with the earth, and has done always.

9 And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory. ***HERE WE SEE THAT MEN, WHO ARE NOT TRUE WORSHIPPERS OF GOD AND CHRIST, REBEL WHEN GOD'S HAND IS UPON THEM, RATHER THAN REPENT.*** And we have all done this in some way, but it is only by God's sovereign saving grace, that men can be given new hearts, and humble themselves to worship God, even in their suffering. Let us stand in awe, and fear God, as we see that some are destroyed by the hand of God, and others are graciously saved! And let us plead for God's saving mercy upon men, because no word or action on our part can help them – God alone must open blind eyes and deaf ears, and God alone must give life to those who are spiritually dead, otherwise they will die in their sins, without remedy!

10 And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, 11 And

blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and repented not of their deeds.

ROME HERSELF DOES NOT REPENT WHEN HER SINS ARE EXPOSED; IT IS NOT IN HER NATURE; SHE IS REPROBATE – note the attitudes of her bishops and cardinals when they are questioned about their covering up of crimes. Rome can no more repent than Pharaoh could, in the days of Moses – God raised up Pharaoh to show His power and wrath (Romans 9), and so He has done with the Church of Rome. 14 For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, *which* go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty. 15 Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed *is* he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. 16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

IN VERSE 19 THERE IS MENTION OF THE FALL OF BABYLON (I.E. THE PAPAL KINGDOM), which was also mentioned in Revelation 14:8. This reminds us again how THE REVELATION IS ARRANGED IN SERIES OF VISIONS WHICH ALL END WITH THE END OF THE WORLD AND THE RETURN OF CHRIST, for we are told plainly by Paul in 2 Thessalonians 2, of this “man of sin,” that “the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: 9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders.” AS FOR ARMAGEDDON, WHICH IS SUCH A POPULAR TOPIC OF CONVERSATION, I SUSPECT THAT NOBODY FULLY UNDERSTANDS EXACTLY WHAT IT MEANS. Those who give political significance to every prophecy, have their minds warped with an arbitrary method of literal interpretation, contrary to all Scripture and all common sense, who think only of physical wars and nations, but Armageddon may well be a spiritual battle, and yet spiritual warfare is not without its physical outworkings. THE ARMAGEDDON OR MEGIDDO OF OLD, WAS THE PLACE WHERE BARAK DEFEATED THE CANAANITES AND GIDEON THE MIDIANITES – SPIRITUALLY SPEAKING, IT IS THE PLACE WHERE GOD TRIUMPHS OVER HIS ENEMIES AND THE ENEMIES OF HIS PEOPLE. It is most likely a figurative reference to the final victory of God over a world which increasingly and militantly opposes Him and His people on earth. It may not be far off, it may well be happening already, as we see all nations and all religions gathering in a global ecumenical movement, religious, political, social, legal, and even physical, as Christianity and Christians, on a world wide scale, are hated and persecuted, but Christ is on our side - “Even so, come Lord Jesus!”

*Ch 17 – we have studied previously. It is about “that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth” (v 18), called “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (v 5), and especially about her judgment. She is “the great whore” (v 1) hence she is also an unfaithful church; she sits on “seven mountains” (v 9), and she sits on the Roman beast with “seven heads and ten horns” (v 12). Many have pointed out that other cities sit on seven hills, but no other city fits the entire and comprehensive description the prophets have given to the Vatican here! The Vatican City is both a Church and a State, and she does unquestionably reign over the kings of the earth, she has done so for practically the whole Christian era, and she fits this description like a glove – all the old Protestants agreed on this. Her filthiness and worldliness are well known. She makes “war with the Lamb” by preaching a deceptively false gospel, while claiming to belong to Him, by mingling Paganism with the Word of God, by literally adding to, and subtracting from, God's written Word, by claiming divine power for her popes, who speak blasphemous false doctrine in Christ's name. **AND THE NATIONS TURN AGAINST HER** – this happened in Martin Luther's day, as on the heels of His gospel preaching, the nations of Europe rose up against Popery, but Rome has since gained a more subtle and more widespread rule over all the earth and seems unstoppable, yet the Vatican has suffered enormous financial penalties, through litigation by the victims of her crimes, her priesthood is in total disarray, and in great shortage as well, and who knows what further devastation awaits this wicked city and Church in the near future?*

CH 18 – BABYLON THE GREAT IS FALLEN: “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” (18:2), **and a call to believers (18:8-11)**, “Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues. 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.” **Contrary to the popular 'love gospel' which says, “God loves everybody so you must judge nobody, and you must work feverishly to try to save every soul even those who refuse God’s Word,**

because God doesn't want anybody to go to hell", here in Scripture, BELIEVERS ARE COMMANDED WITH URGENCY TO DEPART FROM THIS FALSE CHURCH! "In one hour she is made desolate!" (18:19) Such a powerful entity which rules the world, can fall in a moment! "20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her." Her fall is a matter for our rejoicing. Let us pray earnestly for the fulfilment of this prophecy! And by God's grace, let us warn our families and friends and neighbours, of the black doings of Popery, and plead with them to hear the Word of God and obey it. God give us grace to be faithful in such a treacherous time, and to rejoice in His Truth together! Amen.