THE WRITINGS

OF THE

APostle John:

WITH NOTES, CRITICAL AND EXPOSITORY

BY THE LATE

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VOL. II. THE REVELATION.

London:
Hodder and Stoughton,
27, Paternoster Row.
S. Harris and Co., 5, Bishopsgate Street Without.
1889

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Cambridge
PRINTED BY C. J. CLAY, M.A. AND SONS,
AT THE UNIVERSITY PRESS.
INTRODUCTORY NOTES
TO THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

"The Revelation of Jesus Christ," Rev. i. 1. These opening words constitute at once both the title and the subject of the Vision. The book is a prophetic vision in figure of things hidden in Christ, but about to be revealed when John wrote; the history in figure of the day of Christ—then instant. "The witness of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy," ch. xix. 10. The dominant thought throughout the vision is the immediate advent in glory of the Lord Jesus, and the events which were to attend and follow His advent up to the time of the restoration of all things in the new heavens and the new earth. The imminent expectation of this advent of the Lord is indicated by the repeated announcements of it running through the whole vision from the first verse to the last. The book relates to:—"Things which must shortly come to pass," ch. i. 1; "Which are about to be," ch. i. 19; "The time is at hand," ch. i. 3; "Behold, he cometh," ch. i. 7; "I will come unto thee quickly," ch. ii. 5; "I will come unto thee quickly," ch. ii. 16; "Hold fast till I come," ch. ii. 25; "Behold, I come quickly," ch. iii. 11; "Behold, I stand at the door," ch. iii. 20; "Behold, I come as a thief," ch. xvi. 15; "Things which must shortly come to pass," ch. xxii. 6; "Behold, I come quickly," ch. xxii. 7 (see notes there); "The time is at hand," ch. xxii. 10; "Behold, I come quickly," ch. xxii. 12; "Yea, I come quickly," ch. xxii. 20.

The impending advent of the Lord Jesus is the master-thought of the Book, the law under which the facts and events of the vision range themselves. The day of Christ was instant when John wrote, instant as to its inception, but having a duration such that a thousand years period, i.e. the millennial reign, ch. xx. 4, 5, is only one of its details.
The vision opens with a few words by way of prelude, ch. i. 1—3, in which the title of the Book and the name of the writer are given. The words, "Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy" shew that the Apocalypse was intended to be read and understood and to be a blessing. At ch. i. 4 the preface passes into a salutation, "John to the seven churches," &c. At ch. i. 7 we have the announcement, "Behold, he cometh" (in ch. vi. we have the description of the advent of our Lord with the angels of His power). At ch. i. 9 John describes the circumstances under which the vision was revealed to him.

It was "in the isle that is called Patmos" that the Voice of Him who is the subject of the vision—the Son of God, our Lord—came to him as the sound of a trumpet, saying, "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." When John goes on to speak of the seven churches as seven golden lamps which he sees in vision, in the midst of which the Son of God, our Lord, stands, he lifts us in thought from the conception of mundane churches to the idea of the church universal in the heavens, with its sevenfold powers, of which the seven churches on earth are the representations.

It may be said that, just as the one divine Spirit has its sevenfold manifestation on earth (comp. chaps. i. 4; iv. 5; v. 6), so has the church universal in the heavens, of which our Lord is the head and central power, its sevenfold manifestation also, represented in the vision by the seven churches of Asia. The seven churches as they are pictured in the Apocalypse not only illustrate the sevenfold manner of manifestation on earth of the church universal, but also in the several imperfections of the churches there are revealed to us the snares and dangers to which each of the seven manifestations is liable. Each church may be said to represent a certain character of soul, one of the

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1 There is not a word about any imprisonment at Patmos. On this see Neander, *Early Planting*, i. 399 n.
2 Throughout the vision the events recorded are represented as being transacted in part on earth and in part in the heavenly places.
seven great spiritual divisions under which human souls are classified.

Rev. ii. Souls of the Ephesian order are they who begin well, who labour patiently and faint not, careful in discipline and in organization, but like the Jews they worship the outward forms of righteousness, and forget the essence of it. Ephesian souls are in danger of leaving their first love and investing themselves in systems (see ch. ii. 1 n.).

The church in Smyrna represents those whose lot in this world is tribulation and poverty, but who, being rich in faith, shall receive the crown of life (see ch. ii. 8, n.).

The church in Pergamum represents those who are strong in faith, who would even suffer death for their faith, but whose faith is one-sided. They are not willing to submit to that bloodless martyrdom in the crucifixion of the flesh and its uncleanness to which all the followers of the Lord are called (see ch. ii. 12, n.).

Thyatira represents that order of the church universal on earth, made up of those who are exemplary in good works, in charity, in faith, in patience, but who are wanting in caution, apt to be led away into delusion, and the pretences of false teachers (see ch. ii. 20, n.).

Sardis represents that order of souls who have fallen into spiritual apathy; they have a name to live, but they are dead. For want of waking and watchfulness they are losing the life they once had (see ch. iii. 3, n.).

Philadelphia represents those blessed souls who are specially beloved. They have an open door of communion with the Lord which no man can shut. They are kept from the hour of trial which comes on all others, they have upon them the name of God, and the name of the city of God, and the new name of Christ (see ch. iii. 7—10, n.).

Laodicea represents the lukewarm people who say they are rich and increased with goods and have need of nothing, not recognizing how wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked they are. They are so without life that they do not know how dead they are (see ch. iii. 14, n.).

Now it is evident that these addresses to the churches in the Apocalypse were not intended only for the seven churches in
Asia, but for the church universal on earth throughout all time, for us in this day as well as for the men of the first century.

The third chapter concludes the addresses to the seven churches, and with the fourth a new scene opens. John is raised into a yet higher state of ecstasy, and a vision of the future opens before him, a vision of the things that were then about to be. The fourth chapter is occupied with the scenery of the coming vision; it is to the following chapters what the first chapter was to the second and third chapters.

The whole Book from this period onward is divided into two great sections, the one reaching to the Day of Judgment of the old world period, ch. xi. 18, the other reaching onward to the Day of Judgment of this present dispensation, ch. xx. 11, 15, and the consummation of this aeon in the new heavens and the new earth. The section of the Apocalypse from ch. vi. 1, 2 to ch. xi. 18 deals with a period in the fate and fortunes of the church of which we have no other record. It includes the period from the destruction of Jerusalem until the beginning of ecclesiastical history, i.e. from about A.D. 70 to about A.D. 112. Beyond what the Apocalypse itself tells us, this period, in so far as it relates to the history of the church, is shrouded in silence. Eusebius in approaching these times, Bk. III. 5, refers his readers to Josephus for information. We have to depend on hostile evidence mainly for any other record. It was during this period that episcopacy was established, but the circumstances under which it was effected are shrouded in darkness (Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 199).

This first section of the Apocalypse is mainly occupied with events relating to Israel, and the dissolution of the theocracy, and finally the day of judgment of the old world period (Rev. xi. 18). This section includes the advent of the Lord Jesus in the glories and terrors of His Parousia and the judgments on Israel, which attended and followed the destruction of Jerusalem up to the period of the day of judgment of ch. xi. 18 (which is the judgment foretold by our Lord as coming at the close of the Jewish age, Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3; xxv. 31—45).

The second section carries on the course of the dispensations after the final close of the Jewish and mixed period into the times of the Gentiles. It is the prophetic history in figure of the
Gentile period until the great day of judgment of Revelation xx. 11—15, culminating in the new heavens and new earth, and the restoration of all things.

The fifth chapter of the book introduces the vision of the seven-sealed scroll. This is the great vision of the Apocalypse; it may be said to be the fountain vision, because from the seventh seal of this vision all that follows flows. The opening of the first seal of the seven-sealed book (ch. vi. 1, 2) reveals the Lord Jesus coming forth with the angels of His power, conquering and to conquer.

And the seventh and last seal, which occupies the 8th, 9th, 10th and 11th chapters, reveals the opened heavens of ch. viii. 1—4. ("The way into the holiest" which had not been made manifest whilst the old tabernacle was still standing, Heb. ix. 8, n.), the vision of the seven trumpet angels and of the seven thunders, and the events that follow up to the day of judgment of the old world period, ch. xi. 18. (This day of judgment marks the consummation of the Jewish age, ἡ συντελέσα τοῦ αἰῶνος of Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3; the συντελέσα καιροῦ of Dan. ix. 27; the day of judgment of Matt. xxv. 31, 45.) With this "consummation" not only comes in the judgment day of the old world period, but also the everlasting righteousness of the new creation, Dan. ix. 24. It opens the period which (again) finally culminates in the great day of judgment of Rev. xx. 11—15, and the new heavens and the new earth of chaps. xxii., xxii.

The seven-sealed book may be said to be (as I have called it in the notes) the book of the new creation, because it opens out the events that lead up to that great consummation.

It is the master-vision of the Book, because from it flows as from a fountain all that follows. This version of the seven-sealed scroll is marked off from all the others also in this, that from first to last it is mediated by our Lord Himself, whilst all others are mediated by angels. He alone, the Lord Jesus, was worthy to open the seals of the Book of the New Creation. He alone could do it. See notes to ch. v. 3, 5, 9.

Rev. vi. The opening of the first seal of the seven-sealed book reveals the coming forth of our Lord with the Angels of

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1 There are subordinate visions, e.g. and the Millennial period &c., for which the 1260 days period, chaps. xii. xiii., see notes.
His Power, "conquering and to conquer" (see Rev. vi. 1, 2, comp. ch. xix. 11). The whole of this 6th chapter of the Apocalypse, so far as it relates to things on earth, describes in figure the events relating to the destruction of Jerusalem, and the woes that should come on Israel at that time. It deals with the events recorded in the 24th chapter of Matthew's Gospel, the advent of the Lord Jesus in the glory and terror of His Parousia, and the end of the Jewish aeon (see in Appendix). It was our Lord Himself who destroyed Jerusalem, see Appendix. The opening of the second, third and fourth seals (Rev. vi. 3, 8), reveals the coming forth of the angels of destruction, war, famine, and death who attend our Lord in His Advent. There is a great earthquake (shaking, σεισμός), the sun becomes as sackcloth, the moon as blood, the stars of heaven fall, Rev. vi. 12, 13 n.; comp. Matt. xxiv. 29, "The kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men,...hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; 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: for the great day of his wrath is come" (see Rev. vi. 15, 17, notes, and compare our Lord's own words there with Matt. xxiv. 24, 30; Luke xxi. 30). (See notes at large on this chapter, Rev. vi.).

Rev. vii. The seventh chapter of the Apocalypse reveals the sealing of the elect spoken of by our Lord in anticipation (Matt. xiii. 41; xxiv. 31), and the gathering together in the heavens of the multitude which no man could number (ch. vii. 9) before the throne, in anticipation of the approaching judgment-day of ch. xi. 18. All these things come under the sixth seal period, of the seven-sealed book, preluding the opening of the seventh and last seal of that book, which immediately follows, and under which comes the judgment-day of ch. xi. 18.

Rev. viii. The opening of the seventh and last seal of the seven-sealed scroll, which is the subject of this and the following chapters up to ch. xi. 19, introduces a new period in the dispensations. It is the climax of the six preceding periods of the six seals. The day of wrath had already come on Israel (ch. vi. 17), but not the day of judgment. The day of judgment of the old dispensation (ch. xi. 18), comes at the close of this the seventh seal period. Thus far in the vision the two dispensations, the old and the new, have overlapped one another. The new dispen-
sation opened with Pentecost. Pentecost marked the initial coming on earth of the kingdom of Christ (see Appendix). The kingdom of Heaven came on earth at Pentecost, but the advent of the king, our Lord, in the glory and terror of His Parousia (see Matt. xxiv. 3, notes), was not manifested until at and after the destruction of Jerusalem. During the whole of the Apostolic period which occupied the interval between Pentecost and the destruction of the city and sanctuary the two dispensations, the old and the new, overlapped one another. The Apostolic period was a period of transition: Paul (Rom. xiii. 12) speaks of it as night in comparison with the glory that was about to be revealed in the day of the Lord’s Parousia (presence). "The way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the old tabernacle was yet standing" (Heb. ix. 8). This advent of the Son of God our Lord in His Parousia, as regards Israel, is set forth in the sixth chapter of the Apocalypse (see ch. vi. 1, 2, n.) As also in the 24th chapter of Matthew’s Gospel. In both cases, whether the Apocalypse or the Gospel, the record is mainly occupied with the judgments on Israel which attended the advent of our Lord. The dispensation of the glory of the Parousia as the dispensation of the opened heavens, the times of communion, opens only with this 8th chapter of the Apocalypse. The parallel period of the opened heavens on the Gospel of Matthew begins with the opening of the 25th chapter there, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins," &c. This parallel between the Apocalypse and the Gospel of Matthew continues, until each closes with the day of judgment of the old world period, the Apocalypse in ch. xi. 18, and the Gospel in xxv. 46. In the Apocalypse this judgment day marks the close of the seventh seal period under the seventh and last trumpet angel, Rev. xi. 18, n., the last trumpet of 1 Cor. xv. 52. In the Gospel of Matthew the same judgment day is described, ch. xxv. 31—46. This eighth chapter opens a new manner of relation between God and man through the mediating priesthood of Christ (see Rev. viii. 1, notes). To this event the preceding seals from ch. vi. 1, 2 onward have been leading up. The seventh seal brings to a climax the events of the six preceding seals of the book of the new creation. The heavens are opened and the mundane city and sanctuary having been destroyed, the way into the
holiest which had not been made manifest whilst the old tabernacle was yet standing is here revealed. This was one part of the glory about to be revealed of which Peter speaks (1 Pet. v. 1). The deep import of this event is emphasized by the signs that attend it. There is silence in heaven (Rev. viii. 1), there is a pause of expectation, a hushed feeling of awe at the revelation of the mysteries hidden under this seal. As with all the previous seals of the book of the new creation, so with this the seventh and last, it is still our Lord who opens it. The vision has now reached that point in the dispensation when the old tabernacle, which was yet standing when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written (Heb. ix. 8), has been done away in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the golden altar of incense upon which the prayers of the saints are offered by the angel of the new covenant (our Lord), stands before the throne of God without any intervening vail (see Rev. viii. 1, note). This represents our Lord’s Melchizedek-priesthood (see Heb. vii. 1, 3) without temple service or sacrifice in the Levitical sense. The Apostle John here sees in vision the advent of the day to which saints and apostles had looked forward as the hope of their lives, the day of the realized presence of the Lord Jesus as the angel of the new covenant-king and priest and mediator between God and man, a mediator not of division but of union. “The darkness is passing away and the light, the very light, now shineth.” (see notes to 1 John ii. 8, also to vv. 27, 28). This is the preface and prelude also to the day of judgment which follows (Rev. xi. 18) at the close of the seventh-seal period. It is the last time of 1 John ii. 18, the last time, that is, of the old world period (see notes ad loc.). It is the prelude and preface to the gathering of the Church of the Firstborn on the Mount Zion which ultimately comes into dominion, and dominates the whole scene in the closing chapters of the Apocalypse. This Church had been gathering from Pentecost onward behind all the turmoil and trouble of the Apostolic Period. In the Epistle to the Corinthians, Paul, in a few rapid words, includes the whole period from Pentecost to the new heavens and the new earth, when he says in 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24, “Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ’s in His Parousia; then cometh the end.” It is in His Parousia that all these events are transacted. The Apoca-
lypse is the history of the Parousia, the history of the day of Christ. As already said (supra) the scene of the vision is laid in part on earth, and in part in the heavenly places. We have already, in the vision, had intimations of the saints (ch. v. 8), and of the elect (ch. vii. 3, n.), and also of those who had been gathered out of the great tribulation (see ch. vii. 14, n.). From Pentecost onward the Church of the firstborn had been gathering—

"Christ the firstfruits; afterwards they that are Christ's in His Parousia." This ingathering of the Church of the firstborn had been progressing throughout the mixed period with which, thus far, the vision of the Apocalypse has been concerned, and so it continues up to the day of judgment, ch. xi. 18, which closes the old-world period. Up to that point (the judgment-day of ch. xi. 18), the two dispensations still overlap one another. 'It is the Judeo-Christian period; beyond that point we enter in the vision on the times of the Gentiles, but the Church of the firstborn which takes the inception from Pentecost, and runs through the whole of this mixed period; passes onward also into the times of the Gentiles and becomes the connecting link between the Judeo-Christian period (including the Apostolic period), and the Gentile period that follows in the vision. The glimpse of the glory of this Church of the firstborn is first revealed in this 8th chapter of the Apocalypse. We have a vision of the Church again in the times of the Gentiles (Rev. xiv. 1, 5, see notes there), in added glory, and ultimately she becomes the great fact to which the whole vision leads up, the Holy City, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of Heaven, the Church of the firstborn, the Bride, heralding the new heavens and the new earth of chaps. xxi., xxii. These things all flow therefore from the seventh seal of the seven-sealed book as their source. The seven-sealed scroll may fitly be called, as I have called it, the book of the new creation mediated by our Lord Himself. It unfolds the glories and the terrors of the day of Christ, the dispensation of the Parousia (presence) of the Lord Jesus. In this, the seventh and last seal period, of the seven-sealed scroll are included the vision of the seven trumpet angels, the vision of the seven thunders, and finally ch. xi. 18, 19, the day of judgment of the old world period. These are the signs of events which follow the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dissolution of the Jewish theocracy, and the opening of the way into
the holiest. Fire from the altar of incense is cast upon the earth, and the seven trumpet angels prepare to sound (see notes to ch. viii. 5, 6). The seven trumpet angels herald the woes which had yet to come on Israel according to our Lord's prophetic words recorded in the Gospels (see Matt. ch. xxiv. and parallel passages in Mark and Luke). The miseries that Israel had invoked upon herself when she crucified her Messiah and Saviour had yet to come upon her. When the Jews rejected Christ and cried "We have no king but Caesar" (see John xix. 15, n.), they elected to forfeit the kingdom which was prepared for them, they elected to go back again into Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, Rev. xi. 8, n.

The judgments of the seven trumpet angels represent the Egyptian plagues falling on the Jewish nation, now in the vision drifting back into Egypt. The Egyptian plagues which, when Israel escaped from Egypt fell only upon her enemies, now, when Israel is passing back (spiritually) into Egypt, fall on the apostate nation (see notes at large on the judgments and woes of the seven trumpet angels, chaps. viii. 6 to xi. 18).

Rev. ix., x., xi. The vision of the seven trumpet angels with the subordinate vision of the seven thunders occupies the whole of these chapters. Under the sixth trumpet period is described the ministry of the two witnesses, in which we find the first mention of the mystical period 1260 days, forty and two months (see notes at large on this vision, ch. xi. 3, 13). Under the seventh trumpet period, the last trumpet of 1 Cor. xv. 52, comes the day of judgment of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18, identical with that of which our Lord speaks, Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxv. 31, 46, as coming at the close of the Jewish age, the same as that of which Paul speaks, Acts xvii. 31. With the seventh trumpet period, Rev. xi. 15, comes also the close of the seventh seal period, which opened with Rev. viii., to which the seven trumpet vision and its attendant vision are subordinate, they are as visions within a vision. From ch. vi. 1, 2 to ch. xi. 18, 19 the Apocalypse has been occupied principally with events relating to the last days of Israel, from the time of the destruction of Jerusalem to the time of the day of judgment of the old world, according to human chronology from about A.D. 70 to about A.D. 112, 1260 days (mystical), forty and two months (mystical), a time and times and half-a-time (mystical).
WHilst this part of the vision has been occupied with the events concerning Israel, the events themselves have indicated the gradual evolution of the advent of our Lord in His Parousia from ch. vi. 1, 2 onwards, the dispensation of the Parousia was being gradually evolved throughout. During this period also the Church of the firstborn has been gradually gathering, as the Church in the wilderness of Rev. ch. xii. During this period the two witnesses of ch. xi. 3—13 have carried on their ministry clothed in sackcloth, and during this period also Antichrist had been at work, warring against the woman and her seed, the church (Rev. xii. 17), and against the two witnesses Rev. xi. 7, as John describes in his 1st Epistle (which relates to these same last times of the old world period, see notes to 1 John ii. 8, 18, 26, &c.). But the day of Judgment (Rev. xi. 18) brings the old world period to a close. This great assize is identical with the Judgment day described by our Lord in Matt. xxv. 31—46, it is identical also with the Judgment foretold in Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49, then the Kingdom came on Israel as a net gathering of every kind, good and bad. The day of wrath had already come on Israel, Rev. vi. 17, n., but in Rev. xi. 18 comes the day of Judgment also. This day of Judgment would include within its limits the whole human race, existent under the conditions of the old world period, all men born into the world before our Lord’s work in the flesh was consummated. Before the advent of this day there had already been a preparation in the heavenly places for this great event (see ch. vii. 9, n., &c.). The event dimly foretold by our Lord, Matt. xxiv. 40, 41, and by Paul in such passages as 1 Thess. iv. 15—17, the translation of the Saints had already taken place. There had already been a translation of the Saints previous to the Judgment day, or together with it (Matt. xxiv. 3), (also 1 Cor. xv. 52); see also Matt. xxiv. 40, 41 and xxvii. 52, 53. In these anticipatory resurrections and translations we may believe that the Apostles of our Lord had their part. Paul speaks with assured hope of his participation therein, 1 Thess. iv. 15—17, “We who are alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord.”

This day of judgment (Rev. xi. 18) of the old world period was also an epoch in the gradually evolving Parousia of our
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Lord. Up to this point the advent had been marked by judgments and terrors, but at and after the great assize His Parousia is manifested in a new form, it is no longer occult. Up to this point in the vision the two dispensations have overlapped one another, it has been a period of mixture, but with the seventh and last trumpet angel (Rev. xi. 15) under the seventh seal of the seven-sealed scroll comes "the last time" of which John speaks (I John ii. 18) lit. "the last hour," i.e., the last hour of Judaism, the close of the Judeo-Christian period, not that human perversity has not brought over into the new period the things that should be left behind, but that so far as the divine dispensations are concerned, and so far as the divine purpose as expressed in the dispensation is concerned, Judaism and Judaic forms were put aside with the last hour of the old world period, which came into judgment with "the last hour" of I John ii. 18; the last trumpet of Rev. ix. 18; I Cor. xv. 52. This was the removing of the things that might be shaken, Heb. xii. 27. None of these Judaic ordinances belong to the dispensation of communion that follows the dispensation of the Mount Zion where our Lord reigns as King and Priest in His Melchizedek priesthood without sacrifice or ordinances in the Levitical sense. The glories of the Mount Zion where He reigns with the elect, Rev. xiv. 1, 5, succeed the day of judgment of the old world period. This is the coming in of the everlasting righteousness foretold by the prophet Daniel (Dan. vii. 27; ix. 24) which was to succeed the destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary, and the consummation of the age (συντέλεια καιροῦ, Dan. ix. 27; συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος Matt. xxiv 3). In the chronology of the Apocalypse, it will be seen that the vision of the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5, succeeds the day of Judgment of Rev. xi. 18, 19, without any interval; the day of Judgment of the old world period brought in the everlasting righteousness of the Mount Zion.

Rev. xii. The two visions of the woman and the man-child ch. xii, and the beasts, and the image of the beast, ch. xiii. which appear to intervene, belong to the period of 1260 days, (mystical) fifty and two months, to the same period (i.e.) as the two witnesses in ch. xi. to the period that is anterior to the day of Judgment of ch. xi. 18 (and therefore not separating, as they appear to do in the text, the day of Judgment of ch. xi. 18
from the Mount of ch. xiv. 1—5. They are records of things belonging to the period between Rev. vi. 1, 2, and Rev. xi. 18, 19. Chapters xii. and xiii. revert to the period already considered between ch. vi. 1, 2 and ch. xi. 18. They deal with that period, but with another order of events under that period. Ch. xii. is a résumé of the same preceding 1260 days period (42 years), the same period but not the same events.

The vision of the woman and the man-child in Rev. xii. carries us back to the period anterior to the day of Judgment of the old world period (ch. xi. 18). It describes the fortunes of the Church (mystical) during the period between Rev. vi. 1, 2 and Rev. xi. 18, when Israel was drifting back into Egypt. It describes the history of the Apostolic Church in prophetic symbols through this period concerning which Ecclesiastical history is silent, the time between the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of ecclesiastical history. It is a recapitulation of the times already spoken of, but not of the same events. The Apostles have now disappeared from the scene, they no longer pilot the vessel of the Church through the storm; probably John alone lived into this period (see notes on the two witnesses, ch. xi. 3—12, also introductory notes to the Gospel and first Epistle of John), the Church is in the wilderness, and the man-child is gathered up to God, and to His throne (see notes at large on this Chapter). This re-tracing the history of the Judeo-Christian period between Rev. vi. and Rev. xi. 18 (which occupies Rev. xii.) brings up the history of the Church again to the close of the old world period, and to the coming in of the times of the Gentiles that follow. Ch. xii. is a summary of the 1260 days period, but deals with collateral events occurring during that period. It prepares for the manifestation of the Church of the firstborn, in glory with Christ on the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, the great fact of the new dispensation and of the Parousia.

Rev. xiii. The vision in the 13th chapter of the Apocalypse also again carries us back to the same period as the twelfth chapter, the period anterior to the day of Judgment of ch. xi. 18. Whilst ch. xii. recites the history, in figure, of the Church during that period, ch. xiii. tells the story of the rise and progress of the Anti-christian power during that same period. The beast of ch. xiii. 1—8 represents the Roman Empire, the earthly
power under which the events evolve (the fourth beast of Daniel's prophecy, ch. vii. 7, 26; see notes at large Rev. xiii. 1—2). According to the ancient word of prophecy, Dan. vii. 7, 14; ix. 26, LXX. Messiah in His glory and power was to be manifested during this period, and Jewish tradition says the same thing. The Targum of Palestine on Exodus xiii. says, "Moses came forth from the midst of the desert, but the King Messiah comes from the midst of Rome," Rome being the fourth beast of Daniel, the beast of Rev. xiii. 1, 2; vii. 7 (see Etheridge, i. 418; also ii. 432 on Numb. xxiv. 24; see notes at large on Rev. xiii. 1, 2). Thus Prophecy, Tradition, and the Apocalyptic story all coincide in associating the Roman Empire intimately with the evolution of the events that concern the day of Christ of which the Apocalypse is the history. The beast of Rev. xiii. 1, 8 (see notes there at large) represents the Roman Empire out of which and in which not only was Christ to be manifested, but from which also as its ground and source was to arise the beast of Rev. xiii. 11, the beast and his image (Rev. xiii. 14) during whose period pseudo-Christianity was to arise. This second beast of Rev. xiii. 14 is probably the power, that John afterwards when writing his first Epistle recognizes, and speaks of as Antichrist. Thus, from this 1260 days period (mystical) during which the two witnesses prophesied in sackcloth (ch. xi. 3, n.), during which the Church was in the wilderness (ch. xii. 14), and during which the Christianity of the Apostolic days was changed into a pseudo-Christianity, emerged, after the day of Judgment of the old world period (ch. xi. 18), two antagonistic powers.

Rev. xiv. On the one hand, the Church of the firstborn (ch. xiv. 1—5) on the Mount Zion gathered into the Parousia of the Lord Jesus the outcome of the Church in the wilderness, and on the other hand, the evil powers and principles (Principalities?) described in Rev. xiii. (see notes above), the dragon of ch. xii. 3, 4, the devil, i.e. the beast of Rev. xiii. 1, (see notes there;) the

\[1\] Whilst the Roman empire (the beast of Rev. xiii. 1) is the scene in which the evil powers work, Babylon may be said to be the atmosphere. The beast of Rev. xiii. 11 probably includes the Antichrist, 1 John ii. 18, and the false Prophet, Rev. xvi. 13; xix. 20; xx. 10. To these we in all probability owe the pseudo-Christian Church of Sacerdotalism and Ecclesiasticism which is now in one form or other the religion of the diffused Roman empire, our modern civilization.
beast of Rev. xiii. 11, see notes there; identical probably with the false prophet, see below; and Babylon the harlot city, see notes on "Babylon." The Saints on the Mount Zion are, to the remainder of the inhabitants of the earth, only as 144,000, to untold millions, see Rev. xiv. 1, n.; 1 John v. 19, n. We are now in the times of the Gentiles and it is henceforth almost exclusively from among the Gentiles that the Church of the firstborn is gathered, that Church which is ultimately manifested as the new Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, ch. xxii. 2, that Church of which Paul speaks, 1 Cor. xv. 23, as made up of "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's in His Parousia." This manifestation in glory of the Church of the firstborn on the Mount Zion with Christ the Lord is a great epoch in the dispensation of the day of Christ. It is the coming in of the everlasting righteousness (Rev. xiv. 6, n.), a greatly enlarged measure of the opened heavens of ch. viii. 1—4, n. It is the pledge of the ultimate destruction of Babylon the antagonist and harlot city, see Rev. xiv. 3, n., pledge also of the final triumph of the Church, the Body of Christ the Bride. From henceforth blessed (specially) are the dead which die in the Lord, ch. xiv. 13, n. Henceforth death is made of none effect to those who are already in communion with the Lord Jesus in His Parousia (see 1 Cor. xv. 26). They are already on the Mount Zion, even on the earth. Death to such is merely a putting off the vail of flesh that hinders perfect communion with the Lord.

Rev. xiv. The 144,000 who stand with Christ the Lord on the Mount represent the perfect number of the elect who constitute the Church of the firstborn, what that number may be according to human arithmetic we know not. The Saints here gathered are not identical with the 144,000 of Rev. vii. 4 (see notes there), the two companies are distinguished by clearly defined marks. The firstfruits unto God and the Lamb in ch. xiv. 1—5 are virgin souls, [they represent the faithful Bride], they have the name of the Lord Jesus, and His Father's name, written in their foreheads, they follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. In their mouth is found no guile, they are without fault before God, they sing the new song, which none but they know. This is the

1 [The words are to be understood spiritually, cf. Ps. xlv. passim, 2 Cor. xi. 2. Ed.]
Mount of Communion to which even during the Apostolic period the Saints were called in anticipation of the coming time (Heb. xii. 22, 23). Paul, when he wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, had probably already seen, but might not speak of, many of the things that John here describes in the Apocalypse (see 2 Cor. xii. 2,—4). The Mount Zion here revealed in the Apocalypse is the consummated sabbath rest spoken of, Heb. iv. 9, which remained for the people of God, the city which hath the foundations (ib. xi. 10). It is the home and refuge of the Saints whether in heaven or on earth, the nexus and point of junction between heaven and earth, the point where the two worlds meet in one; it is the ante-chamber to the preparation for the Holy city, the new Jerusalem, Rev. xxi. 2—10, which cometh down out of heaven from God as a bride adorned for her husband, “When the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it,” see Isaiah ii. 2; xi. 9; xxv. 7, 8; lxv. 25; Micah iv. 1.

The Mount Zion revealed in this vision (Rev. xiv. 1—5) is one of the great glories of the day of Christ of which the Apocalypse is the history in figure, thus does the Lord Jesus go on conquering and to conquer. The Mount Zion whether contemplated in its mundane or super-mundane character is the place in which the Saints are safe from the power of the enemy, it is that spiritual region from which the evil one has been cast out, Rev. xii. 9, n. It is in this Mount only that the glories of the Lord’s Parousia are realized, the world around remains the habitation of the evil one and his angels, here the Lord Jesus rules though it be as in the midst of His enemies, Psalm cx. 2. To the world, as distinguished from the Mount Zion, the day of the Lord is darkness and not light, yea, very dark with no brightness in it, a day of darkness and gloominess, a day of clouds and of thick darkness, Isaiah xiii. 6; Amos v. 18—20; John ii. 1—2. The glory of the day of Christ is known only on the Mount Zion (see notes to Rev. xiv. 1). The inhabitants of the Mount Zion are they who having been quickened from death into life in Christ enter into communion with Him in His Parousia, (the present dispensation in which we now are) and abide therein, living the Blessed Life in Christ and dying therein, “Christ the firstfruits;
afterward they that are Christ's in His Parousia" (so lit. see 1 Cor. xv. 23). These are they who share the glories of the Mount, for whom death is made of none effect, l. c. v. 26. These are they who are to reign with Christ a thousand years, Rev. xx. 4, n. These are some of the glories of the Parousia, and it is in this period of the day of Christ, as set forth in the Apocalypse, that "the everlasting Gospel" (ch. xiv. 6), as distinguished from "the Gospel," is here for the first time spoken of, because these times of communion, the dispensation of the Parousia and its powers and blessings, constitute a new era; they constitute the everlasting righteousness of Daniel ix. 24, and are fitly called in the Apocalypse "the everlasting Gospel," which is for every nation and kindred and tongue and people, Rev. xiv. 6. The proclamation of the "everlasting Gospel" is the proclamation also of the destruction of Babylon (Rev. xiv. 8, n.), because the destruction of Babylon is involved in the ultimate triumph of this everlasting Gospel. The coming in of this dispensation of the Parousia was, and is, also a great event for the saints, because it made and still makes death of none effect for them, death thenceforth is the entrance gate to the enlarged life on the Mount Zion. Therefore we read Rev. xiv. 13, n., of the voice from heaven, saying, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from henceforth," &c. (For the remainder of ch. xiv. see notes at large.)

Rev. xv. The 15th Chapter of the Apocalypse holds a place in the Gentile period of the vision similar to that which the 8th Chapter holds in the old world or Judeo-Christian period. The opening vision is described as great and marvellous, it introduces the seven Angels having the seven last plagues just as the 8th Chapter introduced the seven trumpet Angels. It also introduces the vision of the sea of glass, and the Saints standing thereon, who had gotten the victory over the beast and over his image, and over his mark and over the number of his name; it speaks also of the Temple opened in heaven, preluding the seven last plagues, which in the Gentile period of the Apocalypse are answerable to the judgments on Israel under the seven trumpet Angels in ch. viii. (see notes there). The pouring out of the vials is described in the following chapter.

Rev. xvi. The 16th chapter is occupied with the description
of the pouring out of the seven last plagues which lead up to the destruction of Babylon, the battle of Harmageddon, the millennial reign and the great judgment day of the Gentile period, ch. xx. 11, 15, with the new heavens and the new earth that follow. The seven angels who mediate the seven last plagues are probably identical with the seven trumpet angels of ch. viii. 1, 6 (see notes to ch. xv. 6, also notes to ch. xvi. 1). The seven last plagues here are also similar in character and probably also in purpose to the judgments and woes of the seven trumpets in ch. viii. Just as in ch. viii. the judgments came on Israel before the day of judgment of the Jewish and old world period, both to punish and to bring to repentance, Rev. ix. 20, 21 n., so also do the seven last plagues come on the nation in the Gentile period both in punishment and in mercy (ch. xvi. 9, 11, n.). The judgments in each case run on parallel lines, and both series of judgments find their prototype in the history of Israel, specially as regards the plagues of Egypt (see Rev. viii. 7, n.). Israel is as it were the ground-plan according to which the nations of the world are governed, “When the most High divided to the nations their inheritance,...he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel” (Deut. xxxii. 8). The Gentiles are to be redeemed through judgment just as Israel was, the plagues poured out on the earth and on the kingdom of the beast are to bring men, if it be possible, to repentance, they are “to compel them to come in” (Luke xiv. 23), to the marriage supper (see notes at large on Rev. xvi.). We have no hint given as to the duration of the times of the Gentiles, no such hints as we have in the Judeo-Christian period (1260 days, 42 months, &c.). In the Gentile period all time is indefinite. All we know is, that the times of communion, the dispensation of the Parousia in its manifested glory, came in with ch. xiv. 1—5, and that the Mount Zion of God there revealed abides as the home of the saints whether on earth or in heaven throughout the whole term, the one place of worship, the one true religion for the world which is ultimately to swallow up all other; all churches, sects, societies, are to fall before the church universal, all the powers of the world are to give way to the reign of Christ the Lord. “He must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet” (1 Cor. xv. 25). We do not know whether (in this A.D. 1881) we have yet entered
on the period of the seven last plagues, or whether they are still in the future, all we know is that we are now in the dispensation of the Parousia, and that we are called to come out of the world, and out of Babylon, and enter into that spiritual communion with the Lord Jesus in faith and love by which we are made members of the church of the firstborn gathered to Him in the rest and peace and glory of the Mount Zion. No clue is given as to the time or duration of the period of the seven last plagues as described in this 16th chapter of the Apocalypse, but we are told that toward the end of that period there will be what John calls a drying up of the water of the great river Euphrates, that the way of the kings of the east may be prepared (see notes on ch. xvi. 12). The waters of Euphrates (mystical) are peoples and multitudes, and nations and tongues (see Rev. xvii. 15, n.), the peoples constituting the diffused Roman Empire towards the times of the end of the Gentile period. These people are the waters on which Babylon (mystical) sits just as Babylon of old sat on the Euphrates; these people and nations are also the diffused Roman Empire as it shall then exist when these things shall come to pass (see ch. xvii. 8—13 notes), that is, they are the nations who, under the sixth seal period of ch. xvi. 12 (see notes there), shall be dried up, probably by the severity of the judgments of the last plagues. This drying up shall be the signal not only for the destruction of Babylon, but also for the coming in of the kings from the rising of the sun. The hordes of the Eastern nations shall come down upon (the diffused Roman empire), not in blessing but in judgment, and then shall come the destruction of Babylon, the battle of Harmageddon, and then the Millennial reign, see notes on ch. xvii. It is quite possible that all the events and portents and descriptions that follow on chapters xvii. xviii. and xix., are only the details of the events summed up in little under the seventh seal, ch. xvi. 17. The events of the seventh vial period are epitomized in ch. xvi. 17, 21; they are (I suggest) given at large in chapters xvii. xviii. and xix. This accounts for the seeming reiteration in these chapters. Whether we have already (1881) entered upon the period of the seven last plagues, or whether they are still in the future, our Lord's words to the Jews, Luke xiii. 3—5, are applicable to us. These woes and judgments are a warning for us, and it is vain for us to
say that they will not come in our day. If we are of the generation of Babylon these woes are for us, though their actual incidence may not come in our day; our Lord’s word is still true, "Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." The judgments are for our warning just as the promises and invitations are for our encouragement. That we come out of the world and out of the doomed city Babylon, and that we be found in communion with the Lord Jesus and His holy ones on the Mount Zion, this is the message of the Apocalypse for us, the solemn warning, the blessed invitation.

Rev. xvii. This chapter, the seventeenth, describes in detail as I suppose, the execution of the sentence pronounced on Babylon, ch. xvi. 19 n. Babylon is here described as "the great whore that sitteth upon many waters;" ch. xvii. 1, "the woman...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," Rev. xvii. 4. The waters on which the whore sitteth, ch. xvii. 1, n., and the scarlet coloured beast on which she sits (ch. xvii. 3, n.) are identical, each represents the diffused Roman Empire at the time when Babylon shall be destroyed; this scarlet-coloured beast is identical also with the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2 (see notes there), see also notes to ch. xvii. 1, 2, 3, 8, 10, 11, 15, 16, as to what is meant by Babylon. The fate of Babylon is identified with the fate of the beast on which she sitteth—identified that is with the "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" (ch. xvii. 15) who shall constitute the diffused Roman Empire at the period when the doom of Babylon shall be executed. The beast that was, and is not, and shall come again (ch. xvii. 8, n.), and who goes unto perdition shares the doom of Babylon, the destruction of one will be nearly identical with the destruction of the other. The destruction of both is to come within the seventh vial period of ch. xvi. 17—21, of which I suppose chaps. xvii. xviii. and xix. of the Apocalypse to be the detailed record. The order of the mutual destruction of Babylon and of the diffused Roman Empire at their day of doom appears to be this: when the sixth vial of ch. xvi. 12 shall be poured out on the earth (specially on the seat of the beast (ch. xvi. 10, n.), the accumulated woes and sufferings of this and the previous five vials shall so have brought low the
people who constitute the then diffused Roman Empire (the seat of the beast) on which Babylon sitteth, as Babylon of old sat on the Euphrates (xvi. 12, n.), that they shall be, as it were, dried up, and in their dire dismay, both at their sufferings and with the threatened descent of the Eastern nations impending over them (see notes at large), they shall resolve themselves into a federation of nations under one head which shall be the renewed Roman Empire in something of its original form, "The beast that was, and is not, and shall come again," see ch. xvii. 8 (amended text). The nations constituting the diffused Roman Empire, at that time existent under ten horns or kings (ch. xvii. 12, n.), shall unite together under one supreme king (ch. xxviii. 11, n.), and under this dominion shall come not only the last great slaughter of Harnaggeddon, but the destruction also of Babylon. The mutual slaughter of the nations of the earth will probably continue for an undefined time, see chaps. xvii. 14; xix. 11, 17, 21, whilst the destruction of Babylon (chaps. xvii. 16, 17; xviii. 10—21) will be sudden, and this sudden and complete destruction of Babylon is to be brought about, by the act of the very people who have constituted her support. This federation of nations, kings and people united (ch. xvii. 15, 16, n.) "shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire." The destruction of Babylon shall come from her own people, from the very people among whom, and upon whom, her throne has been placed, her destruction is to come from those who have been her friends. The impulse that determines them to this act is not hinted at; we may imagine that the motive impulse may arise from the drying up of the peoples, the sufferings that are upon them at the 6th and 7th vial periods of the dispensation, that the low estate of the world shall bring with it a sudden determination that the excesses of Babylon shall no longer be tolerated, and that acting on some such determination and with secular, not religious intent, the nations shall determine the abolition of those excesses and abominations which shall and do constitute Babylon; they shall seek in the destruction of Babylon a mitigation of their own sufferings. Anyhow Babylon is to fall by the hands of her own people, she is, as it were, in the nature of things, to reap the harvest of ruin she has sown, ch. xviii. 7, 8, n.
Rev, xviii. is occupied with a description of Babylon, see also ch. xvii. 1, 2, n. Coincident with her ruin will come also that war of extermination between man and man which is described in chaps. xvi. 16, n.; xvii. 14, n.; xix. 17, 19, n. These are the results to which our present boasted civilization is leading up. Like Saturn of old, our civilization will destroy its own children. The symptoms of this ultimate ruin may be seen even in the present conditions of human society.¹

Rev. xix. This war of extermination foretold in Rev. xix. 17, 18 (see notes there at large) is to be the consummation of the Gentile period (ἡ σουρῶμα τοῦ αἰῶνος). The scene of this war of extermination on earth will be the diffused Roman Empire, the kingdom of the beast, the home of the pseudo-Christianity which took its rise from the beast and his image, ch. xiii. 11—15, n. (Respecting the unloosing of Satan and the war that follows, see notes at large, ch. xx. 7—9.)

Rev. xx. With chapter xx. of the Apocalypse a new scene opens. During all the period from ch. xiv. 1—5 onward, behind the turmoil and unrest of the world, the Church of the firstborn, the Body of Christ, the Bride, has been gathering in anticipation of the marriage and the marriage supper. The announcement has already been made, ch. xix. 7—9 (see notes there); but so great an event is this that there is yet a period of probation for the Bride, the Church, to pass through before the marriage-day, a probation of glory, not of suffering.

For a period of a thousand years Satan is to be bound; and during this period the saints shall live and reign with Christ as the prelude and preparation for that yet higher glory when the Bride of Christ, the Church, shall come forth (ch. xxi. 2) as “the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven,

¹ Science is now occupied to a large extent in perfecting inventions for the destruction of human life. There is every reason to believe that these inventions will be multiplied and intensified, and that the ages of invention will culminate in some great crisis of mutual slaughter, in which a great part of the earth will be depopulated. This is the reasonable climax of the present tendencies of our civilization looked at from the human side, and this is what the Apocalypse declares shall be the end, “the end of all the toil of centuries.” Man, with deliberate intent and industry is working out the great catastrophe, and he will reap the ruin he is sowing. It is demonstrating the problem already prophetically solved in the Apocalypse. It is demonstrating what human power and knowledge and activity will lead to when it works only in its own strength.
prepared as a bride adorned for her husband (see notes at large on ch. xx. 1—10). Whilst the saints in Christ thus reign with Him for one thousand years, the rest of the dead (of the Gentile period) live not again until the thousand years are finished (ch. xx. 5, n.), they are reserved against the great day of judgment that is described ch. xx. 11—15, n. This day of judgment (ch. xx. 11—15) is not as it is called by some, the judgment of "the wicked dead" only. It is the judgment day of all who shall have passed out of life during the Gentile period, without having been spiritually quickened out of death into life in Christ during their life on earth. There are included in the number some whose names are in the Book of Life, see ch. xx. 15, n. But this great assize does not appear to include within its limits any of the saints who form the Church of the firstborn, the Body of Christ on the Mount Zion of God (ch. xiv. 1—5, n.). They are already with the Lord; they do not pass into the judgment; they have already passed from death unto life (John v. 24, n.), they have already reigned with Christ during the millennial period in the glory of the first resurrection. In this respect the day of judgment of the Gentile period differs from that which closed the old world period, ch. xi. 18 (see notes there). See also notes at large in ch. xx. 11—15. In this great judgment day of the Gentile period the dead are to be judged according to their works. Judging from the analogy of the judgment day of the old world period (ch. xi. 18) and the countless multitude that were saved in that dispensation out of all kindreds and peoples and nations and tongues (Rev. vii. 9, 10, notes), we may dare to hope that from this judgment of the Gentile period (Rev. xx. 11—15) there shall come a still greater number of souls saved by Christ, many of whom had never even heard His name on earth. It is only reasonable to suppose that the power of the new covenant between God and man in Christ shall immeasurably exceed that of the old covenant, and that if the company of saved souls was innumerable under the old world period the multitude saved under the new covenant should immeasurably exceed it.

Rev. xxi. The twenty-first chapter of the Apocalypse again introduces a new scene. The times of the Gentiles are now fulfilled; the great day of judgment of the Gentile period has come and gone; Babylon has already become a desolation; Death
and Hades and the evil one are put out of the way, they have served their purpose in the economy of salvation (see Rev. xx. 7, n.); the new heavens and the new earth have come in, and with them the holy city, new Jerusalem, is seen coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. The final triumph of the Church has come, the Church of the firstborn gathered on the Mount Zion with Christ the Lord, His Body, His Bride, the Church (mystical), which from ch. xiv. 1—5 onward (see notes there) had been gradually gathering in the heavenly places beyond the din and clatter and unrest of the world and of Babylon. The Church of the firstborn which is gradually gathering now, in the dispensation of the Parousia of the Lord, "Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's in his Parousia," 1 Cor. xv. 23, the Church now comes forth as the great and glorious consummation of the economy of salvation in Christ, and John proceeds to speak of her beauty and her building. This is the holy city, the new Jerusalem, to which the true Israel of God is to be restored in the day of the restitution of all things, it is in the light of the glory of this heavenly city that the nations of them that are saved are to walk (see Rev. xxi. 24). This is the city to which patriarchs and prophets looked forward, the city that hath the foundations whose builder and maker is God (Heb. xi. 10). This is the Church of which Paul speaks as beloved of Christ, for which He gave Himself, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, that He might set it side by side with Himself in glory, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing (Eph. v. 25—27). To this Church it is even now that we are called to be joined "in communion in the Parousia of the Lord," 1 Cor. xv. 23. To be in this Church is eternal life, the Lord shall count when he writeth up the people that this man was born there, Psalm lxxxvii. 6. In speaking in the Apocalypse of the beauty and the building of this glorious Church, the Bride, the city of God, His dwelling-place, John attempts to express in human figure of speech the glories that cannot be told. The economy of the building is still ordered according to the house of Israel as its ground plan, or rather, according to the Body of Christ, of which Israel was the type on earth; the wall of the city has twelve foundations and twelve gates, according to the twelve tribes of the children of Israel. We also find the number 144, (12 x 12), see ch. xiv. 1—5 and ch. vii. 4. The city is
described in the vision as like unto a stone most precious, clear as crystal (see notes at large ch. xxii.).

Rev. xxii. The twenty-second chapter of the Apocalypse introduces the vision of the river of the Water of Life proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. The throne here spoken of is "the great white throne" of ch. xx. 11 (compare chaps. xx. 11; xxii. 5; xxii. 1). Out of this throne which is the judgment seat of God and of Christ flows the river of the Water of Life, and on either side of the river the Tree of Life, bearing twelve sorts of fruit, the leaves whereof are for the healing of the nations (Ezek. xlvii. 12). In this city of the saints there shall be no more curse, nor death, nor sorrow, nor pain, all things shall be made new. The vision closes with reiterated assurances of the nearness of the day in which all these things shall come to pass, see ch. xxii. 6, 7, 10, 12, 20, our Lord Himself, v. 16, is He who directly or indirectly witnesses the things which John sees and hears; the invitation to partake of these things is universal. We know that only a few will accept the invitation; but as it stands at the close of the vision, the invitation is without limitation, "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." This victory over sin, the ultimate triumph of righteousness in Christ our Lord, as set forth in the Apocalyptic vision, belongs to all who will accept it and live it. This victory which our Lord first achieved for us potentially in His own death and resurrection belongs to all those who through participation in His death and resurrection are gathered into resurrection life with Him on the Mount Zion. This the first resurrection. There is yet another resurrection which follows the day of judgment of Rev. xx. 11—15, in which we may believe (from the record in Rev. vii. 9, see notes there) that an innumerable company beyond the saints of the first resurrection period shall share. But the glory of the first resurrection is the supreme glory, the glory of belonging to the Church of the firstborn, the body and bride of Christ. The chief purpose of the vision is to set forth the inception, increase, and final triumph of the bride, the Church, in the day of Christ, the dispensation of the Parousia (presence); Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's in His Parousia; then cometh the end (see 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24). May we
thus be found, even in this world, standing with Christ on the Mount Zion, delivered from Babylon and the world in the victory of Christ, partakers of the first resurrection.

It remains to say a few words as to the date, the authorship, and the canonicity of this Book. If my interpretation of the text in the preceding notes be a true interpretation, there can be no question as to its date and canonicity, and if the date and canonicity be established, there can scarcely be a doubt who was the person that in the Apocalypse speaks of himself as "John." The Book (according to my interpretation of it) purports to be the history in figure of the day of Christ, from the date of the destruction of Jerusalem, which event was imminent when the Apocalypse was written, to the consummation of the present dispensation in the new heavens and the new earth. It was written therefore about the year 70 A.D., and according to the declaration of the writer it was written in the Isle of Patmos (or rather this vision was witnessed there) by a man who speaks of himself as John, a man who was so well known to the people to whom the Book is addressed that his name was enough, it served as a guarantee for its integrity. There is no hint in the Apocalypse of any imprisonment of the writer at Patmos, see Neander, (Early Planting, I. 399, n.) and this dissipates the legend about the Apostle's banishment and return in the reign of Domitian, or Claudius, or Nero. Who this "John" was, whose name was intended to serve as surety for the book, from the first chapter to the last (see Rev. i. 1, 4, 9; xxi. 2; xxii. 8) has from early times been a disputed question; but if the book be indeed what I have supposed it to be in these notes there can scarcely be any question that the writer was the Apostle John.

The manner in which the writer speaks of himself by name, chaps. i. 1, 4, 9; xxi. 2; xxii. 8, implies that he was too well known to need any further identification. Could this be said of John the Presbyter who is supposed by some to have been the writer.

If the book was written about A.D. 70, as I contend, John was alive. He being alive at the time, and the vision being

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1 See Lightfoot, Philippians, pp. 198, 199. Dr Westcott says about A.D. 68, Renan, Life of Jesus, Introd. p. xviii. says A.D. 68, Neander, Early Planting etc., I. 398 gives A.D. 70 as the date of the Apocalypse.
what it is (see notes) we can hardly suppose that the revelation of it would have been entrusted to any other John than the well-known Apostle. Would any other John the Apostle of that name being at the time alive have ventured to use his own name as the name John is used in the Apocalypse? (see chaps. i. 1, 4, 9; xxii. 2; xxii. 8). John "the Presbyter" to whom the authorship of the book has been attributed by some is to us a name and little more; it is all conjecture with regard to his identity, even supposing there were such a person distinct from John the Apostle. It is not probable that so important a message would have been committed to so obscure a person, nor is it probable that so obscure a person would have used his name in such a manner as the name of "John" is used in the Apocalypse, the Apostle of that name being still alive. If, as tradition suggests, any namesake of the Apostle's had any part in the authorship of the book it may have been as re-editor, see Introductory notes to Gospel of John pp. 1, 14, &c. That John himself wrote the vision down at the time he saw it, and not afterwards from memory, would appear from the word "write," ch. xiv. 13. It might have been that John the Apostle witnessed the vision in Patmos, and recorded it in his native Aramaic tongue, and that his namesake may have translated it out of its Hebraistic form into the barbaric Greek in which the text has come down to us, and thus with some shadow of reason tradition may have associated the name of John the Presbyter with the authorship of the book. Either this, or John the Apostle may (as tradition affirms) have dictated to John the Presbyter the substance of the Apocalypse, and the book may thus have been written by the latter though the vision was seen and dictated by the Apostle. (But see quite another view of the subject in Introductory notes to Gospel of John p. 13, 14, &c.) Either alternative would account for the tradition that the Apocalypse was written by John the Presbyter, by him also may have been written the 2nd and 3rd Epistles of John which are of doubtful authorship. The Apocalypse appears to have preceded the first Epistle and the Gospel, the true order being:

1st, The Apocalypse about A.D. 70.
2nd, The 1st Epistle of John
3rd, The Gospel of John \{ A.D. 100 to 110.\}

(See Introductory Notes to the Gospel.)
When John wrote the Apocalypse the Parousia of the Lord was still in the future, it was just about to be (see notes to Rev. vi. 1, 2). When he wrote his first Epistle, the dispensation of the Parousia was already come, though not in its consummated brightness, the darkness was passing away and the light, the very light was shining (the light of the Parousia), see 1 John ii. 8 notes. It was "the last hour" of the old world period (see 1 John ii. 18, n.), the Son of God had come ("is here," 1 John v. 20, n.). The Apocalypse was written before the 1st Epistle of John, compare Rev. ii. 25, n., "till I come," with 1 John v. 20 "is here"; see also Rev. iii. 2, 3, n. John probably lived into the sixth trumpet period (Rev. ix. 13) and was concerned in the ministry of the two witnesses (Rev. xi. 3, 7, 13 notes). He wrote the Apocalypse before the Epistle; when he wrote the Apocalypse, although he saw in the vision the arising of the beast and the false prophet, he did not know them as he afterwards did, as "the Antichrist," it was only when he himself lived into the period of which he speaks in anticipation in the Apocalypse, after he himself had come into contact and conflict with these hostile powers of darkness, that he knew them as and calls them by the name of Antichrist (see 1 John ii. 18, n.; ii. 22), "This is that spirit of antichrist whereof ye have heard that it should come," 1 John iv. 3. When John wrote the Apocalypse the name of Antichrist was not publicly known, but when he wrote the first Epistle it was a familiar term. (Antichrist must not be identified with the man of sin, the son of perdition of 2 Thess. ii. 3, 9. The word "Antichrist" is used nowhere but in the Epistles of John; 1 John ii. 18—22; iv. 3; 2 John vii.) The 1st Epistle of John was therefore we may conclude written after the Apocalypse, whilst the Gospel of John (see above, and Introductory notes to Gospel) was probably written after the first Epistle. In the Apocalypse the term "Jew" had not yet assumed that hostile meaning which it afterwards does in the Gospel, comp. Rev. ii. 9; iii. 9 with Gospel passim. Rev. ii. 25, "till I come," was evidently written before 1 John v. 20, "we know that the Son of God is come (is here)"; see also Rev. iii. 2; iii. 3; so also Rev. ii. 20 connects itself with the Apostolic period, whilst the 1st Epistle has no such reference; the Apostles had passed away when the 1st Epistle was written (see ch. iii. 17, n. Lao-
dicea as bearing on the date of the Apocalypse). The difference in the composition of the books attributed to John, Apocalypse, 1st Epistle, and Gospel, may be easily accounted for. Whether John himself wrote the Apocalypse in Aramaic, or whether he wrote it in the barbaric Greek, in which it has come down to us, whether John the Presbyter translated it out of Aramaic, or wrote it at John's dictation, in any case its rude style marks it out as the first of the three. The others owe their style of composition to the amanuensis or translator, also the even style of the Gospel, in which evidently history and dialogue were toned down to the form in which we have them, so that it is difficult in places to say where our Lord's words end and where the historian himself speaks. The Gospel bears marks of recomposition, and the style is marked off sharply from that of the Apocalypse, indicating another hand at work from that by which the Apocalypse was written (see Introductory notes to Gospel of John). On the assumption that John the Apostle wrote the Apocalypse, the 1st Epistle, and the Gospel it seems only a necessary inference that the Apocalypse with its barbaric Greek and rugged style must have been written (if by John) many years before the Gospel and the 1st Epistle. It is not at all incredible that the man who wrote the Apocalypse, say in the year 70 A.D., might have so far changed his manner of writing in 40 years as to have written the Gospel and the 1st Epistle about 100 to 110 A.D., but it is incredible that the Apocalypse could have been written by the man who wrote the Gospel and Epistle at any approximating date. A man might in the course of years improve his style from that of the Apocalypse to that of the Gospel and Epistle, but he could hardly have deteriorated from the style of the Gospel and Epistle to that of the Apocalypse. Still, supposing an interval between the date of the Apocalypse and that of the Epistle and Gospel, it is not at all improbable that John's style might have altered in that period so greatly that he might have written all the three [which we comprise under the title of "The writings of the Apostle John"].
THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

CHAPTER I.

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. The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, &c.] "The Revelation," ἀποκάλυψις, an unveiling. Paul had his ἀποκάλυψις when the Lord Jesus revealed Himself to him on his way to Damascus, Gal. i. 12—16; he also had his ἀποκάλυψις, 2 Cor. xii. 1—4 when he was caught up into Paradise. Probably he then saw some of the hidden mysteries which John speaks of in this book of Revelation, but Paul was not permitted to make them known as John was to make them known to the world. These words indicate on the level of human comprehension the fact that our Lord is the administrator of the divine will. All the purposes of the Godhead, whether in creation or redemption, are mediated through the Lord Jesus the God-man; therefore the communication of purpose from the Father to the Son (which in the Godhead is intuition) is here spoken of as impartation of thought "which God gave Him."

things which must shortly come to pass] Lit., which must shortly have come to pass, δὲ γενέσθαι ἐν τάξει. The book includes not only things about to be but things that are (see v. 19 below), i.e., the things of which he writes were already in process when John wrote, they had already begun to be at the time of the vision. The last times were already upon them, the advent of the Lord Jesus in glory was imminent and instant when this book was written (see Introductory Notes). Note how this imminence of the facts is re-iterated, the imminence, that is, of the opening of the drama with which the book is occupied; see chaps. i. 1, 3, 7, 19; ii. 5, 16, 25; iii. 11, 20; xvi. 15; xxii. 6, 7, 10, 12, 20; vi. 11; see ch. xxii. 7, n.; see v. 3, n. The book is
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

an unveiling of the hidden things of Christ, of the secret things which God through Christ was about to shew unto His servants, things which must shortly come to pass, things which were even then transacting (see v. 19 below), and things also that were in the remote future.

2. Who bare record of the word of God] [Or, "who certified the word of God"]: This is supposed by some to refer to some previous testimony which John had borne, thus in these words identifying himself with the person who bore the former testimony, but this is quite unlike John's manner, and the words apply as fitly to the present as to any previous testimony. John seldom brings himself into notice.

and of all things that he saw] Better, whatsoever he saw; ὅσα εἶδεν, "as much as he saw"—Alford.

3. for the time is at hand] Note the imminence of the time, ὅταν καὶ ἐγώ, Phil. iv. 5; James v. 8; see also chaps. i. 1, 3, 7, 19; ii. 5, 16, 25; iii. 11—20; vi. 11; xvi. 15; xxii. 6, 7, 10, 12, 20; see on ch. xxii. 7, for summary of texts. See also v. 19 below, "the things that are," they were already in process when John saw the vision. Observe the passing from the singular to the plural, he that readeth ὅταν ἐνεργόνοντος, they that hear ὅταν ἐνεργήσατον. The book is intended to be read and understood.

4. John to the seven churches which are in Asia] The prophetic vision is addressed to the seven Churches in Asia; but before announcing the message John proceeds to speak of some of the glories with which he is surrounded, the glories of the Lord Jesus. "Asia here, as always in the New Testament, is the proconsular province so-called." Alford.

from him which is, and which was, and which is to come] Better, from the am, and the was, and the coming one, ὅταν, καὶ ἦν, καὶ ὅ ἐρχόμενος. In v. 8, "He that is, and that was, and that is to come," is

1 [The singular participle ὅταν ἐνεργόνοντος refers to the person who acted as Reader in the public meetings, answering to the Ἰησοῦς, Chazan, of the Synagogue; the plural participles refer to the audience. Ed.]
is, and which was, and which is to come; and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne;

called "the Almighty," but He is also called "the first and the last, the Alpha and the Omega;" but in v. 11 our Lord says of Himself, "I am the first and the last," as also in v. 17. Again in chaps. ii. 8; xxi. 6; xxii. 13 our Lord is spoken of as "the first and the last;" therefore it follows that He who is "the first and the last," the Alpha and Omega,  is both the Almighty and the Lord Jesus.

"The coming one," ο ἐρχόμενος, is one of the titles of our Lord, see Matt. iii. 11; xi. 3; xvi. 28; xxi. 9; xxiii. 39; xxiv. 30; xxvi. 64; Mark xi. 9; xiii. 26; xiv. 62; Luke vii. 19—20; xiii. 35; xix. 38; John i. 9, 15, 27; iii. 31; vi. 14; xi. 27; xii. 13; Acts xix. 4; also Rev. i. 4—8 (see ch. i. 8, n.). The word is not however confined to this usage, but is found also in a secular sense, as in 2 Cor. xi. 4, "If he that cometh." It will be seen that in this book (Rev.) the word is used of the Almighty, chaps. i. 4, 8; xi. 17; xvi. 5? But the fact of "the coming" (ἐρχόμενος) is here associated with the advent of our Lord in glory (see v. 7, n.), as it is also in Matt. xvi. 27; Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26; see also John xiv. 23, n., where the Father in the Son makes His abode with the soul; see also 1 John ii. 23; xii. 45; xiv. 7, 9, 10; all bearing on the divine relationship in oneness between our Lord and our Father—God. The "Coming one" in v. 7 is our Lord; the Almighty is spoken of as ἐρχόμενος, probably as attending our Lord in His advent; ο ἐρχόμενος, "the Coming one," may therefore be taken as a mutual title, whether of God Almighty or of the Lord Jesus; see notes on v. 8. Alford considers the words ὁ δὲ καὶ ὁ ἸΗΒΣ καὶ ὁ ἔρχομενος to be a paraphrase of the incommunicable name of Exod. iii. 14, similar to the paraphrase in the Targum of Jerusalem, qui fuit, est, qui erit. [Another version of the paraphrase we have in Shemot Rabba, an early Jewish exposition of Exodus, I was, and I now am, and I shall be in time to come. The Johannine phrase ὁ δὲ καὶ ὁ ἸΗΒΣ καὶ ὁ ἔρχομενος corresponds to the Hebrew יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה שֵׁם יְהוָה Shem unhayah, vehu hoveh, vehu yihye, a Rabbinical amplification of the mysterious name Yehovah, bringing out the past, the present and the future tenses, "and He was, and He is, and He will be." Ed.]

and from the seven Spirits which are before his throne)

1 [Note that our Lord speaks to John in Greek when He says "I am Alpha and Omega," when He spoke to Paul (Acts ix. 4), "Saul, Saul," He spoke in Hebrew. Ed.]
5 And from Jesus Christ, who is the faithful witness, and the first begotten of the dead, and the prince of the

See also ch. iii. 1, the seven Spirits of God; Zech. iv. 10 marg.; ch. iv. 5, the seven Spirits; ch. v. 6, the seven Spirits of God, which proceed from our Lord (see v. 13, n. below). The Holy Spirit is sevenfold, seven in one. It is sevenfold in its operation, “the number seven denotes completeness.” This number dominates the whole prophecy; 7 churches, 7 spirits, 7 candlesticks, 7 stars, 7 lamps of fire, 7 seals, 7 horns, 7 eyes, 7 angels, 7 trumpets, 7 thunders, 7 thousand, 7 heads, 7 golden vials, 7 plagues, 7 mountains, 7 kings.

5. And from Jesus Christ...the faithful witness] See ch. iii. 14, n., “the faithful and true witness.” Our Lord is the faithful witness, “the faithful and true witness,” in that He faithfully and truly images God’s likeness to man, He is the brightness of the Father’s glory, the express image of His Person, Heb. i. 3. To all that God is, and ordains, He says, Amen. To this we also are all called in Christ, we are called to Christlikeness, and to accept with gratitude and joy all that He ordains, to say Amen to all. Not only is our Lord the faithful witness to God, manifesting and revealing and interpreting God to man, the Amen to all God’s righteous will, but He is also in regard to nature the faithful witness, in that in Him are contained in their archetypal forms the principles of nature. He is ἡ ἀρχή from which all things spring and in which all things stand. “In him all things consist” (Col. i. 17).

and the first begotten of the dead] [Better, the firstborn from among the dead.] These words imply a process of birth in which death is [as it were] the womb, in which life is begotten out of death. This is one of the laws of the Divine economy, death and resurrection. Our Lord was the first who [of and through Himself] ever arose from the dead, the first who through death and resurrection entered glory.

and the prince of the kings of the earth] [More correctly, and the ruler (ὁ ἀρχιερεύς) of the kings of the earth.] John saw in these two titles, “firstborn from the dead,” and “prince of the kings of the earth,” something of a parity of honour, the former however taking precedence of the latter title; he sees an honour in the “firstborn of the dead” greater than in the title “prince of kings.” To conquer death is to be a king indeed, an estimate very different from that of the world, which would esteem “firstborn from the dead” as meaningless.

29—2
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.

Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood] The amended text reads "loveth" for "loved," and the question is doubtful whether λούσαντι, hath washed, or λύσαντι, hath loosed (or freed), is the true reading; the "loving" is a present and continued act, the washing or loosing from sin was potentially achieved in the past, i.e. in and through our Lord's death on the Cross, though the power of it as it is applied to our souls is a present act and fact.

6. And hath made us kings and priests, &c.] For "kings" read "a kingdom" [βασιλεία is the best authenticated reading (Griesb., Lachm., Tischend., Tregelles, and others), the idea is a kingdom of priests, a royal priesthood]. The kingdom of God which our Lord came to establish on this earth is made up of individual saved souls, aggregated in Christ the king; not only does the aggregate constitute the kingdom, but each individual soul is itself a kingdom, a microcosm of the macrocosm, it is in grace as it is in nature that the individual is the universal in little. Each stone in the Temple Christ, has in it the likeness of the Temple itself, it is the Temple in little. Each saved soul is a kingdom added to the universal kingdom, a new star added to the spiritual stellar world, containing the joy and glory of the whole (in its measure) and adding joy and glory to the whole, as our Lord Himself says, Luke xv. 7, 10; see also Luke xviii. 21. "And priests," see chaps. v. 10; xx. 6; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9; Exod. xix. 6. For the ultimate glory of this kingdom of which our Lord speaks, see ch. xxii. 5, note. "And priests," it does not appear whether this Priesthood of which the writer here speaks (apparently) as a function of our present human life in time (not the future life as in chaps. v. 10; xx. 6), consists in that intercessory prayer for others which souls in Christ are permitted and invited to put up in fellowship with our Lord in His Priesthood (in communion, see Acts ii. 1), or whether it may be only the rudimentary form in this present life of that perfected priesthood in eternity, spoken of Rev. v. 10; xx. 6, when man in Christ shall become a mediator and Priest of God's grace to outward nature, when the creation itself, made
7 Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him. Even so, Amen.

subject to vanity in man's fall, shall, through man as the channel, participate in the glories of redemption (see Rom. viii. 21, 22).

7. Behold, he cometh with clouds] Thus does John announce the coming of the Lord Jesus in glory [he strikes the keynote of the Apocalypse]. The advent was instant when John wrote the book of Revelation. The book itself is "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," of His Advent, and of the events that flowed therefrom. It is the prophetic history of the Day of Christ—Behold! He cometh with clouds[1]. The clouds in which Christ came were not necessarily masses of vapour in the sky. They were as the clouds on Sinai. Comp. Exod. xix. 16—18 with Deut. xxxiii. 2 (LXX. saints and angels); the clouds at Sinai were myriads of "saints and angels," so with the clouds when our Lord came to establish the Mount Zion on earth in the midst of His enemies, Ps. cx. 2; the clouds of which John speaks are the glory of the Father with His angels as our Lord says, Matt. xvi. 27; xxv. 31; xxvi. 64; Mark viii. 38; Luke ix. 26. See also Deut. xxxiii. 2; LXX., and Targ. Pal. in loc., also the Targum on Deut. xxxiv. The long expected advent of the Lord in His Parousia was now at hand. It was instant, and John so announces it, as the immediate coming of the king in the glory and terror of His Parousia, the joy and reward of those who were looking for Him, but terror and judgment to His enemies. 

every eye shall see him] The destruction of Jerusalem, which was the outward sign of the Advent of the Lord in His Parousia, was an outward palpable fact visible to every eye, seen by all Israel. The prophecy of Zech. xii. 10 quoted here is quoted by our Lord also, Matt. xxiv. 30, in regard to His advent, and relates to Israel only; "all the families of the land," not "all the tribes of the earth," shall see and mourn over Him and come to repentance. This prophetic word was, according to our Lord's own declaration, to find its fulfilment within the lifetime of the generation then living. Compare Matt. xxiv. 30 with Matt. xxiv. 34. It was fulfilled when our Lord came with the angels of

[The classic texts which illustrate this expression are Dan. vii. 13 and Matthew xxiv. 30, which see, and cf. their parallel passages. Among the later Jews the Messiah was designated יְהֹוָּל (Y. B., Synhed. 96 B, quasi בּוֹל, a cloud), and יְהֹוָּל Anani (Chald. clouds) is also a recognised name of the Messiah. Ed.]
8 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.

9 I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus

His Power (Rev. vi., see notes there) to destroy Jerusalem and bring in the everlasting righteousness in His Parousia. The very watchword of the Jews at the siege of Jerusalem, "The Son is coming," evidence that they recognize in some sort the coming of the Son of Man in that event; they had already the tradition partly from our Lord's words, Mark xiv. 58 and elsewhere, partly from Stephen, Acts vi. 14, also from Dan. ix. 26, LXX., also from their Targums (see Targum of Palestine, pp. 451, 482), that Messiah should come from Rome with the Roman armies to fight against and destroy Jerusalem.

8. I am Alpha and Omega] These words as they stand in the text are applied to the Almighty, but by a comparison of texts we find that they apply to our Lord. In v. 11 below (doubtful reading) we find our Lord saying "I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last;" also in v. 17 below, "I am the first and the last;" also our Lord uses the same expression of Himself in ch. ii. 8; xxix. 6, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end," and again xxii. 12. In all these instances the application of identical terms to Him who is "the Alpha and the Omega," the first and the last, "the Am, and the Was, and the Coming one" (see v. 4, note above), shews that the Almighty Father and the Lord Jesus are one, distinguished but not divided, the one from the other; the same terms are applied to both our Father and our Lord. This comprehensive term, the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the ending, express the comprehensiveness of the Godhead.

which is, and which was, and which is to come] The sacred name Yehovah (Jehovah) means "I was, I am, I shall be." The name Yehoshua (Jesus) is a compound word, meaning "divine Saviour." 9. I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience] These things were the natural and necessary conditions of the times in which John writes—the Apostolic period—the times of distress (Luke xxi. 13; 1 Cor. vii. 26?) between the death of our Lord and His coming again in the

1 See notes on ch. vi. 6, infra. 2 See Sir Monier Williams on the Re-
Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

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

glory of His Parousia, Matt. xxiv. 9, 21, 29; Mark xiii. 19—24; Luke xxi. 19. The words of our text need not imply any imprisonment at Patmos, only the features of suffering peculiar to the times then present, between the coming of the kingdom at Pentecost and the advent of the King in His Parousia. Note the coincidence here and in v. 7 between the words of our Lord in the Gospel, and the words used by John in the Apocalypse, shewing that both are speaking of the same thing, the advent of the Lord at and after the destruction of Jerusalem.

was in the isle that is called Patmos] These words do not necessarily imply that John was in banishment at Patmos; they may be the origin of the tradition, but they may just as probably apply to his Apostolic work there, his testimony for Jesus (τὴν μαρτυρίαν Ἰησοῦν).

10. I was in the Spirit] Lit., I became in Spirit (εἰς θεοίματι εἰς πνεύματι), the words imply a transition of state, a transition into a spiritual condition. The words εἰς πνεύματι may relate either to the Holy Spirit or to John’s spirit, the spirit of the man John (cf. Eph. iv. 23; 1 Cor. vi. 20; 2 Tim. iv. 22); according to the way in which we interpret εἰς πνεύματι we must understand either that John was taken up into the atmosphere of the Holy Spirit, or else, that his own spirit was lifted above the things of sense into something of ecstasy; see a similar expression, Rev. iv. 2.

on the Lord’s day] Better, in the Lord’s day (ἐν τῇ κυριακῇ ἡμέρᾳ), i.e. “in the day of the Lord,” of which the whole book witnesses. The Apocalypse is prophetic of the Day of Christ. John was raised in spirit (or in the Spirit) into this day, which was then instant, and in this state of spiritual ecstasy he saw the things of which he speaks, the things concerning “the Lord’s day,” of which the Book of Revelation is the prophetic history in figure. [The adjective κυριακός is used only twice in N. T., here and in 1 Cor. xi. 20. It is never used in N. T. as an equivalent for the first day of the week, Sunday, or the day of our Lord’s resurrection. This usage came in afterwards.

11. Saying, &c.] The words “I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last” are struck out from the amended text.

What thou seest, write in a book] see v. 19 below, “the things
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 And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

13 And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

*which are, and the things which shall be.* The vision was already in course of translation into fact, the opening scenes were already in act; on the imminence of these things see vv. 1 and 3 above and references there. The Revelation really begins with this verse, all before this is John's own prologue.

12. candlesticks] Better, *lampstands*, λυχνία, see Exod. xxv. 31, 32. These are the seven vessels in which are contained the seven Spirits of God, ch. iv. 5, note. [We have here a reminder of the seven-branched lampstand of the Tabernacle, which has this very name of λυχνία in the Septuagint (Exod. xxv. 31, comp. Heb. ix. 2; Josephus, *Bell. Jud.* book v. ch. v. § 5; Philo Judaeus, *Quis Rer. Div. Haer.* 44), but it is not a seven-branched candelabrum that John sees, but seven separate lampstands. This differentiates the Christian from the Jewish Church; the one Church for the one people is now to be the one Church for the many. Ed.]

13. like unto the Son of man] This is I think the only instance in which John sees a human form in the heavens. He saw under the Altar (ch. vi. 9) the *Souls* of them that had been slain, and in Hebrews xiii. 23 the *Spirits* of just men are spoken of, but no human form is pictured: see ch. ii. 18, where the expression is absolute, "These things saith the Son of God," &c. "Like unto the Son of man." Thus does John qualify his testimony, because the glory of the person he sees so exceeded the glory of Jesus of Nazareth, that though the identity was certain, yet the added glory distinguishes the Lord in glory from the Lord in humiliation. He speaks of the Lord in glory as "like unto" the Son of man. He who here is described as in the midst of the seven golden lamps, like unto the Son of man, is spoken of in ch. iii. 1 as He that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars, and in ch. ii. 1 as He that holdeth the seven stars in His right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden lamps; and yet further in
14 His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

15 And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

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

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,

as the sun] Matt. xvi. 2, n. The “stars” are angels, see v. 20, n.

17. And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead] Such was the glory of our risen and ascended Saviour, Jesus, that John, who had leaned on His breast at supper in the days of His humiliation, falls as it were dead before the presence of His glory. But we may note that in all the glory there is distinctly marked the person of the Son of man, the Lord Jesus; whilst in His resurrection and ascension the Lord Jesus became a quickening spirit, 1 Cor. xv. 45, a spiritual power and glory, yet He still retains His personality and human attributes, so that John can say and feel that He laid his right hand upon him, and said, “Fear not,” see Dan. viii. 18; x. 10. Here we see even in the glory the power of the touch of our Lord, the power of contact as in the days of His flesh (see Matt. xiv. 36). “The touch of Spirits is a qualifying touch,” and when our Lord touches John, with the words “Fear not,” the sense of fear would be taken away, John would “fear not.”

I am the first and the last] see ch. v. 5, n. Why should these words be associated with “Fear not”? it was because “the circle of His life includes all life beside” (Col. i. 17), and knowing this, John would know that if He in whom all things exist says “Fear not,” there is nothing to fear: see notes on vv. 8 and 11 above [ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἐσχατος corresponds to ἄρχων ἀναχαίνων, Rishôn v'acharon, of Isa. xliv. 6, a title of God implying eternity]. Connect these words, “I am the first and the last,” with the next verse, and the words read “I am the first and the last, and the living one,” ἐγώ ειμι ὁ πρῶτος καὶ ὁ ἐσχατος καὶ ὁ ζων (see Alford in loc.).

18. I am he that liveth, and was dead] Beginning this text with καὶ ἐγενόμην, and joining καὶ ὁ ζων to v. 17 (see note there), this text begins with the words καὶ ἐγενόμην νεκρός, “And I was (became) dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore.” This fact that our Lord, “the living one,” became dead is one of the cardinal facts of redemption, therefore it is that it is so re-iterated, see v. 5 above, also ch. ii. 1, n., see Paul’s Epistles passim, and on the needs-be of death and resurrection see Acts xvii. 3.
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;

and have the keys of hell and of death] Our Lord is the arbiter of life and death\(^1\), see John xxi. 22, "If I will," &c. The word Hades\(^2\) should here be substituted for the term "hell," which is misleading.

19. Better, Write therefore the things which thou hast seen, and the things that are, and the things which shall be hereafter. These words of our Lord imply the vision of which John is the witness and the historian relates to things which were then happening, "things that are." The woes on Israel, the labour pangs (ωδήνεις) of Matt. xxiv. 8; Mark xiii. 8; 1 Thess. v. 3; the tribulation, θλυψίς, of Matt. xxiv. 21—29; Mark xiii. 19—24; Rev. vii. 14 which preceded and followed the advent of the Lord in the clouds of Heaven, ch. i. 7, n., were now upon Israel. The advent of the Lord, Rev. vi. 2, brought with it war, Matt. xxiv. 6; Mark xiii. 7; Luke xxi. 9; Rev. vi. 4; pestilence and famine, Matt. xxiv. 7; Mark xiii. 8; Rev. vi. 5, 6; and death, Rev. vi. 8; the falling of the stars from heaven, Matt. xxiv. 29; Mark xiii. 25; Rev. vi. 13; Acts ii. 20; the calling on the rocks to hide them, Luke xxiii. 30; Rev. vi. 16; all these things which attended the coming of the Son of Man in the glories and terrors of His Parousia, were then beginning to come to pass at the time John wrote this book of the revelation of Jesus Christ, see notes to ch. vi. 2. The things which shall be hereafter [lit. the things which are about to take place after these things]; all these things are included in the revelation of Jesus Christ, in Him all things consist.

\(^{1}\) [The term keys is here emblematic of authority; the Jews were familiar with such phraseology as this, e.g. "Four keys are held in the hand of the Lord of all the world...and he does not entrust them either to angel or to seraph—the key of rain, the key of provision, the key of the grave, (and) the key of barrenness" (Targ. Yerushalmi in Gen. xxx. 21). Again, when the son of the widow at Zarephath died, Elijah prayed for the key of the resurrection of the dead (see the Talm. Babli, Synhedrin, fol. 113 A). The same metaphor may be further illustrated from the Koran, Sur. xxxi. Ed.]

\(^{2}\) [For the meaning of the word Hades we are usually referred to the Greek ᾳδης meaning invisible or unseen, but it is quite possible that the Greeks adapted the Assyrian term Ἰδή (i.e. assembly) when they adopted the worship of Oriental deities. In the cuneiform writings we have the phrase Bit Ḫidī signifying House of Assembly, so named because the spirits of all meet there, just as we have in Job xx. 23 a cognate term in the Hebrew text Beth Moed, i.e. House of Assembly, as it says, "for all living," applied to Sheol the Hebrew representative of the Greek Hades. Ed.]
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.

20. The mystery of the seven stars] Lightfoot, *Philippians*, 198, says, "The angel may be the guardian angel, he is made responsible for the churches in a degree wholly unsuited to any human office." The stars are angels, the lamps are churches. In these words of our Lord we get the key to part of the version of mystery; and first of the churches: represented by the seven lamps these churches, though represented in the vision by the seven churches in Asia, have not necessarily any objective existence in the economy of this visible phenomenal world—the κόσμος—in which we live, though probably every saved soul belongs to one or other of the classes distinguished as "Ephesus," "Smyrna," &c. They have their spiritual existence in the heavenly places with Christ the Lord who is in their midst, and represent the sevenfold operation of the one divine Spirit as it goes out from the person of Christ into all the earth, ch. v. 6, n., gathering souls each according to its sort and lot, into the sevenfold character of its operation. The church, the mystical body of Christ, which is gathered into the heavenly places in Him, and is there being still gathered as the bride, for the marriage supper, a bride for her husband, Rev. xxi. 2, is sevenfold in character and essence. This is the church universal to which we are called, the church that is gathered on the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1, 5; having no objective existence on earth but consisting of all who (from whatever sects or churches) are in this dispensation gathered into living communion with the Lord Jesus in the glory of His Parousia, 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 13; 1 John ii. 27, 28; Rev. xiv. 1, 5, n. In the midst of the church universal the Lord Jesus abides as a divine spiritual presence, "who walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands" (Rev. ii. 1). And what of the seven stars? "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches" held in the right hand of the Lord Jesus. The stars are angels, but in what sense? From the way in which the angels of the churches are spoken of in chaps. ii. and iii. they can hardly be supposed to represent or to be human beings. When our Lord says in ch. ii. 1 of the seven stars (which are angels) that He holds them in His right hand, it would appear that the angels spoken of were parts of the hierarchy included in the ἄρχαι καὶ ἰδιωταί (see 1 Cor. iv. 9; xi.
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1 Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write;

10; Eph. iii. 10; Col. ii. 15; Heb. i. 1—7; ii. 2—5; xii. 22) in the heavenly places, powers and authorities invisible to us on earth, but manifested in their operations. We see from the whole of this apocalyptic vision how the events of the day of Christ are mediated through angelic powers. Our Lord during the days of His flesh taught that His little ones on earth have their angels "who do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven" (see Matt. xviii. 10). The disciples of our Lord believed that men on earth have their angels when they said of Peter, knocking at the door, "It is his angel." If children then have their angels in the heavenly places, if men have their angels, if the waters have their angel (Rev. xvi. 5), so also may the churches have their angels in the heavenly places, angels through whom our Lord ministers to the church universal in its sevenfold manifestation, according to the power of the sevenfold spirit. The analogy of the book requires, and the words imply, that the angels of the churches are not human beings on earth but spiritual powers in the heavenly places, who, as with the little children, mirror before the face of God the state of the churches on earth, their spiritual condition, their waxing, or their waning. Probably the only ground on which the angels of the churches can be looked upon as human is that John is commanded to write to them, "Unto the angel of the church in Ephesus write," &c., and that, as Wordsworth on ch. ii. 1 observes, the epithets, "hot," "cold," "rich," "poor," "dead," "blind," "naked," &c., stand in grammatical relation to ἄγγελος (mas.) and not to ἐκκλησία (fem.). May it not be that the spiritual state of each of the churches is focussed before the throne in the star-angel of that church, the light of the star-angel before the throne waxing or waning according to the state of the church on earth? Even the Lord Jesus Himself has an angel, ch. i. 1; xx. 16.

1. Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write] For "of Ephesus" read "in Ephesus," according to amended text. This command of our Lord to John to write to the angel of the church at

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1 According to Deut. xxxii. 8, LXX. the bounds of the nations are set according to the number of the angels of God, a nation to an angel. [In the Palestinian Targum in loc. it says, "When the Most High allotted the world unto the nations which proceeded from the sons of Noah...he cast the lot among the seventy angels, the princes of the nations, with whom is the revelation to oversee the city, even at that time He established the limits of the nations according to the number of the seventy souls of Israel who went down into Egypt." Ed.]
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,
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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.

6 But this thou hast, that thou hastest the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate.

7 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit

*whom he hath sent.* The Ephesians were told to forsake (by repentance) their organized religiousness, and go back to their first love, serving the Lord not in a formal activity but in the freedom of love, as little children.

or else I will...remove thy candlestick] Only to Ephesus is this warning of extinction given, "I will remove thy lamp out of his place, if thou do not repent." Here we see that the lapse of the church is attributed to the church itself and also the power of repentance, see 2 Cor. vi. 1. There is here the threat of extinction to a church that was once "in Christ."

6. the Nicolaitanes] A heresy of which we have no authentic account. Tradition ascribes it to Nicolas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons, Acts vi. 5. Tradition also associates abominable uncleanness with the heresy, see v. 15 below.

which I also hate] Note the strong expression, also the personal tone running through the whole. Irenaeus, lib. 3. xi, says that in the gospel of John is refuted the error which was disseminated among men by Cerinthus and much earlier by the Nicolaitans. This early date of the Nicolaitan heresy, and the non-mention of it in post-Apostolic times, helps to fix the date of the Apocalypse as certainly not in post-Apostolic times. See the Apostolic Constitutions, vi. 81.

7. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches] The injunction is given in each instance to each church as though all were to attend to what was addressed to each one. The expression "He that hath an ear" reminds us of our Lord's manner of speaking when on earth, "He that hath ears to hear, let him hear." It is only the quickened soul that can hear and understand aright, some have not (in this sense) got ears to hear. "We hear what we bring power to hear—no more."

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1 [The common interpretation of the two names Balaam and Nicolas regards them as identical in meaning; the former from the Hebrew (bala and am) signifies the destroyer of the people, and the latter (from ruwo and lao) is its translation into Greek; and it is possible that the same idea repeats itself in the Rabbinic name of Antichrist, Armilus, as if taph yphanos, Devolator of the people. Ed.]
saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

8 And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write;

To him that overcometh] This promise, like the injunction "He that hath ears," is common to the whole of the addresses to the churches, see chaps. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21. However bad a church may be the promise to individuals is full of blessing, and it is worthy of note that the promise is only to individuals and not to churches, and also that the promise is to him that overcomes; it implies a conflict and a victory. It implies fellowship with our Lord in His own conflict and victory, see ch. iii. 21, n.: "Salvation is not so much an escape from perdition as a victory over sin."

the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God] According to Jewish tradition Paradise existed before the world was. "The tree of life" is our Lord Himself, "Paradise" is the garden of Gen. ii. 8, the Paradise into which our Lord died from the Cross, Luke xxiii. 43, see my pamphlet, Thoughts on Spiritual Ethnology, pp. 10, 11, &c.; Rev. ii. 7, τοῦ ξύλου τῆς ζωῆς δ’ ἐστιν ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ παραδείσου, cf. xxii. 2; Gen. ii. 9, τὸ ξύλον τῆς ζωῆς ἐν μέσῳ τοῦ παραδείσου. The promises "to him that overcometh" were to have, and do have, their fulfilment in the dispensation of the Parousia of the Lord, the dispensation then instant when these several Epistles were written, the dispensation which came in after the close of the Apostolic period, the dispensation in which we are living. They relate to blessings to be realized on this earth and whilst in the flesh by those elect souls, few out of the many, who through the grace of our Lord are called by Him and enabled by Him to reach in spirit even in this life the Mount Zion of God, and there to abide in the new creation-life (Rev. xiv. 1—5). The way into the holiest of all was not made manifest during the Apostolic period, but is now open for all who are called and who obey the call: these are the called and chosen of Rev. xvii. 14. Paradise and the tree of life is restored in Christ.

8. And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write] "The church in Smyrna" represents that manifestation on earth of the Church universal (that one Lamp of the Seven), which, so far as this world is concerned, is poor and despised and persecuted and afflicted, but being rich in faith (v. 9) fights the fight, and receives from the Lord’s own hand the crown of life. As a church it has much in common with Philadelphia, see ch. iii. 7, 8, 9, notes.
These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive;

9 I know thy works, and tribulation, and poverty, (but thou art rich) and I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.

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:

the first and the last] See ch. i. 8, 17, 18, also ch. xxi. 6, 7.
which was dead, and is alive] “The first and the last and the living one,” ch. i. 17, 18. Here, as elsewhere, the attributes of glory are taken from the vision in the first chapter of the book.
9. The praise accorded to the church in its collective capacity was scanty; the promises to individuals are glorious throughout, whatever the assembly in each case may be.
and poverty] Meaning, poor in spirit, Matt. v. 3. It may or may not include what we call “evangelical poverty,” a means of grace. “Evangelical poverty is not so much a deliberate as an unconscious abstinence from that which most men desire; or, if conscious, then conscious not with self-applauding effort, but with the glad indifference of one who has his treasure.”
but thou art rich] Throughout these addresses to the churches the various epithets, dead, cold, hot, poor, rich, blind, naked, and the like, which our Lord uses to characterize the qualities and conditions of the several churches, do not agree in gender with the feminine word ἐκκλησία, but with the masculine ἄγγελος. Wordsworth, Cr. Gr. Test. on ch. ii. 1.
which say they are Jews, and are not] The true Jew would be in John’s eyes the Jew who accepted Christ as Messiah. The word “Jew” is used here as a term of honour, as also in ch. iii. 9, shewing that the Apocalypse was written by a Jew—John—and also that the term “Jew” had not yet become to him, as it had when he wrote his gospel, a term of reproach, shewing in fact that the Apocalypse was written before the gospel.
10. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer] Better, Fear not those things which thou art about to suffer (ά μολεστίας τάσιμως).
and ye shall have tribulation ten days] [For ἤκει, “ye shall
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be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life.

11 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; He that overcometh shall not be hurt of the second death.

12 And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write;

have," some good authorities read ἔχεις, "ye may have;" the remainder of the sentence more literally rendered reads, a tribulation of ten days, a ten days' tribulation—possibly a colloquial expression, meaning a short period, cf. Gen. xxiv. 55; Num. xi. 19; Dan. i. 12.]

be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life] Faithfulness to the Lord is of far more moment than any seeming success or failure. Tribulation, poverty, and imprisonment were to be the lot of the faithful, not outward success; yet these very people were they who were to have the crown of life. How foolish then to suppose that success and plenty in outward affairs are the sign of well-doing. Blessed (rather) are ye when men shall revile you and persecute you, &c., see notes on Philadelphia, ch. iii. 7, 8, 9, 10. This is a promise to the church independent of the individual promise to "him that overcometh." In ch. iii. 10 there is also a promise to the Church of Philadelphia distinct from the promise to "him that overcometh."

11. He that hath an ear] The exhortation common to all; each church is to attend to what is written to the others, see v. 7, note above.

He that overcometh] The victor, ὁ νικῶν. It is not only what we believe, but what we conquer by believing, that brings with it the prize. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith," 1 John v. 4, n.

shall not be hurt of the second death] See chaps. xx. 14; xxii. 8. The individual promise is ever something over and above, something distinct from the promises or warnings to the churches themselves. We are saved as individuals, not as churches or as members of churches. See on these promises, v. 7 above.¹

12. the church in Pergamos] [Better, the church in Pergamum; why the Greek termination was retained in this case by our translators is unaccountable; by the same rule we should have Ephesos for Ephesus, its Latin form. The neuter form of this name, i.e. Pergamum, is much

¹ [The second death is an accredited Rabbinical expression: see Targ. in Ps. xlix. 11 "...the wicked who die the second death...are adjudged to Gehinnom." Ed.]
These things saith he which hath the sharp sword with two edges;

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.

14 But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

more general than Pergamos (fem.). Ed. The Church in Pergamum represents that manifestation on earth of the Church universal (sevenfold in one) that has a strong faith, but the faith is onesided. It is a faith that will go even to martyrdom at the stake, but is not careful enough to suffer that bloodless martyrdom in the crucifixion of the flesh and its uncleanness to which all the followers of the Lord Jesus are called, see Rom. iii. 20—22: they needed the sharp sword with the two edges (Heb. iv. 12).

13. where thou dwellest, even where Satan's seat is] Probably, alluding to the character of the place or the character of the rulers of the place, Satan was in dominion there. or to famous other to Greek gods there.

14. But I have a few things against thee] With a strong faith the Church at Pergamum was too ready to tolerate sins of uncleanness, idolatry, fornication and the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes.

eat things sacrificed unto idols] Perhaps attending the heathen feasts, and falling into the heathen customs at those feasts, fornication and such like (see also v. 20, infra). In these things we find a link connecting the time of writing the Apocalypse with the time of Paul and his troubles.

1 [The proof-text for this version of Balaam's teaching is Numbers xxxi. 16, as traditionally expounded, see the Palestinian Targum in loc.; this gossipy paraphrase has much to tell us about Balaam and his evil counsel; among other things it says that, pursuant to the advice of Balaam, the wicked Balak appointed certain Midianitish women to keep confectionery stalls at Bath Jeshimoth, close to the encampment of Israel, and these people by selling sweetmeats at attractive prices decoyed the Israelites into their tents, and led them into idolatry and its attendant vices. Ed.]
15 So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate.

16 Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

17 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him

15. which thing I hate] See ch. ii. 6, n. It is often the case that the old Adam asserts himself, or insinuates himself in those who have a faith that would even bear them to martyrdom.

16. Repent; or else, &c.] [Better, Repent therefore, or else, according to an important var. lect.] "with the sword of my mouth," i.e. the two-edged sword of v. 12; "fight against them," i.e. the evil doers.

17. To him that overcometh, &c.] See notes to vv. 7 and 11, supra. These exceeding great and precious promises are a new revelation of grace and glory, revealed to John as part of the riches of the day of Christ of which the Apocalypse is the prophetic history in figure. They belong to the period then just opening when the book was written, the dispensation of the Parousia, which is heralded with the announcement in ch. i. 7, "Behold he cometh." Such spiritual blessings as are here promised to individual believers who "overcome" were unknown during the Apostolic period; the way into the holiest was not then open, Heb. ix. 8. Only with the advent of the Lord in His Parousia came these wonders of grace, these possibilities of glory, each in this life for "him that overcometh," "the hidden manna," "the white stone," "the new name," and it is to individuals and not to churches that the blessings are promised, to the few, out of the many, to those elect souls to whom the Lord reveals Himself in His Parousia and who yield a response to His revelation, 1 Cor. xv. 23. These constitute the church of the firstborn gathered on the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5, n. They have His name and His Father's name written on their foreheads, and they sing the new song, which no one else can sing, and they are not defiled with women, see v. 7, see also Heb. xii. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 13; 1 John ii. 27, 28, n. They are in number only as 144,000 against untold millions, see Rev. xix. 7, n.

the hidden manna] The true bread from heaven (John vi. 31, 32, notes), this blessing [and the after-mentioned blessings are] not seen by the world, they belong to him only who receives them, they are invisible and not to be described in words.
a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.

18 And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God, who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass;

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.

20 Notwithstanding I have a few things against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel, which calleth

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**a white stone**] White stones were symbolic among the ancients of acquittal of guilt, of citizenship, of admission to festivals, as tokens of friendship.

**a new name...which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it**] See Rev. xix. 12 [a similar prerogative is recorded of our Lord Himself]. This is the secret of secrets, a precious secret to him who has it, an unknowable secret to the world (see ch. iii. 12). The things promised to those who overcome throughout are the riches of communion, not the riches of believing merely, but the riches of such believers as are called by the Lord Himself through victory into communion with Himself in His Parousia.

**18. And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write; These things saith the Son of God**] Here our Lord assumes His own great title, “the Son of God.” In ch. i. 13 John says, “one like unto the Son of God.” Here there is no such qualification. [This emphatic avowal of our Lord is certified by an appropriate quotation from the 2nd Psalm (see v. 27), wherein it is recorded, “The Lord said... Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.” Ed.]

**19. I know thy works, and charity, and service, &c.**] This is great commendation; works, and faith, and love, and service, and patient endurance, and yet the church was not without pollution, see v. 20. [This eulogium contrasts strongly with the reproof of Ephesus.]  

**20. Notwithstanding I have...against thee, because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel**] “Jezebel was to the church at Thyatira what that other was to Ahab” (Alford).

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1 [A presentation as it were of the freedom of the city of Zion. Ed.]
herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols.

21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not.

22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that

\textit{which calleth herself a prophetess]} Jezebel need not be taken here as an individual, but as Balaam was taken; see v. 14 above, "the doctrine of Balaam," see v. 24 below, "this doctrine." The word Jezebel represents a class of people who were to the Church in Thyatira what Jezebel was to Ahab, a cause of stumbling. Here, as in v. 14, with Pergamum the offence consisted in uncleanness, and heathenish pollutions. The charge against the Church in Thyatira (or the angel of the church) is, that the evil thing represented by the term Jezebel is tolerated among them. Jezebel probably represents many in one, just as the word "legion" in Mark v. 9; Luke viii. 30, included many in one; just as Antichrist, 1 John ii. 18, n.: an evil leaven was at work. The manner of address here changes, and vv. 21, 22, 23 are forewarnings respecting these evil persons, rather than an address to the church, the address to the church being resumed at v. 24. The Church at Thyatira may be taken to represent that manifestation on earth of the Church universal which has life, and faith, and growth, but which is wanting in caution and prudence, and lays herself too open to the deceptions and snares of those who associate with her; she does not sufficiently turn away her eyes from uncleanness.

21. \textit{And I gave her space, &c.]} Better, "And I gave her time that she should repent out of her fornication" (να μετανοήσῃ ἐκ τῆς πορ-\textit{νείας αὐτῆς}), this formula indicates what repentance is to effect. It is to effect the forsaking the thing repent of. We are to forsake our sins by repentance, see Acts viii. 22, μετανόησον οὖν ἀπὸ τῆς κακίας σου ταύτης: repent therefore from this thy sin. Our Lord called the sinners to repentance (see Acts v. 31), but they have to do their part in forsaking the sin of which they are called to repent; man has the power to obey the Lord's call or to refuse to obey it. Here, Jezebel had refused; that Jezebel has a mystical signification see v. 22, also v. 24 where the evil thing is spoken of as a doctrine.

22. \textit{Behold, I will cast her into a bed]} Here the bed must necessarily be taken metaphorically. The members of Jezebel shall be cast into that which has served as the occasion and means of their wickedness, and there shall they find the Nemesis of their doings, according
commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.

23 And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works.

24 But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put upon you none other burden.

to the law of compensation, which in the Lord’s hand runs through all things (see Rom. i. 28). Just as the bed here must be taken as a figure, so also probably must the adultery be taken as spiritual adultery, see James iv. 4, “Except they repent.”

23. And I will kill her children with death] [As much as to say, I will certainly destroy; probably the wording of this sentence is due to an attempted translation of the well-known Hebraistic expression moth-yumath, Lev. xx. 10, “shall surely be put to death,” which the Sept. renders by θανάτῳ θανατοφθαι. Ed.] The threat is for the evil doers, that they may repent, but the retribution is to be a lesson for “all the churches.”

and I will give unto every one of you according to your works] Works not profession is the true test of what we are. Our Lord says He will give to every one according to his works.

24. But unto you I say, &c.] The Lord Jesus now resumes his address to the church of Thyatira, “to the rest,” those (i.e.) not included in the sin of Jezebel.

the depths of Satan, as they speak] This expression, ὀς λέγοντως, “as they call (it)” is singular, and seems to imply that the upholders of the doctrine of Jezebel themselves called the thing they held, “the depths of Satan.” Can it have been that they taught people to seek experience by committing sin, taught them that the way to encounter Satan was to enter into the “depths of Satan,” that they might know what Satan was, and thus led people to perdition on the theory that they ought to know what perdition is by experience, put themselves into bondage to Satan in order to know what slavery is, labelling their system with the term τὰ βαθεία τοῦ σατάν (see Apostol. Const. vi. 10)? That they esteemed their evil craft a religion is plain from v. 20, “Jezebel who calleth herself a prophetess;” a prophetess or seer would
CHAPTER II.

25 But that which ye have already hold fast till I come.
26 And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations:

be one who professed to look into the unseen. Paul speaks of a βάρος that separates from the love of Christ, see Rom. viii. 39; see 1 Cor. viii. 10. The seed of Jezebel may have held that the man who “had knowledge” might do anything, just as many have since held; such men work upon opportunities for sin as opportunities for new experience. “That which is sin in others is experiment for them.” “As they say;” this touch of nature in the midst of the solemn vision, this “as they say,” shews that when the Apocalypse was written this heresy was at work. It was a heresy “of the day” when the book was written. It was a thing of which men were then talking.

25. till I come] [More exactly, until I shall come.] The coming of the Lord was something they were to look for and live unto, they were to hold fast what they had until the Lord should appear. Note other instances indicating the nearness of the Lord’s coming, chaps. i. 1, 3, 7, 19; ii. 5, 16, 25; iii. 11, 20; vi. 11; xvi. 15; xxii. 6, 7, 10, 12, 20: the words of our text imply that the Lord would be there within the period of their life. The injunction could have no force unless it carried with it a definite meaning. To hold fast till the Lord came, if that coming was not to happen for twenty centuries, would be meaningless. This was evidently written before 1 John v. 24, where we have it said, “we know that the Son of God is come” [ἡσυχαίται, “is here,” a term closely related to the word ἡσυχαίται of our text].

26. And he that overcometh, and keepeth my works unto the end, &c.] This individual promise to Thyatira is marked off from all the others. It is connected with the previous verse by the καί with which it opens, shewing that holding fast until the Lord be come is one of the conditions of the subsequent promise of ruling over the nations. And again, the promise here is not (as it is in the other instances) to “the overcoming” only, but to the “keeping my works unto the end.” καί ὁ νικῶν καὶ ὁ τιμῶν ἐχει τέλοια τὰ ἔργα μου, and he that overcometh, and he that keepeth my works unto the end. The condition that is attached to the promise is twofold, “overcoming,” and “keeping the Lord’s works unto the end,” not “word” only but “work.” They were to be identified with the Lord in His work; they were to live His life, and doing this, and keeping on unto the end—“until I come,” v. 25—they should share with Him the Lord the power over the nations, see Luke xix. 17—19.

to him will I give power over the nations] This power which
27 And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; as the

is the special province of our Lord is here promised to those of Thya-
tira (and of all who are included in that which Thyatira represents in the
Church universal) who fulfil the conditions attached. Identified with
the Lord in their life they are to be identified with Him also in His
rule and reign over the nations, see also ver. 27, 28, below. This is
specially the reward for those of Thyatira who come out conquerors,
ever and always; see next verse.

27. And he shall rule them with a rod of iron] See Luke
xxii. 29. This participation with our Lord Himself in His reign and
rule over the nations is also promised in other words in ch. iii. 21; see
also 1 Cor. vi. 2; 2 Tim. ii. 12. It is, as all these individual promises
to the churches (in the Apocalypse) are, intended for those who enter
into communion with the Lord in His Parousia in the day of Christ, of
which the Apocalypse is the prophetic history in figure. Our Lord in
His human ministry had already, though not in such detail, promised
such things to those who in this life enter into the Holy Communion
with Him in His Parousia, see Matt. xxiv. 47; xxv. 10, 21—23; Luke
xx. 29, 30. He here yet more explicitly declares that identity in
function and power with Himself into which He is pleased to call
whom He will. The words “He shall rule them with a rod of iron”
may be read “He shall tend (πομανεῖ) them,” but the words that
follow indicate severity rather than gentleness, see Rev. xii. 5; xix. 15.
The words are quoted from Psalm ii. 9, which is Messianic throughout,
and contemplates, as the Apocalypse also does, “the King upon the holy
hill of Zion,” Psa. ii. 6; Rev. xiv. 1—5. The tone here must be taken
as that of severity (see notes to ch. xii. 5; xix. 15 “rod of iron”), whilst
there is in our Lord’s nature that tenderness which will not break the
bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax, yet will He bring judgment
unto victory, Matt. xii. 20; Isai. xlii. 3. As with Israel of old, either
when they occupied the Land of Promise, or when they were winning
their way towards it, they were to spare neither age nor sex; all who
opposed them were to be slain without pity; so also in the Prophets,
Isaiah xxx. 13, 14; xlii. 24, 25; Jer. xix. 11; see also Psa. ii. 9; Rev.
xii. 5; xix. 15. And it is because we will not be ruled with this rod of
iron, because we too well love our iniquities to let the love of Christ
break them in pieces, that we are such feeble folk. Our Lord is not
only the Lamb of God, He is the Lion also of the tribe of Judah, em-
bracing in His own person the whole range of nature; “I am the first
and the last,” Rev. i. 17, n.; Col. i. 17. In the character of David, who
vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of my Father.

28 And I will give him the morning star.

29 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHAPTER III.

1 And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God,

was a type of our Lord, we find these seeming contradictions, severity and tenderness. They who thus surrendered themselves absolutely to the Lord are they who are fit to rule nations (Gentiles).

even as I received of my Father] Such are in regard to our Lord what He was and is in regard to God Almighty; see John x. 14, 15, on the identity of relation between man and the Lord Jesus, and the Lord Jesus and God the Father.

28. And I will give him the morning star] In communion our Lord gives Himself to those who are His, see ch. xxii. 16, “I am the bright and morning star;” see also 2 Pet. i. 19.

29. He that hath an ear, &c.] Still the same limitation to the blessed promises; here, as elsewhere, only they who can hear and receive the promise can possess it. “We hear what we bring power to hear, no more.” And again, not to “believers” merely, but to such believers as enter into communion with the Lord in the glory of His Parousia, and who overcome in the strength of that communion, are these promises made, just as we find it in our Lord’s human ministry, Matt. xxiv. 24, 47; xxv. 10, 21—23; Luke xxii. 29—30. The blessings of the Parousia belong only to those who have realized the Parousia, who are on the Mount Zion with the Lord, Rev. xiv. 1—5, notes; see notes to vv. 7, 10, 17.

1. he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars] This designation of our Lord, in these identical terms, is not found elsewhere. In ch. i. 4 the “seven spirits” are spoken of, and in v. 20 of the same chapter our Lord is spoken of as holding the seven stars in His right hand; but in our text the Lord Jesus is spoken of as having the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. In ch. iv. 5 we find the seven Spirits of God mentioned, and in ch. v. 6 they are spoken of as “sent forth into all the earth” (Zech. iv. 10); and our text
and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead.

2 Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die: for I have not found thy works perfect before God.

speaks of them as in the Lord's hand, meaning evidently that the sevenfold Spirit of God is wielded by our Lord; it is the sceptre of His righteousness (Heb. i. 8), the righteous sceptre, it is the two-edged sword of ch. i. 16. As John the Baptist testified of our Lord, it is He who baptizes with the Holy Ghost, Matt. iii. 11; Mark i. 8; Luke iii. 16; John i. 26, 33; see Acts ii. 33. The Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour, Titus iii. 6; see also Rev. v. 6, n. "We have mention in ch. i. 4 of the seven spirits which are before God's throne; and we there found occasion to interpret them of the plenitude of the Godhead in its attributes and energies. These spirits, this plenitude, Christ, the Lord of the Church, possesses, is clothed and invested with, in all fulness. From Him the spiritual life of His churches comes, as its source, in all its elements of vitality. He has in His hand, all the Spirit's power of conviction. He wields the fire of purification and the fire of destruction. It is Christ who, searching the hearts as Son of God and feeling their feelings as Son of man, wields and applies the one and manifold spirit." Alford, Cr. Gk. Test., in loc.

thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead] The Church of Sardis as a church was dead (spiritually), and yet there were individual living souls within her borders, see v. 5 below. Our Lord had foretold these signs of the last times, Matt. xxiv. 12, "The love of many shall wax cold." Paul also had foretold the apostacy before the advent of the Lord, 2 Thess. ii. 3.

2. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die] "Be watchful." See our Lord's re-iterated warning in this respect and in regard to His advent, Matt. xxiv. 42—43; (xxv. 13); Mark xiii. 33, 35, 37; Luke xii. 37, 39; xxi. 36, to the very period in fact to which our text refers. In John's Gospel the warnings are not recorded, because when that Gospel was written the Lord had already come. Although the Church of Sardis is spoken of as dead (v. 1), yet it is evident that there were still individuals in the Church whose spiritual life was not extinguished; our text itself shews it, as do also vv. 4—6 below.
CHAPTER III.

3 Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee.

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have

for I have not found thy works perfect before God] The amended reading, "my" God, shews that our Lord in glory still calls God "His" God; see also ch. i. 6, also v. 12 below.

3. Remember therefore] The Church at Sardis resembles the Church of Ephesus which was counselled also to "remember" from whence she was fallen and repent, see ch. ii. 5, n. The Church in Sardis (like Ephesus) represents that manifestation on earth of the Church universal which has fallen from its first estate, which is dead as a church, though reputed to be alive (see v. 1 above): she is called to arouse herself; the cause of her deadly state is not given, but the twofold warning to watch (vv. 2, 3), and the solemn "Remember" of our text suggest unwatchfulness and forgetfulness as the sin of Sardis, and of all churches who are a part of her. "The Church in the Spirit is good, entire, ever pure; as the candlestick is drawn into Heaven, so a company of men on earth love the beauty, unity, and name of a church. When this candlestick is again let down into the flesh and set upon the earth, the Church is the same again in integrity and glory." (Sterry.)

I will come on thee as a thief] In illustration of this see Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39, where our Lord in anticipation speaks of the same event as that in our text, the advent of the Lord in the glory and terror of His Parousia. He comes either as the Bridegroom or as a thief, according to the state of those to whom He comes.

thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee] Matt. xxv. 13; Mark xiii. 32—35, whether at even or at midnight or at cock-crowing, or in the morning, Luke xii. 40—46.

4. which have not defiled their garments] See ch. xvi. 15. Even in the dead Church of Sardis there are holy souls, "a few names," who have not defiled their garments, see vv. 2, 5, 6. Can this mean that they have never since they received the white robe of righteousness stained it, that the robe has never needed cleansing, but has been kept ever spotless since first given by the Lord? If so, the saints in Sardis, the dead church, are indeed worthy. The deadness of their
not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy.

5 He that overcometh, the same shall be clothed in white raiment; and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life, but I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels.

6 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

7 And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write;

church seems to have wrought great things in these holy ones, and great is their reward.

they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy] Is this the human nature purified by crucifixion? or is it the wedding garment? or are the two things one? The next verse seems to indicate an added glory.

5. He that overcometh] A superadded glory? something added to the glory of v. 4, “and I will not blot out his name out of the book of life.” Does not this imply that, in this dispensation of the Parousia, the names of all men are written in the book of life, but that some are blotted out because of their iniquities? see Rev. xxii. 19, n. The expression “the Book of Life” is confined to the Apocalypse with only one exception, Phil. iv. 3. Can it be that it is one of the glories of the Parousia that all men are included in the Lamb’s book of life, but that some (many) shut the book upon themselves by denying their part therein, refuse in fact the guerdon that is given them of free grace? see ch. xxii. 19; Rev. xvii. 8 presents a difficulty; see references to “Book of Life,” Phil. iv. 3; Rev. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xvii. 8; xx. 12; xxi. 27; xxii. 19; see also Exod. xxxiii. 32.

6. See ch. ii. 29, note.

7. And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, &c.] This church represents on earth that manifestation of the sevenfold Church universal which is admitted with open entrance into the blessings of communion with the Lord in the glory of His Parousia. It is the beloved church, “I have loved thee,” v. 9; it is also the church of brotherly love [Φιλαδελφία signifies brotherly love]; as a church it has a crown, v. 11, as Smyrna also has, ch. ii. 10, a crown in possession; it has great blessings as a church, and its members have many and great blessings individually. The attributes of our Lord as set forth in this address to the angel of the Church in Philadelphia are not found, as in
CHAPTER III.

These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shuttest; and shuttest, 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.

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.

**behold, I will make them, &c.]** This is emphatic, twice repeated. He Himself, the Lord Jesus, will make the adversaries of the Church of Philadelphia [do homage and acknowledge their fault] (see Isa. lx. 14'). Little as may be the strength of Philadelphia (v. 8, n.), her enemies shall be made to come and bow down before her, and to know that the Lord has loved her. Not that the Lord does not love all (see ch. i. 5, n.), but to Philadelphia, the church of brotherly love, it is especially said that her enemies shall know that she is loved of the Lord, "know that I have loved thee."

10. **Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, &c.]** Better, "Because thou hast kept the word of my endurance, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which is about to come," τῆς μελλόντος ἐρχομένης, "upon all the world," εἰς τῆς οἰκουμένης δαίμονας. This expression has a wide range of meaning (see Schleusner, Lex. of Gr. Test. on the word οἰκουμένη), ranging from the land of Israel, Luke ii. 1; Matt. xxiv. 14; Acts xi. 28, to the whole world. The Greeks used the word οἰκουμένη to mark off the civilization of Hellas from the nations beyond, so also the Romans. The meaning of the word is governed by the context in which it is used; in our text I believe that John is speaking of the trial, περασμός, which was then about to come on the whole Jewish theocracy wherever scattered, the tribulation of Matt. xxiv. 9, 21—29; Mark xiii. 19—24; Luke xxii. 25, 26; 1 Pet. iv. 18, the great tribulation of Rev. vii. 14, which was already looming over Israel when this book was written, but which did not come in its intensest form until at and after the destruction of Jerusalem and the extinction of the Jewish theocracy, "in blood and fire and vapour of smoke," Acts ii. 19. These troubles were already impending when this book of prophecy was written; it deals with things that are, as well as with things that are to be, see ch. i. 10, n. From these troubles the

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1 Indeed this whole chapter of Isaiah (i.e. ch. lx.) relates to the glories of Mount Zion, on which spiritually (see v. 12 below and Rev. xiv. 1—5) these things are to be fulfilled.
CHAPTER III.

II. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

Church of Philadelphia was to be preserved, "I also will keep thee from the hour of trial which is about to come upon all the earth" (land). This preservation from the troubles of the last days is probably the escape of which Luke speaks in the 21st chapter of his Gospel; our Lord in speaking of these troubles which were to come on Israel, says, Luke xxi. 36, "Watch ye therefore and pray always that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all these things that are about to come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man," see also Matt. xxiv. 40, 41; Luke xix. 35, 36; 1 Thess. iv. 17. In all these places, mention is made more or less explicitly of a translation of certain of the saints who should be living on the earth at the close of the Jewish age, and Paul in writing to the Thessalonians speaks of himself as one of those who should "be alive and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord," and should "be caught up," to be for ever with the Lord. (It was by translation that the Church of Philadelphia was to escape.) But whilst this promise was thus fulfilled for the then existing Church of Philadelphia, and whilst this escape by translation was the intention of our text for the saints who should "be alive, and remain unto the Parousia of the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 15), it may be asked what meaning will the promise have for those who throughout all time represent on earth the Church of Philadelphia, of which John speaks, for as one manifestation of the Church universal in its sevenfold character the Church of Philadelphia remains we may believe as a spiritual reality unto this day, and shall remain. The spiritual members of this Philadelphian manifestation on earth of the Church universal are they who are called by the Lord Jesus as by an open door which He opens, and which no man can shut, into that free and unfettered communion in spirit with Him, which John, in this vision, the Apocalypse, associates with the name of Philadelphia; whilst those of this Church who were alive, and remained unto the Parousia of the Lord, were to escape by translation the tribulation which should come on the world at that period, troubles such that unless they had been shortened no flesh had been saved, but shortened as concerning the elect, Matt. xxiv. 22; Mark xiii. 20. The promise to the Church of Philadelphia must yet have a meaning even for the times in which we now are, and the meaning appears (to me) to be this, that whilst we are (or ought to be) now in the dispensation of communion with the Lord Jesus, and all whom the Lord our God shall call (Acts ii. 39), are called to attain this blessed fellowship; yet are there in reaching this blessing, different manners of experience.

II. I come quickly] This is not a threat, as in ch. ii. 5, 16, n.; but H. 31
12 Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name.

13 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

a blessed encouragement to perseverance, thus does our Lord assure Philadelphia, that she has not long to wait, the time is at hand, see chaps. i. 1, 3, 7; ii. 5, 16, 25; iii. 11, 20; vi. 11; xvi. 15; xxii. 6, 7, 10, 12, 20. They of Philadelphia are ever waiting and watching for the time of communion with the Lord in this dispensation of His Parousia (see 1 John ii. 27, 28 and references there). There is nothing that their souls long after so much as to realize this blessed communion. To realize what the words mean for them in this dispensation of communion, "Behold I come quickly." Not for ten thousand worlds would they willingly lose their crown, and yet the words seem to imply the possibility of losing the crown, see 2 Cor. vi. 1.

that no man take thy crown] For the "crown," see ch. ii. 10; lest any one take thy crown ἵνα μὴ, see 1 Cor. i. 15.

12. Him that overcometh will I make] The Lord Himself will do it, the Lord who is the Divine Artificer in building up His own Body and Bride of which He is the Head and Bridegroom, He Himself will make such an one a pillar in the temple', see 1 Pet. ii. 5 "living stones." The living stones fill various purposes in the living Temple. Friezes, Architraves, Pillars from simple stones they may become Pillars. As in John x. 2, sheep may become shepherds; as in 1 Cor. iii. 10, a believer may become a master builder.

and I will write upon him the name of my God, &c.] See ch. xiv. 1, they who are gathered on the Mount Zion with Christ our Lord have the name of God written on their foreheads and also our Lord's name.

13. let him hear, &c.] [The oft-repeated injunction hear with the implied sense of heed, as in Matt. xviii. 15—17 and elsewhere. Ed.]

1 [The term pillar applied to men eminent for piety, or otherwise renowned, is of frequent occurrence in Rabbinical literature. Abraham was designated as 'a pillar of the world' (Yalkut Rubeni, fol. 29). The same metaphor is applied to Peter, James and John, Gal. ii. 7. Ed.]
14 And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God;

14. And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans, &c.] [According to amended text, the assembly in Laodicea, this correction is well supported, and undoubtedly authentic.] The church in Laodicea represents that manifestation of the sevenfold Church universal, which, though not absolutely fallen from the love of her espousals, has become lukewarm and indifferent. While professing great things and believing herself to be spiritually rich, and needing nothing, she is really the wretched one, the miserable and poor and blind and naked one. She is not accused of heresies and false doctrines as are some of the other churches, but want of life, a want of vitality that has so deadened her conscience that she cannot know what she really is. Not only does she not know her misery, but she dreams that she is rich, and increased with goods, and has need of nothing. The cause of her declension is not given us, but if the words of v. 17 have relation to material as well as spiritual things we may suppose that wealth and outward ease and pre-occupation in the things of this world have overpowered her and inebriated her, so that she mistakes dreams for realities and realities for dreams. Labdicea was the sister Church of Colosse and it is a curious and interesting coincidence noticed by Lightfoot (Colossians p. 42, n. 2), that in writing to the Colossians (ch. i. 18) Paul speaks of our Lord as the ἀρχή, just as John does in this passage, "who is the beginning," ἡ ἀρχή, see also Rev. xxi. 6; xxii. 13.

These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness] In ch. i. 5 (see notes) our Lord is described as "the faithful witness and the first-begotten of the dead." The Lord Jesus is the faithful and true witness in that He represents God to man in His own Divine Person and character (John i. 18), He is the Revelation of God to man, He is the one Mediator between God and man (1 Tim. ii. 5). Only in and through Christ our Lord can man truly know God aright.

the beginning of the creation of God] [This phrase] is probably intended as another expression for the firstborn from the dead, ch. i. 5. God's creation begins with resurrection, the old creation in which man is by nature cannot truly be called God's creation. It is rather God's creation marred by sin. The new creation in Christ beginning with the resurrection from the dead is the true creation, God's creation into which man is called in Christ. The creation in the first Adam was provisional, typical; tentative. The first Adam was a type of
15 I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot.

16 So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth.

Him that was to come, Rom. v. 14. This provisional creation in Adam failed (may we not say necessarily failed?). The true creation of God begins in our Lord as the first-begotten of the dead. He is the head of it, He is the head, the ἄρχοντας of all things. The first creation is nought save only that it serves as the ground on which, and out of which, the new creation in Christ is to be edified. The true creation of God in each one of us begins then only when Christ reveals Himself to the soul, when the new life in Christ is first quickened in us, when that kinship which our Lord established with us in His incarnation first begins to be quickened into reality in us. Then do we first begin to have a conscious part in that new creation of God of which Christ our Lord is head and ἄρχοντας. The new creation is edified on, and out of the old (see notes to John xii. 24, 25), and wonderful as it may be fallen human nature is the ground on which in the eternities, through the Incarnation, Cross and Passion of our Lord, the glory of God is to be manifested, just as in the type Canaan the cursed was ordained to be the dwelling-place of the elect seed.

15. I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot, &c.] It is to be noted that these adjectives, cold and hot, rich, poor, blind, naked, &c., agree in gender with ἄγγελος, and not with ἐκκλησία, see Wordsworth on ch. ii. 1. This peculiarity runs throughout these chapters, the second and third.

16. So then because thou art lukewarm, & c.] Lukewarm (masc.), agreeing with ἄγγελος, not with ἐκκλησία, see v. xv. above n. “I will (μὴ ἐλλείψω, I am about to) spue thee out of my mouth,” this presage of destruction may relate to the ruin that came on Laodicea when destroyed by earthquake, but the date of her destruction is uncertain, whether in the reign of Nero or Tiberius (see Introd. and on v. 17 infra). The words may however (and the analogy of the prophecy leads to this conclusion) have a spiritual meaning only, and relate to a threatened extinction of the Church of Laodicea, without any reference to physical events that may or may not have happened at this time. The Lord Jesus cannot endure lukewarmness. Lukewarmness presents a pretence of Christianity, which probably deters others from accepting the truth even more than coldness and unbelief do; lukewarmness also cheats the lukewarm themselves, as we see by the following verses.
CHAPTER III.

17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked:

18 I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness

17. Because thou sayest, I am rich, &c.] The lukewarm Church of Laodicea esteemed itself spiritually rich, she had not a conscience quickened so as to perceive her own spiritual condition, she knew not what she really was, and we may learn from this that lukewarmness and a torpid conscience go together, and that spiritual pride and ignorance accompany them. Although these words are probably the expression of spiritual pride, yet they may have some relation also to the outward wealth and splendour of Laodicea, the wealth may have bred lukewarmness. Laodicea was destroyed by an earthquake, but the date of the destruction is uncertain, whether in the reign of Tiberius (see Smith’s Dict. of Bible), or whether in the reign of Nero (Alford, Prolegom. to Rev., p. 240, Cr. Gr. Test.). Lightfoot, Colossians, pp. 38, 39, says, that Tacitus, who is our earliest authority for this fact, places it in the year 60; Eusebius however makes it subsequent to the burning of Rome, A.D. 64, and Lightfoot places the occurrence a very few years before the date of Paul’s Epistle to Colossians. Alford says (Prolegom. to Rev.) that Laodicea was rebuilt by the wealth of its own citizens without any help from the state, Tacit. xiv. 27. This boast of her wealth can therefore not be taken as an evidence that the earthquake that destroyed the city had not occurred, when the Apocalypse was written, because the boast may have rested (so far as earthly wealth and power went) on her power of self-restoration after destruction.

18. I counsel thee to buy of me, &c.] Alford says there is a deep tone of irony in this word συμβουλεύω, I advise.

white raiment] See v. 5 above. Bad as is the estate of the Church of Laodicea this word of counsel from the Lord Himself shews that for individuals there is a never failing hope in Christ (see also following verses). This counsel and the acceptance of it implies a total change of mind (as to their condition) in those who accept it. It implies that they come to see that in reality, and in the light of the Parousia, they are wretched and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.
do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eye-salve, that thou mayest see.

19 As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent.

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.

19. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten] As much as to say, don’t be drawn away from me by this rebuke (v. 18). It is not to repel thee, but because I love thee still, that I rebuke thee [Gr. convict]. See Heb. xii. 6, 7, παιδεύω, to chaste.

be zealous therefore, and repent] The Lord calls on these lukewarm ones to do their part in working out their own salvation, see Phil. ii. 12.

20. Behold, I stand at the door, and knock] These words, so precious in themselves, receive a yet deeper meaning from the fact that they are spoken to Laodicea, the lukewarm church. They imply that as yet, the people to whom they are spoken have not yet admitted the Lord into dominion in their souls, that they have not yet realized the true communion, that they are careless about the coming in to them of the Lord; yet that notwithstanding all this, the Holy One, the Lord, the Prince of the kings of the earth, in all patience and condescending humility still stands at the door and knocks. Let it be remembered that these words are spoken by the Lord Himself, that our risen and ascended Saviour says, “I stand at the door and knock.” The unseen Christ watches and waits at the door of our hearts. He comes forth to serve us (Luke xii. 37) in communion, He, the King, waits on man, the wretched, the pitiable one, and he will not admit Him, he will not hear, he will not open; the turmoil and the nonsensical noises of the world deaden his senses, he is preoccupied, he has neither the sense to hear nor the will to receive. Like a madman he takes dreams and shadows for realities, and flings aside and refuses the everlasting realities of Christ as a dream.

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] In these words is contained the ultimate doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. The

1 [The verb “I love” (φιλῶ) is not the same as that employed in ver. 9; here it implies personal and intimate affection. Ed.]


CHAPTER III.

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.

form, the true communion in the body and blood of Christ takes under the dispensation of the Parousia, the dispensation under which we now are living, the dispensation to which the Apocalypse looks forward as instant when these words were written. Everything of a ritual character is excluded from it; it is a purely spiritual act, in which the Lord Jesus, the unseen Christ, presents Himself to the soul seeking admission thereto, and if admitted, makes His presence spiritually known by entering into that communion of which John speaks in the first Epistle, (1 John i. 3, see n. there). To Laodicea, the lukewarm Church, is given the honour of being the subject of this declaration concerning the mystery of the true communion, to realize which is eternal life. The words of the text, our Lord's own words, shew that man is free either to accept or reject the visitation of the unseen Christ to his soul. Free-will in this sense is one of the foundation facts of the economy of the Divine government, see Acts i. 25, and yet God's will is also as absolutely a foundation law, the two run together, they run through all things. Let it be noted that this knocking at the door of the heart, this coming in, this partaking together in communion of the bread of life, of Christ and His elect, is a reality to be known in this state of being, it is not merely promised as a reward after death, it is promised to people who are still in the flesh, even the promise "to him that overcometh" (v. 21) relates in part to the present life; and if these great and glorious promises relate as they do to the present state of being, so also do those which precede. The promises to the other churches are of the same texture as these, some of the promises relate to this life, some to eternity. But in the communion with the Lord Jesus in His Parousia, heaven and earth interpenetrate each other, and the limitations of each state are not easily determined; to such the heavens are opened as they were to our Lord at His baptism.

21. To him that overcometh, &c.] The promise here given by our Lord to him that overcometh is the promise to the bride, the Church, see Eph. v. 27. That He might set side by side with Himself, the church, glorious, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she might be holy and without blemish, see Eph. v. 27; see also Eph. i. 20, 23; ii. 6. To gather into communion with Himself
22 He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

CHAPTER IV.

1 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.

in His Parousia virgin souls who shall thus constitute the Church, the Bride, the Body, is the crowning purpose of the dispensation in which we now are, the dispensation of the Lord's Parousia (see 1 Cor. xv. 23; see Rev. xiv. 1—5 and Rev. xx. 4). Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's in His Parousia. Then cometh the end, 1 Cor. xv. 23, 24. Once again towards the close of the prophecy (ch. xxi. 7) we find a promise to him that overcometh. He that overcometh shall inherit all things (or these things), and I will be to him a God, and he shall be to me a son.

1. After this] After these things, μετά ταῦτα, does not imply a break in the subject, but a succession of events. I saw, and behold, a door opened in heaven, &c. [We are hereby introduced to a new and striking scene in the great myriorama of Apocalyptic vision. Ed.]

the first voice which I heard as...a trumpet] I.e. the voice of the Lord Jesus which John speaks of, ch. i. 10, the former voice, the voice not only of the trumpet (i. 10), but of Him also who said "fear not," the Lord Jesus, our Lord, my Lord, "the first and the last," see notes to ch. i. 17, and ii. 27.

Come up hither, &c.] The scene of the vision is about to be changed. In the previous chapters the Church universal in its sevenfold manifestation on earth has been called by exceeding great and precious promises to enter into communion with the Lord in His Parousia. In this chapter John describes his own assumption into a yet higher state of ecstasy in the heavenly places. These things are still intended for the Churches, though the Churches are not again mentioned until ch. xxii. 16, but the reference there shews that the whole book is addressed to the "Churches," and not to the world.
2 And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

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

and a sardine stone] The word "sardine" (σαρδῖνος) is found nowhere else in Scripture, but sardius is found in ch. xxi. 20; also Exod. xxviii. 17; xxxix. 10; Ezek. xxviii. 13. It may be identified with what we call the "ruby."

and...a rainbow like unto an emerald] 'In Rev. xxi. 19 we find again σμάραγδος, σμαράγδινος—an emerald, supposed to be identical with our precious stone of that name, a transparent green stone of exquisite beauty. These precious stones and their colours doubtless have their occult signification for us if only we could decipher them, see ch. vi. 4, n. They have their significations (and signatures) not only as representing the Divine glory, but also as representing the beauty and building of the Bride, the Church, the new Jerusalem of ch. xxi. 2, 18, 21. The Divine glory and the glory of the saints are represented by the same similitudes. Again: in the breast-plate of the High Priest twelve precious stones represented the twelve tribes of Israel, some, if not all, of the stones being apparently identical with the stones of the new Jerusalem (had we the power to know their characters), these yet further illustrate how the glory of God, and the glory of the elect souls constituting the Church, are identical the one with the other. We cannot say how far the ancient Hebrew names of the stones in Exodus (see chaps. xxviii. 17; xxxix. 10) are identical with the Greek names of the stones in Rev. xxi. 19, 20, but if the "jasper" of Exodus xxviii. 20; xxxix. 13 be identical with the "jasper" of Rev. xxi. 19, we may observe that the first foundation stone of the Holy City is identical with the last precious stone (Benjamin's) in the breast-plate of the High Priest. Each precious stone has its own particular signification, and each has also a signification of glory connecting the divine and human—a glory common to each, a common glory. They who are made partakers of the Divine nature in Christ, are the relations of God. They who are gathered with Christ our Lord on the Mount Zion have His Father's name written on their foreheads, ch. xiv. 6.

4. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats] [Instead of the word seats read thrones, which is the correct rendering of θρόνοι. There is no reason for the capricious alteration of the A.V.] These elders clothed in white raiment having on their heads crowns of gold who form part of the Court of Heaven appear again and
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.

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.

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.

again throughout the vision. _The elders_ (προσβλέποντες), who are they, and what is their office? At first, one would suppose they were redeemed from among men. Patriarchs and Prophets who had lived on the earth and shared in the redemption of our Lord. But this is doubtful, they are never identified with the redeemed throughout the whole book of Revelation. They are associated rather with the angelic host and the living creatures who form part of the throne of God. They may be human in nature and yet not of our fallen race. They may be of the race of the sons of God who with the morning stars shouted for joy, Job xxxviii. 7. _“The Angels” are an order distinct from the elders, see ch. vii. ii, n._ (On the hierarchy of Angels, cf. 1 Cor. iv. 9.)

5. _out of the throne proceeded lightnings, &c._ Better, _And out of the throne proceed lightnings and voices and thunderings; “proceed,” ἀπερρέουσαν, there proceed (pres.). The drama is in act, as John sees it, the lightnings and voices and thunderings and the seven lamps of fire burning which are the seven Spirits of God. See chaps. i. 4, n.; iii. 1, n.; iv. 5; v. 6. The vision is a vision of the power and glory of God, rather than of His love and Fatherhood. As yet the only signs of humanity consist in the four and twenty elders, if indeed they belong to the human family, see v. 3 above._

6. _And before the throne there was a sea of glass, like unto crystal_ [In ch. xv. 2, we have another vision of the sea of glass mingled with fire.

_and in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne four beasts_ [Living beings is the proper rendering of the word awkwardly translated beasts.] These four [living creatures] which dwell in and around the throne of God’s power, these together with the
7 And the first beast was like a lion, and the second

dρχαι καὶ ἔσωρίας are the powers that live behind and energize the phenomena of nature.

“I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our mis-shaping vision of the powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains.”

Tennyson.

The living creatures have a certain order of precedence among themselves, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, see ch. vi. 1, 7. These four living creatures whose dwelling-place is the throne of God represent probably the powers through which the goings of nature are ordered; but see v. 7, n. below; ch. vi. 8, n. They are neither human beings (v. 7) nor angelic beings, ch. vii. 11, nor do they probably belong to the “δρχαι καὶ ἔσωρίας,” in the heavenly places (?). The cherubim of Ezek. i. 5—10; x. 8, 15; xli. 19. The words “in the midst of the throne and round about the throne” express their intimate connection with the seat of the power of God—such are the powers of nature which I suppose to be here indicated by “the living creatures.” There is a mutual intermingling of existence, see ch. v. 6, n., “in the midst and round about,” see Isaiah vi. 2; vv. 7, 8, notes; also v. 11 notes.

full of eyes] The eyes are the organs through which the glory is ever streaming, stars of glory, the power which runs to and fro throughout the whole earth, 2 Chron. xvi. 9; Zech. iv. 10; see the vision of the four living creatures in Ezekiel, ch. i. 18 “their wings... were full of eyes;” ibid. x. 12 all eye, all ear, all sense. This vision of the secrets of creative power in and about the throne of God fitly expresses, so far as figure can express, the impersonal character of the powers of nature as seen in their source. See Ezek. x. 8, 13; “the cherubim,” v. 13 “As for the wheels it was cried unto them in my hearing, O wheel.” The wheels had a certain instinct and intelligence, “O wheel!”

“The chariot of Paternal Deity,
Flashings thick flames, wheel within wheel undrawn,
Itself instinct with spirit, but convoy’d
By four cherubic shapes...
as with stars their bodies all
And wings were set with eyes.”

Paradise Lost, vi. 750—755.

7. And the first beast] [Better, and the first living creature] see Ezek. i. 10; x. 14, the cherubim, the living creatures, Ezek. x. 15. These
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,

Similitudes harmonize with the idea that the four living creatures represent the powers of nature in so far as the animal creation is concerned—the flying eagle not only representing the birds of the air, but also the fish of the sea, with which the flying fowl are associated in Genesis. But we do not trace in these similitudes any relation to inanimate nature. Suns and stars and worlds, mountains, rivers, seas, trees, flowers, and fruits, and dewdrops, which so sweetly sing the praise of our Lord, who created them.

8. **they rest not day and night** They represent the ceaseless ongoings of nature, never resting yet never wearying *natura*, ever *naturans*. Not only are they, in their source, ever active, but they are also ever praising God, i.e., in their source, because as traversed by hostile influences, whether the will of evil men, or adverse ἀρχαι καὶ ἐνεργεία, or the power of the evil one, the powers of nature are often directed into evil courses. The powers of nature, as John saw them, were heralding the speedy coming of the Son of man in the glory of His Parousia, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come, ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ὁ ἅγιος καὶ ὁ ἀληθής. This attribute belongs both to God and to our Lord, see ch. i. 4. It is their nature to be ever doing so, *all thy works praise thee, O Lord, and thy saints bless thee,* Psa. cxlv. 10.

9. **And when those beasts** [living creatures, as before]. When nature with all her multitudinous powers and voices praise God, these also join in the song. “And when these living creatures give,” lit. *shall give, δώσωσιν*. It is singular that this is in a future tense, as also is v. 10, the four and twenty elders *shall fall down*, and *shall worship* Him, and *shall cast* their crowns before the throne. This future tense may have a meaning. It may look forward to the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 19, 23, when all nature, groaning now and travailing in pain, shall sing a new song.
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.

10. The four and twenty elders, &c.] The four and twenty elders cannot represent the church of the firstborn of the New Covenant (see next verse).

11. Thou art worthy, O Lord, &c.] This is manifestly a song of creation not of redemption, and it fitsly comes in the first instance from the four living creatures who are (I suppose) the creative powers in God's hand and in the hand of our Lord, they attribute all the glory to Him through whose will (θελημα) they were, and were created. The elders unite in the song of creation, but do not originate it. Who are the elders? (see note on v. 4).

for thy pleasure] [Better, through thy will]. The Authorized Version reads "for thy pleasure." In Isaiah xliii. 7 we read I have created him for my glory, I have formed (πλάσω, to mould) him, yea I have made (ποιοῦ) him. Whilst God created all things for His glory, pleasure, will, yet it is also the highest glory and joy and blessedness to all things, that they should be thus created. The glory of God constitutes the glory of the creation. It was to bring many sons unto glory that creation was ordained (Heb. ii. 10). It was that man might be an image of his own eternity (Wisdom ii. 23), the reflex image of his own glory. But for a being to reflect the glory of God, there must be in that being a capacity to receive and understand and appreciate the glory. The creature must be conjectured with the glorious one, for the reflexion is not mechanical or material only as in a mirror, but moral also, and spiritual. Hence the exceeding dignity of man, in his ultimate destination.

This fourth chapter is occupied not with the things which must be afterwards, v. 1, but with the description of the scene in which the things which must be were to be worked out. The description of the things that were to follow begins with the next Chapter. The fourth chapter is "scenery," the fifth chapter begins the drama, in which our Lord again appears and opens the seven-sealed scroll. This fourth chapter of the Book is to the fifth, sixth and seventh, what the first
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.

chapter was to the second and third, the portraiture of the scene, in which the following events were to be enacted. The thrones (vv. 2—4) are now set for the judgment of the old world just as in ch. xx. 4, the thrones are to be set for the final judgment day of ch. xx. 11—15. The opening of the sealed book of nature and Providence by our Lord, and the advent of our Lord 'on the earth, in the glory and terror of His Parousia, ch. vi. 2, 8, notes, precede (or rather attend) the impending judgment day of the old world, ch. xi. 18, and the events that precede it.

I. And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book] "A book," βιβλίον, a scroll; see Rev. vi. 14, scroll; see also Ezek. ii. 9, 10. Written within and without (ἐπιπέτοτε, on the back), closely sealed with seven seals. This seven-sealed scroll filled with writing within and without may be interpreted as representing the Book of the new creation in Christ our Lord, of that new economy which opened with our Lord's advent in glory, ch. vi. 2, the dispensation of the Parousia. The opening of the first seal reveals the horn coming forth conquering and to conquer (ch. vi. 2, n.). The second, third, and fourth seals represent the judgments on Israel that should attend the advent of our Lord, war, famine, and death (see notes to ch. vi. 3, 8). With the fifth seal a new order of events opens (ch. vi. 9), and a new order of judgments, and the sixth and seventh seals continue the prophetic vision of the last times up to the period of the judgment day of the old world, ch. xi. 18, the judgment day alluded to by our Lord in Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxv. 31, 46. The scroll of events had never yet been opened; even our Lord Himself during His ministry in the flesh had declared Himself unable to open it (see Mark xiii. 32), but now, when ascended to His glory and in the power of the death and resurrection (see v. 6, n. below), He has prevailed to open it, and to reveal it to His servant John. The writings on the scroll are not written characters but events, all His words are acts. As in the vision of Ezekiel, ch. ii. 9, 10, the opening of the first seals is attended with "lamentation and mourning and woe." The day of the Lord to Israel was, as the prophetic word had declared it should be, a day of darkness and not light (see Amos v. 18, 20; Joel ii. 2). The advent of the Lord in His Parousia was Israel's day of doom. Our Lord had already foreshadowed the portents which were to attend that day, see
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

Matthew, chaps. xxiv. xxv. The destruction of Jerusalem and of the Temple were to be the outward signs in Israel of the advent of the Lord in the glory and terror of the Parousia. The whole Mosaic economy was to pass away. Those things in Israel which seemed as fixed as the sun and the moon and the stars should then fall, and with the terrible judgments that should come on the land of Israel was to come the yet more terrible judgment day in Heaven of which our Lord had spoken when on earth, Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxv. 31—46, of which Paul also speaks, Acts xvii. 31; xxiv. 15, 25. All these events were contained in the seven-sealed scroll, and were included within the limits of the six seals. The seventh seal opens out a far more extended scene. From the opening of the seventh seal proceeds the whole of the succeeding visions and events as far as ch. xi. 19 that constitute the subject of the Apocalypse from the end of the old world period until the close of the dispensation. The vision of the seven trumpets and the seven thunders are included within the compass of the seventh and last seal. Out of this seven-sealed scroll proceed in their due order the whole series of events which lead up to the new creation; this seven-sealed β良好 may be fitly called the Book of the new creation. This vision is marked off from all the other visions, not only by the portents that attend it as described in this chapter, but still more by the fact that it is our Lord Himself who alone can and does take the book and open it, and each of the seals of it. This great transaction in the Heavens is mediated by our Lord Himself, the succeeding visions are all mediated by angels—the seven trumpets, the seven thunders, the seven last plagues.

2. And I saw a strong angel, &c.] Mark the portents that attend the opening of this seven-sealed scroll. This challenge “to open the book and loose the seals thereof” is no mere theatrical display, it is a challenge with a meaning; many a tongue had doubtless in its day professed a philosophy that should be the key to all philosophies, among men; many had doubtless professed to be able to solve all mysteries; let the men now stand forth and prove their power. Let any man who can do it open the seven-sealed book, and there was no man (v. 3).

3. And no man] Better, no one (οὐδεὶς). Neither man nor angel, either in heaven, or earth, or Hades claim to take up the
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.

challenge; man’s wisdom is effectually silenced and brought to nought. No man could open the book, or even look thereon. Note the compass of the voice of the Angel; it rings through Heaven and Earth and Hades, shewing not only the power of the voice, but also that Heaven and Earth and Hades have all an interest in the seven-sealed book.

4. And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open the book, neither to look thereon] “I wept,” lit. “I was weeping” (imperf.). This “much weeping” implies how great importance even John, the man, attached to the opening of the Book. See also how great importance the elders and the living creatures and the angels attached to the event, vv. 8—14, notes.

5. the Lion of the tribe of Juda] This is the only place in the N. T. where this title is given to our Lord; it is closely associated with the title “Lamb,” v. 6. The Lamb stands as it were at the very contrary pole of existence to the Lion; our Lord embraces in His being the whole range of nature from the Lion to the Lamb, just as He calls Himself “the first and the last,” see ch. i. 17, n.

the Root of David] See ch. xxii. 16, “the root and the offspring of David.” In His divinity our Lord is the root of David; in His humanity He is His offspring, just as with the blessed Virgin who bore Him, as divine our Lord is her creator, as human He is her offspring.

hath prevailed] ἐπέκρινεν, hath overcome, see ch. iii. 21, n., “even as I also overcame.” “Our Lord’s redeeming work was literally a conflict and a victory (an overcoming); so also the promises to individuals throughout chaps. ii. iii. are “to him that overcometh,” see chaps. ii. 7, 11, 17, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21, shewing that believers also have to enter into the conflict on which our Lord entered, and through Him to overcome, that is the Christian work, the Christian warfare, in which, through our Lord, we are made more than conquerors, Rom. viii. 37. Our Lord’s redeeming work in the flesh was a fight and a victory by which He, as man, and for man, redeemed man out of the hand of the enemy. A conflict with H.
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

the powers of death and darkness in which He overcame. In following our Lord we also have to drink of His cup, to partake of His conflict, and in Him to overcome. To overcome, i.e. not merely to escape “Hell-fire,” as we call it, but to overcome sin and be delivered from the power of it.

6. And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne, &c.] Our Lord stands in the midst of the throne, of the living creatures, of the elders, of the seven Spirits, ch. i. 13; ii. 1; the Lamb representing our Lord was in the midst of the throne, and the glory, and the powers of creation, and the elders, and the angels. He was there, and is there, the Lord of the fountain-spirits at the source of all things, indeed He is Himself the ἀρχὴ and source, so also is He present in the outgoings and the ongoings of all things, sometimes active, sometimes passive, sometimes as a King, sometimes as the Crucified One, but still a King, sometimes the Lion of the tribe of Juda, sometimes the Lamb of God, “a Lamb standing as it had been slain.” Our Lord in glory still bears upon Him the marks of death; “I was dead, and behold I am alive for evermore,” ch. i. 18. The word for Lamb here is ἀριθμός (diminutive), a little lamb, the word is used throughout the Apocalypse instead of ἄριστα. It was through this death and this overcoming death that our Lord became the captain of salvation, Heb. i. 10, through this also that He prevailed to open the seven-sealed scroll full of writing inside and outside, the book of the new creation, see notes to v. 1 above (cf. Dan. xii. 4). Our Lord in glory still bears the marks of His conflict; He whom we worship and follow is He who lived, and died, and conquered death; all these vital acts and facts are contained in Him, and when He reveals Himself to His elect He stamps upon them His own stigmata. “I bear in my body the stigmata of the Lord Jesus,” Gal. vi. 17. Not only the marks of the conflict, but the marks also of the victory and the glory, for it is the risen and ascended and glorified Jesus who reveals Himself to His elect. In them death and resurrection and glory proceed forward together (see Acts xvii. 3); as they abide in Him the risen and ascended Saviour, His stigmata are their portion in Him. Just as our Lord stands in the midst of the seven golden lamps, ch. i. 13 n., holding the seven stars in His right hand, ch. i. 20, n., ii. 1, n., just, that is, as He is in the midst of the Churches, so also is He declared in our text to be in the midst of the ongoings of nature, of creation and
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.

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.

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.

Lord, looking for the opening of the day of the new creation which is to come in with the opening of the sealed book.

having every one of them] Better, each having (ἐκεῖνος ἐκαρπεῖς), "apparently applying only to the elders," Alford in loc.

golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints] The point of time in the vision here is before the destruction of Jerusalem, which comes in ch. vii. with the opening of the first four seals. The way into the holiest is not yet opened, see Heb. ix. 8, n., and the prayers of the saints do not as yet ascend before the throne as they do in ch. viii. 3, 4, n., they are held back as it were, in the case of the elders who represent the saints, reserved for the day of the opened heavens, ch. viii. 3, p. 89.

9. And they sing a new song] The new song is the song of the new creation in Christ; this new song is afterwards taken up again (ch. xiv. 3), by the redeemed on earth, who are gathered even in this life into the new creation on the Mount Zion (see notes to ch. xiv. 1—5, see also ch. xv. 3, 4). "Saying, Thou art worthy to take the scroll and to open the seals thereof, for thou wast slain and hast redeemed to God by (θυ) thy blood out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation." The word "us," (redeemed us,) is omitted from the amended text, see v. 10, n. The probability is, that the "living creatures" never needed redemption, nor the elders; see ch. iv. 4, also ch. vii. 10—12, note. Note the far-reaching efficacy of our Lord's redeeming work; it extends to every kindred (tribe), and tongue, and people, and nation; people surely who never heard the name of Jesus (see also ch. vii. 9, n.).

10. And thou hast made us, &c.] Better, And hast made them (unto our God) a kingdom and priests, and they (shall) reign on the earth. The amended text here, which reads "them" and "they" for "us" and "we," confirms the amended reading in v. 9, which strikes out the word "us." The amended text also reads "a kingdom" for "kings," see ch. i. 6. Anselm (Neander, Ch. Hist. viii. 17) says, "Whatever any one who is
CHAPTER V.

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.

thought worthy of reigning there wills, that, whether in heaven or on earth, is done, and whatever he wills not, is not done. For so great will be the love between God and His saints, and of the saints one to another and to God, that all will love each other in themselves, and God more than themselves; hence no one will will any thing else than what God wills, and what one wills all shall will, and what one or all wills God wills, and thus shall all be perfect kings, for that shall be which each wills." This extract from Anselm may be made to apply whether the reading be "kings" or "kingdom." The kingdom here spoken of is the kingdom which our Lord preached during His earthly ministry, which John Baptist also preached, the kingdom that dawned on earth at Pentecost, but was really established as the Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1—5) on earth, only on the advent of the Lord in His Parousia (see Rev. xxi. 5, n.). It is our Lord who has done it, and to Him is ascribed the glory and the honour. From the thousands of thousands, and myriads of myriads, from the kindreds and tongues, and peoples and nations, and also from v. 13, we may gather that the gates of Hades were now opened, and the dead of the old world period were gathered before the throne for the judgment day of the old world, though John does not see all (see ch. vii. 9) these things at once. The great assize of the old world period does not come until ch. xi. 18, but all these events are preparations for that judgment day.

11. And I beheld] Of these myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, the only human element consists of the elders. Who are the elders? see on ch. iv. 4. But the presence of the human race is indicated in vv. 9—13, see also ch. vii. 9, n.; this is all in preparation for the judgment day of the old world period, of which our Lord speaks, Matt. xxv. 31—46, see also Acts xvii. 31, n.

12. Saying with a loud voice, &c.] The song is the song of the four living creatures, and the elders, and the angelic host; the angelic host may include the principalities and powers (see 1 Cor. iv. 9), who also share in our Lord's work (Eph. i. 10), though probably not in the
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.

14 And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four same manner as man does. The song here is given forth by the heavenly host, but it is taken up by the whole creation (v. 13); all rejoice in the new creation which the Lord Jesus is now about to initiate in opening the seven-sealed book: as to the "principalities and powers" see Rom. viii. 38; Eph. i. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16. This is a continuation of the new song of vv. 9, 10; it is marked off from that, because, whilst vv. 9, 10 relate to man and his redemption, vv. 11, 12 relate more especially to the rest of creation, animate and inanimate, as set forth in v. 13, which groans and travails in pain, waiting for the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, see Rom. viii. 19—21. In v. 13 universal nature sends up its response to the angelic song of v. 12. The opening of this seven-sealed scroll is the great fact of the prophecy; it is our Lord Himself who opens the book and each seal of it, see ch. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12, and ch. viii. 1; no one but He could open it, v. 3, 5, 9.

13. And every creature] All creation, and every living thing therein, takes up the angelic song of praise, and sings it back to Heaven. All this ecstasy of joy arises out of the opening of the book of the new creation by our Lord, this is the great event of the prophecy out of which all the succeeding events spring from ch. vii. onward. It is worthy of note that the angelic song differs from the response of creation; the song in Heaven is v. 12, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, power, δύναμις; whilst the song of creation is to Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb be the blessing, and the honour, and the glory, and the power (κράτος, might) for ever and ever.

14. And the four beasts, &c.] [Properly, And the four living creatures. These representatives of Nature have their counterpart in Jewish thought. "There is a living creature in heaven which has Truth marked on its forehead, and every time the living creature says, Bless ye the blessed Lord, all the hosts above reply, Blessed be the blessed Lord for ever." Kitzur Sh’l’h fol. 42. Ed.]
and twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever.

CHAPTER VI.

1 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.

And the elders fell down and worshipped] The four living creatures, the powers of nature and creation, again send back their Amen to the song of creation, and the elders worship. It is to be noted in regard to this seven-sealed scroll, the book of the new creation (?), which is the subject of this chapter, that whether in the prelude and anticipation of the unfolding of the things that are written therein, as contained in this fifth chapter, or whether in the opening of the seals as described in chaps. vi. and viii., the whole work is mediated by our Lord Himself. He it is who takes the book out of the right hand of Him who sitteth on the throne, ch. v. 7; He it is who opens the seven seals thereof. The succeeding visions, all opening out of this first vision, are mediated by angels, this is mediated by our Lord. All that follows after the opening of the seventh seal in ch. viii. 1 proceeds from our Lord's act in opening that seal; it is all the revelation of Jesus Christ; it is from Him that the succeeding events flow; it is of Him that they speak, the revelation of Jesus is the spirit of the whole prophecy, see v. 1 n. above.

1. And I saw when the Lamb, &c.] Better, "And I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living beings saying, as it were the voice of thunder, Come." This appears to be the probable reading of the text (see Alford in loc.). The living creature says "Come," "as with a voice of thunder," and this word "Come" is probably addressed to our Lord ὃ καὶ τὸ ἀνθρωπόν of v. 2, who goes forth "conquering and to conquer." Coming as the voice does, from one of the living creatures, and so again in vv. 3, 5, and 7, we gather that the powers of nature vibrate with joy at the prospect opened for nature in the opening of this book. The opening of the second, third, and fourth seals bring woe and desolation on nature, yet knowing this, the living creatures still cry "Come," seeing as they do the bright
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.

beyond', see Rom. viii. 21. As the prisoner in his dungeon listens with eager hope for the footsteps of his deliverer, so does nature listen for the footsteps of the 'Coming one,' of the Lord; man flees from His Parousia, is ashamed from it, 1 John ii. 28, n. Why does the voice of thunder "Come" issue from the powers of nature' here, and not from "the Bride," "the Church" as in ch. xxii. 17? Because the Bride, the Church, was not as yet builded, because the visions that John here witnesses relate mainly, up to the end of ch. xi. 18, to the old world period as far as συντέλεια τοῦ αἰῶνος; ch. viii. reveals the opening of the dispensation that followed the Apostolic period, the dispensation of the "Parousia."

2. And I saw, and behold a white horse] Compare this description with ch. xix. 11, "And behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war;" v. 13, "and his name is called the Word of God." We can have no doubt that in both cases, i.e. here and in ch.

1 Note the portents which attend the opening of the first seal of the book of the new creation. The voice of one of the living creatures as of thunder saying "Come!" to Him the Lord who goes forth conquering and to conquer. Note also the portents which attend the opening of the book as described in the previous chapter. The joy in heaven and throughout all creation when it was known that the book could and would be opened—that the Lord Himself would open it.

It is to be borne in mind, as already said, that it is our Lord who opens this Book of the new Creation, and who opens in succession each of the seven seals thereof (see ch. v. 1). He does it and He alone could do it (see ch. v. 3—7 and notes). The seven trumpets, the seven thunders, the seven last plagues are all mediated by angels, but the seven seals of the Book of the new Creation are opened by our Lord Himself, and out of the opening of the seventh seal proceed the events that follow up to ch. xi. 19 onward to the new heavens and the new earth of chaps. xxi. xxii.

This seven-sealed scroll is the great mystery out of which proceeds in due succession the visions that follow. It is to be borne in mind that the things which John here sees in vision are the signs only of events which were yet to happen (see ch. iv. 1 and notes) when this prophecy was written—they are not the things themselves but the signs of the things, signs in the heavenly places of events that were to come upon the earth between the period of the writing of this Book of the Revelation of Jesus Christ and the end. The opening of the seven-sealed scroll by our Lord is spoken of as the first of the events which were shortly to come to pass when John wrote (see ch. i. 19); and the event which the first seal imported was the advent in glory of our Lord (see ver. 2, note).
CHAPTER VI.

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

xix. 11, our Lord, the Lord Jesus, is intended, see ch. xiii. 1, 2, notes. The opening of the first seal reveals in vision, and under the similitude of the rider on the white horse, our Lord coming forth in the glory and terror of His Parousia, "conquering and to conquer." This is the "coming of the Son of man" (τὸ παροικία) of which our Lord speaks Matt. xxiv. 27—30. This coming of the Lord in the glory and terror of His Parousia was to be signalized in Israel by the destruction of Jerusalem and the end of the Jewish age, see Matt. xxiv. 29 "immediately after, &c." It was to be attended with tribulation and sorrows in Israel such as never had been, and never again should be, Matt. xxiv. 21, &c., and it was to be the sign and prelude of the day of judgment of the old world period, as described in Matt. xxi. 31, 46; Rev. xi. 18, n. This coming of our Lord which John here sees in vision is also associated in meaning with the coming of which He himself speaks Matt. xvi. 27. Of the same event Paul speaks in 2 Thess. i. 7, 10. And according to our Lord's explicit word, Matt. xvi. 27 and xxiv. 34, and according to Paul's implied word, 1 Thess. iv. 15—17, His advent was to take place within the lifetime of the generation then living when the words were spoken (see also Matt. x. 23). Supposing then that John wrote the Apocalypse about the year 68 or 70 A.D. the opening of the first seal of the seven-sealed scroll was just about to happen when the Apocalypse was written¹, see ch. i. 19, n.

3. And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, Come] By the way in which the living creatures (the powers of nature dwelling in the throne of God, ch. iv. 6, n.) are here spoken of as 2nd, 3rd, and 4th, we may suppose that there was among them a certain order of precedence. Here again as in v. 1, the word "come" in the amended text stands alone, without the words "and see." The greeting in each case is addressed to our Lord and His attendant ministers of judgment. This greeting is confined to the opening of the first four seals; and only at the opening of the first seal is the voice "Come" spoken of as a voice of thunder. This "voice as of thunder" acccents the advent of the Lord Himself. The three horsemen who follow Him are His attendant ministers, war, famine and death, the angels of destruction to Israel, see v. 8, note below, "the angels of His Power," 2 Thess. i. 7.

¹ The Book was written just before the destruction of Jerusalem.
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

4. And there went out another horse that was red] Undoubtedly there is a meaning in the colours, red, black (5), pale (8), see ch. iv. 3, n., p. 47. Mark the difference between the description of this vision and that of v. 2, there is no “crown” here, no “going forth conquering and to conquer,” no “voice as of thunder.” The first of the ministers of judgment attendant on our Lord is war, symbolized by the rider on the red horse, to whom was given a great sword. War, famine, and death attend the Lord in His advent, as the angels of His Power, 2 Thess. i. 7: such were the woes which our Lord had foretold should come on rebellious Israel, when He should come in judgment on the nation, war and famine and pestilence, and shakings of the land1. “For these be the days of vengeance, &c.” Luke xxi. 22. These were the events which according to our Lord’s own prophetic word were to attend and follow the destruction of Jerusalem. These are the judgments of which John in vision here sees the prophetic signs. All these things were to be fulfilled within that generation, Matt. xxiv. 34; xxiii. 36; xvi. 28; Mark xiii. 30; Luke xxi. 32. Still the powers of nature say, “Come,” they know that the new creation, the new Heavens, and the new earth, are to be reached only through judgments such as these, and they welcome the judgments, knowing that they presage the ultimate victory.

5. And when he had opened the third seal, &c.] Throughout this vision of the seven-sealed book, as already noted, it is our Lord who opens the book and each seal thereof. Though the opening of the first seal reveals in vision His own advent in glory, conquering and to conquer, yet He still remains the opener of all the seals, from the first which reveals His own advent to the seventh and last which introduces a period of ages, culminating in the new heavens and the new earth of the 21st and 22nd chapters. One of the living creatures, with a voice as of thunder, hails the advent of our Lord Himself, see vv. 1 and 2, n. The other three living creatures, each in order of precedence, hail the ministers of vengeance that attend the Lord.

And I beheld, and lo a black horse, &c. The rider on the

1 [Cf. the תהלים ו of Jewish exegetes. Ed.]
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.

black horse having a balance in his hand represents famine (see v. 8, note). Here again the colour of the horse has a symbolic meaning.

6. And I heard a voice...say, A measure of wheat for a penny, &c.] [Literally, And I heard a voice...saying, A chœnix of wheat for a denarius, &c.] The meaning of the voice is not clear, “the denarius was the ordinary day's pay for a soldier in the time of Tiberius” (Alford). “The chœnix appears in like manner to be taken for a day's provision” (Alford), such a price therefore would not express any scarcity of food, neither would the other words, “and the oil and wine injure not,” be a sign of famine but rather the contrary. This voice from the midst of the four beasts is so indefinite in itself that it means either plenty or famine, or neither, and yet it is associated with the third seal (v. 5) the black horse and the balances, famine, see v. 8. The ambiguity of the cry, which would be almost impossible of explanation were it not for the testimony of Josephus, becomes plain when we know the facts of history; and its very ambiguity, which exactly fits the facts, serves to indicate that the vision in the Apocalypse is here concerned with the destruction of Jerusalem, and with nothing else. Josephus tells us that in the siege of the city a measure of wheat was worth a talent, whilst the cry “from the midst of the four beasts,” a measure of wheat for a penny, means anything but famine1. The cry therefore cannot apply directly to Jerusalem, and yet in some indirect way it does so apply. In what way then can it be applicable? We find the key here again in Josephus. He says that whilst in the siege of Jerusalem the besieged would have paid a talent for a measure of wheat, in the Roman

1 A measure (chœnix) of wheat, variously estimated from about 1 ½ to about 4 pints English, [probably rather less than our quart but] possibly of different sizes in different states. See Dict. of Gk. and Rom. Antiquities, Art. Xœinìz. It represented a day's provision in food for a day's wages, just as a denarius represented a day's pay for a soldier in the time of Tiberius, so that a chœnix for a denarius was about a fair ordinary price and not a sign of famine. A measure (chœnix) of wheat. Authorities differ so greatly as to this question that it is difficult to say whether “a chœnix of wheat for a denarius” implied plenty or scarcity.
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
camp there was such plenty of provision that the Roman soldier taunted
the starving Jews with their own abundance of food. They had in the
Roman camp the customary plenty of a measure of wheat for a dena-
rus. This though not signifying in itself any excessive abundance, was
such plenty as compared with the hunger of the Jews was a great
abundance, and the comparison between the state of the Roman army
and the state of the besieged city is the key to the cry from the midst
of the living creature, and indicates that the cry relates to this very event
of the siege, and to nothing else.

7. And when he had opened the fourth seal] (On the order
of precedence observed in the mention of the four living creatures see
v. 5, note). Again with the fourth living creature as with the others
preceding, the cry of invitation "Come," is addressed in each instance
(amended text) to the rider, ὁ κατημένος, not to the spectators of the
vision or to John.

8. And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name
that sat on him was Death, and Hades followed with him,
&c.] All these ministers of judgment, war, and famine, and death, and
Hades, associated as each one is with one of the living creatures, are
ministers of physical suffering and judgment, and this fact confirms the
idea suggested in ch. iv. 6, n. and elsewhere, that the four living crea-
tures whose dwelling-place is in the midst of the throne, and around the
throne of God, are the powers of nature, a part of His throne which is
the seat of His power, yet distinct from the Almighty. They are His
ministers, intimately connected with the seven Spirits of God, ch. iv. 5,
6, and also with our Lord, who is also described as standing in the midst
of the throne, and of the four living creatures, ch. v. 6, n. The death
spoken of in our text is of course physical death. Death riding on a pale
horse is one of the ministers of the powers of nature, and of our Lord,
and of the Almighty.

And power was given unto them] i.e. to the three horsemen

3 See Ezek. v. 17, "A third part of thee shall die with the pestilence, and
with famine shall they be consumed in the midst of thee; and a third part shall
fall by the sword round about thee; and
I will scatter a third part unto all the
winds" etc. Comp. also Ezek. xiv. 27;
Hab. iii. 5.
part of the earth, to kill with sword, and with hunger, and with death, and with the beasts of the earth.

who attend upon our Lord, war (v. 4), and famine (v. 5), and death (v. 8). Thus the reference here in the words "power was given unto them" is to the three horsemen of vv. 4, 5, 8, rather than to death and Hades (though Death and Hades are the immediately precedent substantives to αὐρῶν), seems probable from the words that follow sword, hunger, death, which carry back the thought to the riders, on the red horse—war (v. 4); on the black horse—famine (v. 5); on the pale horse—death (v. 8). If however the reading αὐρῶν for αὐρῶν, "there was given to him," instead of "there was given to them," the reference must be to "Death," and not to the three horsemen, but the following words "sword, and hunger, and death," still bring in, if not so directly as in the other suggested reading, the preceding horsemen as the ministers of death, i.e., sword, war (v. 4), and famine (v. 5).

the fourth part of the earth] "of the earth," τῆς γῆς "of the land." The portents that attended the advent of the Lord were, so far as we can judge, limited to Israel (see notes to Matt. xxiv. 29). Israel was the stage on which the outward and visible signs of the Lord's Parousia were manifested. In Israel was the glory, on Israel came the judgment of that day. For here, when we read that power was given to the ministers of war, and famine, and death, over the fourth part of the land, we may conclude that the fourth part of Israel is here intended.

This prophetic vision was probably literally fulfilled at the destruction of Jerusalem, when Josephus calculates that upwards of one million Jews perished besides the multitudes who were carried into slavery, and all this destruction did not include the multitude that perished in other parts of the land. Eusebius (lib. iii. ch. vii.) quoting Josephus (Wars, Book vi. ch. ix. § 3) says that "eleven hundred thousand perished by famine and the sword," and "some were preserved for the Roman triumph." Of the remaining multitudes there "above 17,000 were sent to labour at the mines in Egypt, but great numbers were distributed in the provinces to be destroyed by the sword or by wild beasts in the theatres" (ibid. Book vi. ch. ix. § 2).

It is probably literally true, according to the testimony of Josephus, that at the advent of the Lord in the glory and terror of His Parousia, [synchronous with the fall of Jerusalem] a fourth part of the Jewish nation perished. It was our Lord who was to destroy Jerusalem at His
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:

advent, see Matt. xxii. 7; Mark xiv. 58; Acts vi. 14; Dan. ix. 26 (LXX).
This was doubtless what Paul speaks of in 2 Thess. i. 7, 8.

It is a singular fact that whilst there is no Christian record of the destruction of Jerusalem and the events that attended it, the Jew Josephus should have been made the instrument in the Lord's hand to evidence the truth of His own prophecies concerning the time of His Parousia. We should not have known or guessed how the inhabitants of Jerusalem could be destroyed by wild beasts, here, if Josephus had not told us that the Roman conquerors literally reserved their captives for this very fate. To say as John does here that the wild beasts of the earth should have a part in the carnage seems ridiculous, and yet it was literally fulfilled. For other instances of the value of hostile evidence (unconscious evidence) to the truth of divine fact see Acts xvii. 7. The fourth seal marks the end of a certain class of judgments; the fifth seal begins a new series of a different order: see the same feature in the vision of the trumpets, ch. ix. 1, and also in the vision of the vials, ch. xvi. 10; see also notes to ch. viii. 13.

9. And when he had opened the fifth seal, &c.] With the fifth seal the characters of the vision change. It is still our Lord who opens the seals, but there is no longer the cry of welcome—the "Come!" from the four living creatures, the powers of nature. The vision of the advent of the Lord, conquering and to conquer with the "Angel of His Power," has passed. We are now approaching the vision of the judgment day which closed the old world period. This may be the day of which Paul speaks, 1 Thess. iv. 16, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first," see also 1 Cor. xv. 52.

the souls under the altar, &c.] Seen by John would probably be the souls of those saints of the old world period who were waiting for the day of Christ, Heb. xi. 30, 31, n.; martyrs waiting for the martyrs who had yet to suffer. From the fact that they had been slain, and from their position under the altar (of burnt-offering?) we gather that they were martyrs; they "had been slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held." The expression "the testimony which they held" indicates that their testimony was borne under the period of the old dispensation. It was not "the testimony of Jesus Christ," as
CHAPTER VI.

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?

11 And white robes were given unto every one of

in chaps. xii. 17; xix. 10; xx. 4; their cry for vengeance also (v. 10), shews that these "souls under the altar" were still under the spirit of the old dispensation (see Luke ix. 54, 55). They had suffered death for the truth and for the testimony which they held, but had not yet known the power of our Lord's resurrection.

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 whole character and context indicate, as already said, that the martyrs here spoken of belong to the period of the old dispensation, their appeal is an appeal for vengeance, they do not cry to our Lord by name, but to the supreme ruler (ὁ διοικήτης); their testimony for which they suffered is not spoken of as the testimony of Jesus (see chaps. xi. 17; xix. 10; xx. 4), but the "testimony which they held," i.e. their own testimony to such measure of truth as they had attained under the Old Covenant. Their cry for vengeance was such as our Lord speaks of in connection with His own advent, Luke xviii. 7, 8. In both instances the cry is associated with the advent of the Lord. This cry of the souls under the altar, is, perhaps, not necessarily a vindictive desire for personal revenge on their enemies; it may be only a cry that the truth they held, and which they represent, may be vindicated against those who denied it. We find a parallel in the new covenant sense, Rev. xix. 2; see also 2 Cor. x. 6. Dost thou not judge, and vindicate our blood on them that dwell on the earth? clear thy truth, sacrificed in us, from the false aspersions of sinners. These souls under the altar were not in perfect rest and joy, they were expecting a yet fuller salvation, a more perfect satisfaction. There is in the economy of the divine government, whether of the dead or living, a divine order, which has to be maintained; each soul is saved in its own time, see 1 Cor. xv. 23; 1 Tim. vi. 15, and through the foreordained order of events. Individual salvation is not complete salvation; individual salvation has to know the yet higher joy of aggregate salvation, the salvation and completion of the elect number of which the individual is only a unit.

11. And white robes were given unto every one of them] "And there was given to them each a white robe" [according to amended text]. Each had his reward, though not his full reward, in this vision,
them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

they were to rest yet for a little season until, &c. This “resting” does not mean merely “remain;” ἀναπαύονται (1. a. s. m. of ἀναπαύω), implies a state of repose, and comparative blessedness; see Matt. xi. 28; Rev. xiv. 13. These martyred souls (v. 9) were to rest yet for a little season, i.e. until the consummation of the old world period, which when the book was written was about to be accomplished; then, in the συνέκλεισα τοῦ αἰῶνος, “the consummation of the age,” Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxiv. 3, not only would the set time be accomplished, but the perfected number of their fellow-servants and brethren that were about to be killed (οἱ μεῖγγοις ἀποκτείνωσας) should be completed. The advent of the Lord in His Parousia would very shortly bring to completion both the appointed time and the appointed number. Whether these souls under the altar do or do not form part of the 144,000, the complete number of ch. vii. 4—8, is not clear; they evidently do not form part of the 144,000 of Rev. xiv. 1, 5. These latter constitute the Body of Christ, the Church, the Bride, who are gathered after the day of judgment of the old world period, who are being gathered now in the dispensation of the Parousia, the dispensation of the day of Christ, in which we are, or ought to be, living; the period indicated by Paul in 1 Cor. xv. 23, and which is divided off from the period spoken of in our text, and the martyrs of the old world period of Rev. xi. 18 and Matt. xxv. 31—45. The martyrs appear to be marked off here from the other dead.

they should rest yet for a little season] Whether under the old economy or the new, each period has its epochs and foreordained events in which individuals are the units, but which attain their foreordained end only in the completion of the whole number. Thus individual salvation is a great fact for the individual soul, but it is a detail only in the sum total of the glory that lies in the future, when each individual soul shall appear in its ordained place in the whole universe of souls, as stars in their constellations in the stellar world, as citizens in a kingdom, as members in the body of Christ, the Church, the Bride. In this great fact of the new heavens and the new earth, and the marriage supper, it is that the book of the Apocalypse culminates, though we reach it through all the moil and turmoil of the intermediate periods; “this is the harvest, which in the glory of its reaping eclipses the tears and sorrow in which it has been sown.”
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;

12. And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal, &c.] The sixth seal brought a climax, as does the sixth trumpet, ch. ix. 13; so also with the sixth vial, ch. xvi. 12; so with the six days of creation, the seventh brings the sabbath; so also in the generations, i.e. in the genealogy of our Lord, Matt. i. 17, the $6 \times 7$, or $3 \times 14$ reach to Christ. This opening of the sixth seal (vv. 12—17) marks the point at which in Matt. xxiv. 15, 29, our Lord places the destruction of Jerusalem spoken of by the prophet Daniel (see Matt. xxiv. 15, see also Dan. ix. 26, LXX.), where in the Greek it is said, "the anointed one (the Christ)...shall come with the Prince that is coming, and shall destroy the city and the sanctuary." Our Lord Himself should do it, in His coming again (Acts vi. 14). These portents are spoken of, Matt. xxiv. 29, 30; and Luke xxiii. 30, records our Lord's own words, repeated here as about to be fulfilled, "They shall say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us," Rev. vi. 16. This opening of the sixth seal deals with the judgment on Israel, but the great day of judgment of Matt. xxv. 31, 45, is not yet; that comes in, Rev. xi. 18. Our Lord had foretold, Matt. xxiv. 7; Mark xiii. 8; Luke xxi. 11, that great shakings, ὀστροφοί, should presage His coming in judgment to Jerusalem, which again was the outward sign in Israel of His advent in the glory and terror of His Parousia. Luke (ch.xxi. 26, 27) directly associates these shakings with the advent of our Lord. These shakings are also otherwise alluded to, Heb. xii. 26, 27; all these things were to accent the last days of the Jewish age, ἡ σοφρενία τοῦ αἰῶνος, the consummation of the age. In describing the complete subversion and dissolution of the Jewish theocracy in the destruction of Jerusalem and the sanctuary, John uses the same metaphors that our Lord Himself uses in Matt. xxiv. 29, 30; Mark xiii. 24; Luke xxi. 25; the same that the Apostle Peter uses at Pentecost, when, quoting the words of the Prophet Joel, respecting the last days, he says, Acts ii. 20, "The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before that great and notable day of the Lord come;" see also Joel's description of the day of the Lord at the end of the Jewish age, and the Roman power coming as the angel of destruction, Joel ii. 1—10; "the day of the Lord cometh," &c., "The earth shall quake," &c. John, in using these prophetic figures of the stars falling from heaven, and the
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.

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

And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and heavens departing as a scroll, does not at all contemplate the dissolution of this planet, the earth, but only the dissolution of the Jewish economy and the old world period. The subsequent chapters of the Apocalypse, from ch. viii. onward, contemplate the continuance of the earth and its inhabitants for an indefinite time (a period in which a thousand years [ch. xx. 2, 4] is only a detail). After the judgment-day of the old world, which is about to open with the opening of the sixth seal of the book of the new creation, John uses the same metaphors that our Lord Himself used and that the ancient prophets had used to signify the passing away of nations and dynasties. Isaiah had used similar terms when speaking not only of the destruction of Israel, ch. xxiv. 23, but also in the woe on Babylon, ch. xiii. 10, and the woe on Idumea, ch. xxxiv. 4. The words imply (we may say) that when the judgment came upon the nation, those things which were esteemed as firmly established as the sun and the moon and the stars in heaven, should fall before the Lord when His day of visitation came. The whole established order of things in Israel was about to be upset, the sun and the moon and the stars of Judaism, the temple, the law, and the Jewish Church, were to fall and all their glory be eclipsed before the glory of Him whom they had crucified, when He came upon the nation in judgment in the glory and terror of His Parousia. All these things John announces as close at hand; all these things he sees in vision as already present in figure before him as he writes.

and the heaven parted, &c.] [Better, and the heaven parted asunder as a scroll when rolled up] See Isaiah xxxiv. 4.

And the kings of the earth] Peter quoting the words from Psalm ii. 2, applies them to Pilate and the crucifiers of our Lord; see Acts iv. 26.

and the great men] [Better, and the princes] μεγαράτες, see Mark vi. 21, Herod made a supper to his lords.

and the chief captains] Lit. the chiliarchs, χιλιαρχοι, see Mark vi. 21; John xviii. 12, and continually in the Acts of the Apostles.
CHAPTER VI.

the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every freeman, 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?

and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains] See Isaiah ii. 19, see also ibid. ii. 10—12, &c.¹

16. And said to the mountains and to the rocks, Fall on us, &c.] See ch. xi. 18, n. John's description of the great day of wrath which was then (when he wrote) just about to fall on Israel, is still taken from our Lord's own words in regard to the destruction of Jerusalem, see Luke xxiii. 30, "Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us." John the Baptist warned the Jews of this "wrath about to be," Matt. iii. 7; Luke iii. 7; Malachi iii. 2.

17. For the great day of his wrath is come; and who shall be able to stand] Joel ii. 31; Zeph. i. 14; see Malachi iii. 2, "Who may abide the day of his coming? and who shall stand when he appeareth?" Mal. iv. 5, "that great and dreadful day of the Lord." This is one aspect of the day of Christ, one aspect of the advent of the Lord in His Parousia, the aspect of terror. But there is a very different aspect for the saints, Luke xxi. 28, "When these things begin to come pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh," see ch. vii. 3, the sealing of the elect. This is the outward sign of the judgment on Israel. It is the outward judgment, but as in Matthew, chaps. xxiv., xxv. the great day of judgment does not come immediately after the destruction of Jerusalem but at end of ch. xxv. So here in the Apocalypse "the great day of the Lord's wrath" (v. 17) is not the day of judgment, but the day of judgment on Israel as a nation. The day of judgment on the old world period comes with the Jewish seal, the sixth seal is the prelude and preparation for that judgment which was yet to come in the vision, see chaps. vii., viii., ix., &c.²

¹ Tradition says that Pilate committed suicide. [His corpse was said to have been taken to Vienna, which place, as legend informs us, is so called because it is via gehennae. Ed.]
² See also Acts xvii. 31; Eph. iv. 30; Rev. xi. 18.

33—2
CHAPTER VII.

1 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

1. And after these things] Properly, (and) after this (μετά τοῦ) I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth] It may be charged against the seer that he did not know that the earth was a sphere, probably he did not; yet one would think he must have been familiar with Isaiah xl. 22, "He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth," also Prov. viii. 27. Anyhow he speaks of the winds, metaphorically, just as we do in blowing from the four quarters; see Rev. xx. 8, n. Ezek. xxxvii. 9.

holding the four winds] Better, holding back (κρατοῦντα) holding fast, retaining, restraining. These things still belong to the sixth seal, which our Lord had opened, ch. vi. 12 (see note there). John had already seen in vision the sign of the Son of man, the advent of the Lord Jesus crowned, coming forth conquering and to conquer (see ch. vi. 2, n.), and with Him the ministers of judgment, war (ch. vi. 4), and famine (ch. vi. 6), and death (ch. vi. 8). The great day of His wrath on Israel had come (ch. vi. 17). Whilst these events are in process there is a sealing of the saints on earth (see next verse), a gathering together of the saints from the four winds, Matt. xxiv. 31; Mark xiii. 27.

that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree] This blowing of the wind which was to be restrained until the saints were sealed was a hurtful act (see vv. 2 and 3). It may figure one scene in the desolation that came on Israel at and after the destruction of Jerusalem, war of the elements, natural and supernatural? All these things under the sixth seal are in preparation and prelude to the great day of Judgment of the old world period, spoken of by our Lord as winding up the old world period, Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; ib. xxv. 31, 46. "The day of judgment" itself comes under the seventh seal.

2. And I saw another angel ascending from the east] [Coming up from the rising of the sun, is a better rendering of the original (ἀναβάντα ἀπὸ ἀνατολῆς οὐρανοῦ)]. See Ezek. xliii. 2.
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.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed:

the four angels] We read again of four angels who were bound,
ch. ix. 14, and loosed, ch. ix. 15. Can “δεσμονοις” (from δεσμo), ch. ix.
14, have any reference to these four angels of our text who were here
stayed in their work of judgment?

3. Hurt not the earth, &c.] The sentence of destruction on the
earth, and the sea, and the trees is stayed for a season until the sealing
of the servants of God. In ch. ix. 4 this delayed sentence seems to be
taken up again and executed on “those men, which had not the seal of
God on their foreheads.” The vision appears to relate to the desolation
which was to come on Israel at and after the destruction of Jerusalem,
the war of elements natural and supernatural, see v. 1 above. The
“times of the end” themselves constituted a period extending for some
years beyond the destruction of the City and Sanctuary. The day of
grace for Israel was continued until every elect soul in Israel was
gathered, see Matt. xxiv. 3. The sentence of destruction, impending
over the land was stayed until all were gathered, then came the “end,” of
the “times of the end.” Not only was there an elect number here and
elsewhere, but there were throughout the vision up to the “last hour”
those among the multitude who might have repented, see chaps. vii. 3;
ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 13—17; xiv. 7, 8, 15.

This sealing of the elect from the four winds is probably what our
Lord speaks of in Matt. xxiv. 31, “And he shall send his angels with a
great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from
the four winds,” &c.

The seal of God is mentioned again in ch. ix. 4, see also Rev. xxii. 4.
Other illustrative passages are Ezek. ix. 3—6: the latter verse reads
“Slay utterly old and young, both maids, and little children, and women:
but come not near any man upon whom is the mark; and begin at my
sanctuary,” see also Ezek. chaps. ix., x., xi. for other parallels to the
events in the Apocalypse.

4. And I heard the number of them which were sealed,
&c.] The whole of the sealed in Israel was 144,000; this number may
be intended to represent a perfect number rather than a precise arith-
and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

metrical measure. And when we find the sealing in the perfect tense (ἐσφράγιζομεν, part. perf. passive) and not in the present we may also perhaps be justified in supposing that this definite number of the elect souls in Israel, consists not of those only, who were then about to be sealed (v. 3), but of the whole number of the elect in Israel from their first calling as a people up to the close of the old world period, and the consummation of the age η συνέλευσιν τοῦ αἰώνος.

That the number relates to Israel only and not to Gentiles seems probable from the precise manner in which each of the tribes of Israel is specified in the following verses, as also in our text; and also from the fact that the vision is dealing not yet with the times of the Gentiles, but with the men of the old world period, and specially with the Jewish nation, whose day of doom is transacting in vision as the sealing of the elect numbers is being here described by the seer.

The vision up to the close of the chapter concerns itself mainly with the Jewish nation. The 144,000 of Rev. xiv. 1—5 is quite a distinct body from the 144,000 of this chapter; it constitutes the elect gathered during the day of Christ (1 Cor. xv. 23; Heb. xii. 23), the church of the firstborn in Christ as distinct from the elect of the old world period spoken of here. The 144,000 of our text constitute the elect in Israel; the remnant of the elect of which Paul speaks, Rom. xi. 7, these were only a remnant of the whole number (ibid. v. 5). The perfect number 144,000 of the elect here is differenced from the elect of Rev. xiv. 1—5 by many marks; first, these elect of our text belong to the old world period,

4 Wordsworth says that the number 144,000—12 x 12,000 expresses quality not quantity. The 144,000, the sealing spoken of, that was about to take place (v. 3), was a sealing of men then on the earth, who should be marked off from those "who had not the seal of God on their foreheads," when the angels of destruction should come upon the land with war and famine and death, and destruction and elemental war.

I suppose, however, that the men who were now sealed constituted the remnant of the elect in Israel. The remnant of the whole and perfect Elect number—they were the remnant only of the symbolic 144,000—the residue then on Earth of the Elect of all Israel throughout all the Ages. As Paul says, the elect on earth when he wrote was only a remnant of the whole number of elect. See Rom. xi. 5—7 &c.

In this vision John probably sees only so much of what is transpiring in the heavenly places, as belongs to Israel, just as the Judgment-day of Matt. xxv. 31—45 probably relates only to Israel. It was a Jewish scene. The Elect from among the Gentiles do not yet appear on the scene.
5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nepthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand.

They appear in the vision of the Judgment day of the old world, about to be. They are defined as sealed out of the tribes of Israel. They are not spoken of as the 144,000 of ch. xiv. 1—5 are as the firstfruits unto God, and the Lamb, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth and who are not defiled with women. The elect number in our text constitute probably what may be called the Old Testament Church, whilst the 144,000 of ch. xiv. 1—5 constitute the New Covenant Church, the Church of the firstborn, the Body of Christ, the Bride, 1 Cor. xv. 23; Heb. xii. 23. In what relation the two elect bodies will stand the one to the other in eternity, we are not told.

5. Of the tribe of Juda, &c.] Psalm lxxviii. 68. Judah, the royal tribe, is placed first in order in this enumeration, but by what rule the order of precedence of the other tribes is governed does not appear. When Jacob gave his dying blessing (Gen. xlxi.), he took the Patriarchs according to their order of birth; when again the names of the twelve tribes were engraved on the two onyx stones, the stones of memorial, Exod. xxviii. 12; xxxix. 6, 7; they were engraved according to their order of birth, ib. xxviii. 10, and this same order would probably be observed in the setting of the twelve stones on the breast-plate of the High Priest, which is associated with the engraved onyx stones, ib. xxviii. 15, 21; xxxix. 8—14. Besides these enumerations of the tribes, which are in their natural order of precedence, we find in the Pentateuch many other enumerations, Gen. xxxv. 23—26; xlvi. 7—24; Exod. i. 2—5; Num. i. 5—15; ii. 3—29; x. 14—27; xiii. 4—15; xxvi. 5—62; xxxiv. 14—28; Deut. xxvii. 12, 13; xxxiii. 6—24, in none of which (I think) is the natural order of the tribes observed (i.e. the order of birth), and in no two of which is (I think) the same order observed.
520 THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

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;

9. After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude] A new scene here presents itself, though still a part of the same vision, still belonging to the opening of the sixth seal of the book of the new creation. The sealing of the elect remnant was a transaction on the earth, though seen by John from the heavenly places. The scene described in our text takes us back to the throne of God (see ch. v. 1). This multitude which no man could number of all nations, and kindreds, and peoples, and tongues, carries the scene far beyond the limitations of Israel. Thus far, the vision has, for the most part, related to Israel, but now a scene opens out which carries us beyond any such limitations. The number of the elect in Israel has been just spoken of as 144,000, a perfect number (either symbolic or actual). Here in our text the number of the redeemed is declared to be countless, and not of Israel only, but of every nation and kindred and people and tongue. It is evident that the salvation in Christ our Lord in the ages before His incarnation must have extended far beyond the limitation of the outward knowledge or expectation of the Saviour Christ. It may be that this innumerable multitude was the fruit of our Lord’s descent into Hades, when He went in spirit and preached to the spirits in prison, 1 Pet. iii. 19; iv. 6; anyhow our Lord’s redemption—the power of it—must have extended far beyond the outward knowledge of it in this world. This innumerable multitude were gathered rather as spectators than as subjects of the great day of judgment which was then shortly to bring to a close the old world period, the judgment day of ch. xi. 18 n., and of which our Lord speaks, Matt. xiii. 39, 40—43, 47—49; xxiv. 3; xxv. 31—45 (all referring to Jews, though Matt. xxv. 31—45 probably includes the innumerable multitude as spectators); see also John v. 28, 29; Acts xvii. 31. We see in this vision that, beyond the elect of the old world period, there was an innumerable company of saved souls; and the contrast between the elect numbers and the innumerable multitude is brought out in this passage, Rev. vii. 9; the saved from among men exceed the elect by an innumerable multitude. This innumerable mul-
And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne,

titude of saved souls, again, is distinct from the myriads of myriads of angels round about the throne, ch. v. 11, and from the living creatures also, and from the elders; there are hierarchies of existence in that glorious world, angels and principalities and powers, besides saved souls. We see in the Apocalypse distinctions not only between the elders and the powers of nature, ch. iv. 4, between angels and men, but also among the redeemed from among men we see distinctions drawn; these are the elders, the souls under the altar, the martyrs, ch. vi. 9, the elect, ch. vii. 3, 8, the multitude that no man could number, ch. vii. 9, the men in white robes, ch. vii. 13. Paul also in Heb. xii. 22, speaks of different orders of existence among the inhabitants of the Mount Zion, an innumerable company of angels, the church of the firstborn, the spirits of just men made perfect. To this glorious scene we are hastening, O festa dies!

10. And cried with a loud voice, &c.] It is now the redeemed from among men who raise the song of praise; the innumerable company of the redeemed; the angels and the elders and the living creatures fall before the throne and worship, joining in the response. In ch. iv. 8, 9, it was the living creatures (the powers of nature and creation) that raised the song of praise, and the elders made the response. In ch. v. 8, 9, it is the living creatures (powers of nature) and the elders who together sing the new song, and the angels make the response; myriads of myriads, and thousands of thousands, ch. v. 11, and all creation joins in the song, ch. v. 7, when the book of the new creation is about to be opened by the Lord Jesus, ch. v. 13, n. In our text (ch. vii. 9, &c.), it is the innumerable multitude of the redeemed from among men who raise the song of salvation, whilst the angels and the elders and the living creatures make the response. It is to be noted, however, that whilst the redeemed speak of “Salvation” (v. 10), the angels and the elders and the living creatures speak not of salvation (perhaps they never knew the meaning of it or needed it), but of the Blessing and the glory, and the wisdom and the thanksgiving, and the honour and the power and the might. Neither here nor in ch. v. 9, 10 (amended text) do the angels and the elders and the living creatures speak of their salvation, as the redeemed do. May we not say they never needed salvation? But if so, who are the elders?
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 tribu-
lation, and have washed their robes, and made them
white in the blood of the Lamb.

13. What are these which are arrayed in white robes? &c.]
[Better, These that are clothed in white robes, who are they? and whence
have they come?] The elder puts the question to John in much the same
way as our Lord (John vi. 5) said to Philip “whence shall we buy bread?”
“For he himself knew,” &c. This question, put by the elder, introduces
a fresh company of redeemed souls; that they are to be identified with
the innumerable company of v. 9 seems evident from the note of surprise
with which their appearance is marked, as also from the description of
them in the following verse (see note there). The fact that they are
arrayed in white robes need not be supposed to identify them with the
redeemed of v. 9, who also were clothed with white robes, because we
find the white robe given also to the martyrs of ch. vi. 11, and the
clothing in white raiment is also promised to the saints in ch. iii. 4, 5.
The redeemed whom John describes in our verse are described by the
elder, who points them out to the seer, as having come out of “the great
tribulation,” i.e. the tribulation of which our Lord speaks, Matt. xxiv.
21—29.

14. And he said to me, These are they which came out
of great tribulation] More correctly, And he said to me, These are the
comers (οἱ ἐκχώρησαν) out of the great tribulation. This is doubtless the
great tribulation of which our Lord speaks (Matt. xxiv. 21—29) in con-
nection with the destruction of Jerusalem; He speaks (Luke xxi. 36) of
some who should be accounted worthy to escape those things which
should come to pass, and in His addresses to the churches He yet more
clearly declares, that it is they who (spiritually) belong to the church of
Philadelphia (Rev. iii. 10, see note there), who shall be kept from the
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.

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

hour of trial. The Jews themselves believed that the times of Messiah would be times of great tribulation; Schöttgen, 11, p. 512, from the book of Zohar, quoted by Alford on Matt. ii. 3, says, "quos tempore Sol redemptionis ipsis illucescit, tribulatio post tribulationem et tenebrae post tenebrae venient ipsis: dum vero in his versatur, illucescit ipsis Lux Dei S. B." In Matt. xxiv. 21 the tribulation attending the destruction of Jerusalem is called θλυπας μεγάλη; in our text, Rev. vii. 14, the tribulation is called η θλυπας η μεγάλη: the article is prefixed, the tribulation, alluding to some previously mentioned tribulation, i.e. the tribulation alluded to by our Lord in Matt. xxiv. 21.

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] shall dwell among them, οκουνως ετω αιρωνι, (lit.) shall spread his tabernacle over them. The promise contained in these 15th, 16th and 17th verses belong to the saints of v. 13, probably the subjects of the translation, 1 Thes. iv. 17; they probably form part of the company on the Mount Zion, a company of which part are on this side of death, and part are beyond death; perhaps they form a part of the church of the firstborn, or the spirits of just men made perfect, see Heb. xii. 23, see also 1 Cor. xv. 23. John, from his point of vision, sees not only what is passing at the moment, but he sees also the before and after; he in vision, in the present moment, sees that these perfected saints serve God day and night (i.e. not just when he sees them only, but always), in His temple, εν τω ναω αιρωνι (ναως not λεπον is the word used in Apocalypse).

16. They shall hunger no more] Compare Isa. xlix. 10, and note what follows in the prophecy of Isaiah, how that a new progeny, not the children according to the flesh, but a new race shall come to Zion.

17. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of
of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes] See Rev. xxi. 4; Isaiah xxv. 8; see also Rev. xiv. 4, “these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth.” The tender care of the Almighty Father for His human children is here accented in a striking manner “He that sitteth upon the throne,” (i.e. the awful presence of ch. iv. 2, 3), shall spread his tabernacle over them (15) and shall wipe away every tear (17).

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE.

With the close of the 7th chapter of the Apocalypse we reach the completion of the Prophetic vision up to the time of the end of the sixth-seal period of the book of the new creation.

The events which came under the sixth-seal period of this Book included the sealing of the elect remnant in Israel (ch. vii. 4), the gathering together of the redeemed from among men of the old world period of all nations, and kindreds, and tongues, and peoples (ibid. v. 9), and [possibly] the translation of the saints, all in preparation for the day of judgment of the old world period, chaps. x. 6, 7; xi. 18. The great day of wrath had already come on Israel (Rev. vi. 17), but not the great day of judgment.

As in the xxivth and xxvth chapters of Matthew’s Gospel there is an interval between the day of wrath on Israel, Matt. xxiv. 15—30, and the day of judgment at the close of the old world period, Matt. xcv. 31—45 (see also Matt. xiii. 39, 40—49), so it is also in the Apocalypse. The day of wrath on Israel had already come, Rev. vi. 2—17, but the day of judgment, when time should be no longer, Rev. x. 6, xi. 18; “the last hour” (1 John ii. 18, n.) was not yet. This event comes under the seventh seal which is now about to be opened with the opening of the viith chapter, and which includes in its compass all the events that follow to the close of the xth chapter of the Apocalypse, and yet further indeed (for all flows from this 7th seal) to the new heavens and the new earth of ch. xxi. Although Israel may be said to have ceased to exist as a nation after the destruction of Jerusalem, yet as a race the Jew still existed, and now exists, and among the Jews who survived the destruction of Jerusalem there were still some who might yet by the judgments that came upon their race be brought to repentance before the day of judgment which came at the close of the old world period, ἡ σφαγὰ τοῦ αἰῶνος, Matt. xiii. 39, 40—49; xxv. 31—45. The following chapters of the Apocalypse from the viith to the xith concerns this period which is identical in time with the period contained between Matt. xxiv. 41 and Matt. xxv. 46.
CHAPTER VIII.

INTRODUCTORY NOTE. THE SEVENTH SEAL.

The seventh seal brings to a climax the events of the six preceding seals of the book of the new creation. It is charged with the issues to which the six preceding seals have been gradually leading up. Such is the solemnity of the occasion that with the opening of the seventh seal there is silence in heaven. The songs of praise cease, there is a pause of expectation, a hushed feeling of awe at the revelation of the mysteries hidden under this seal. It is our Lord who opens this, and indeed it is He who opens all the seals of the seven-sealed Book of the new creation, none other could do it, no other was found "worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon," ch. v. 2—4.

The scene that opens with the opening of the 7th seal is marked off from the others by silence in heaven. It is as the Sabbath following the six days' work; it is the opening of the everlasting Sabbath, the Sabbath of communion typified by the seventh-day Sabbath of the old Covenant. The way into the holiest of all is now made manifest. The old Tabernacle service [as it survived in the Temple worship] has now been abolished in the destruction of Jerusalem, and the golden altar of incense stands before the throne of God; there is no longer the vail between the golden altar and the holiest of all.

With the opening of the seventh seal the heavens are opened to the prayers of the saints, and the angel of the covenant (Mal. iii. 1) ministers at the altar of incense. This is our Lord's Melchizedek priesthood without Temple service or sacrifice in the Judaic sense (see Heb. vii. 1—3). There is simply the Altar of Incense and the Angel of the Covenant, our Lord, ministering at that altar between the saints and the throne of God. John sees in vision the realised advent of the day to which Apostles and Saints had looked forward as the hope of their lives, the day of which our Lord had spoken to the woman of Samaria, when the true worshippers should worship the Father in spirit and in truth, neither in that mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem. This had been possible only in part during the Apostolic period, the way into the holiest was not then opened, Heb. ix. 8, the day of the Lord's Parousia, the times of communion, the day of the realized presence of the Lord Jesus as the Angel of the New Covenant, King and Priest and Mediator between God and man, a Mediator not of division but of union. It is of this realized communion that John afterwards speaks in his first Epistle, "Truly our communion is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ," see 1 John i. 3, n.; see also ib. ii. 8, n. "The darkness is past, and the light, the very light, now shineth;" see also notes to 1 John ii. 27, 28, v. 20.

With the opening of the 7th seal was to come in also the "last hour" (1 John ii. 18, n.) of the last times of the old world period, and the everlasting righteousness of the New Covenant as foretold by Daniel the Prophet, ch. ix. 24. It is the prelude and preface to the day of judgment of the old
world period, see Rev. xi. 18, n. The day of judgment of the old world of which our Lord gives a glimpse in Matt. xxv. 1—25 is a part of this vision of the 7th seal, it comes in with the sounding of the 7th and last trumpet [of the series] of which the first is preparing to sound when the 7th seal of the Book of the new creation is opened by our Lord. The period of the 7th seal, the opening of the times of communion, is mainly identical in time with the 25th chapter of Matthew; it includes the period between the portents that attended and followed the destruction of Jerusalem described in Matthew, ch. xxiv., up to the judgment day described at the end of Matthew, ch. xxv. It includes the period mainly as it concerns Israel, the times of the Gentiles do not occupy the vision of John until Rev. ch. xii. The period of the 7th seal between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the final close of the old world period in the judgment day as the consummation of the age, was still a time of grace and repentance for Israel, for individuals as distinguished from the nation. Certain individuals of the nation lived in the times of the Parousia, as our Lord had in His life-time declared they should; doubtless many of the elect who were sealed (ch. vii. 4) lived unto that period. Probably many members of the rebellious nation found repentance and access during that time of probation.

This opening of the way into the holiest which is described in vv. 3 and 4 is the coming in of the everlasting righteousness of the Lord's Parousia. It is the great event of the 7th seal period, initiated in these early verses of Rev. viii. 1—4, and of which the consummation is recorded in ch. xi. 19, when also the 7th seal period is consummated, and just as here on the opening of this new period there are voices and thunderings and lightnings, and an earthquake, so also when the period closes, and the new creation period is coming in, we find, ch. xi. 19, lightnings and voices and thunderings, and an earthquake. The scene that opens with the opening of the 7th seal in ch. viii., closes with the close of the 7th seal period in ch. xi. 19, closes, i.e., so far as the vision of the 7 sealed book is concerned. The visions that follow in the Apocalypse have their own signification.

John's 1st Epistle was written during this 7th seal period; he announces (1 John ii. 8) that 'the light, the very light' (Parousia), now shineth, the darkness was passing away, the last hour (ib. v. 18) of the old world period had come; all these things point to the 7th seal period, and in the 6th or 7th trumpet period of the 7th seal period. If John was one of the two witnesses (taken up, Rev. xi. 12), he could not have written later than the 6th trumpet period. He probably lived into the 2nd century, but not so late as A.D. 112, which I suppose to be about the period of the close of the 7th trumpet period, the 1260 days of the whole vision, ch. vi. 1, 2 to ch. xi. 18, 19 being in man's measure from about A.D. 70 to A.D. 112, about 42 years. The scene revealed in the vision as coming in here (Rev. viii. 1) is revealed in ch. xiv. 1 as an established existent fact, see notes to ch. xiv. 1. That which was before hidden now becomes manifested.
1 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.

1. And when he had opened the seventh seal] "When" δεκατά, Alford reads δεκατέρα here instead of δεκάτα as in all the other instances of the six seals, ch. vi. 1, 3, 5, 7, 9, 12. The difference in the shade of meaning is so slight "as not to be reproducible in another language, but it can hardly be denied that in the writer's mind it existed" (Alford). It gives to this 7th seal an indefiniteness that does not belong to the rest (Alford).

The seventh seal] From the seventh seal proceeds the vision of the seven trumpets, and with the seventh trumpet ends the old world period (ch. xi. 15) bringing on the day of judgment of ch. xi. 18; Matt. xxv. 31—46. The vision of the seven thunders, ch. x. 3, 4, is a subordinate vision, the details of which are not described. It comes in as a subordinate vision during the sixth trumpet period, ch. ix. 13. We find in each case that from the seventh period proceed the great events, as also in the times of the Gentiles from the seventh seal, ch. xvi., come the events that wind up the times of the Gentiles, just as from the seventh trumpet flowed the events that wound up the old world Jewish period.

There was silence] This marks a break in the history, a stop in the music, a passing over to a new period in the vision. The day of Christ which began at Pentecost (see Matt. xxiv. 3; and Acts ii. 1) is now assuming a new character. This silence may be answerable also to some part of the Jewish temple service, such as is described in Luke i. 9, 10 when Zacharias went in to the holy place to offer incense, and the people waited in silence for his return, see Lightfoot, 3. 338.

About the space of half an hour] ὡς ἡμιώριον, as of half an hour, as it were half an hour, so it appeared in the vision. ("ὡς adverbium comparandi et similitudinis, significans sicut, ceu, ut, tanquam, velut", see Schleusner on ὡς.)

2. And I saw the seven angels which stood before God, &c.] [which stand would be more correct.] These seven angels who stand before God appear to be a distinct order in the Angelic hierarchy. They have not been mentioned before. They may be identical with the seven vial angels of ch. xv. 1, 6, 7, 8. They may once have been men, see notes to ch. xxii. 9. The imagery of the vision accords here with the Jewish tradition preserved in the book of Tobit, see Tobit, ch.
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

xii. 15, "The seven holy angels which present the prayers of the Saints, and go in and out before the glory of the holy one." 1

3. came and stood at the altar] Lit. above the altar (ἐν τῷ ἣλθώντι), i.e. the angel of the presence. It must be borne in mind throughout that our Lord Himself mediates and ministers this vision of the seven-sealed book, the book of the new creation, and that He himself mediates this, the seventh, and last and greatest of the seals of that book, ch. v. 2—5, notes. It is the office of our Lord to offer the prayers of the saints to God, and to mingle with them the sweet incense of His presence, sweetening and making acceptable our poor, imperfect unworthy offerings. The "other angel" of our text appears to represent in the vision the presence of our Lord. He probably represents in the vision our Lord's High Priestly function. The aspects of our Lord's character are many and varied in the prophetic vision. He is at one and the same time the Lion of the tribe of Judah (ch. v. 5) and the Lamb who opens the seven-sealed book (ch. vi. 1), and the horseman (of ch. vi. 2), He is the Lord of Lords and King of Kings (chaps. xvii. 14; xix. 16) and also the word of God (ch. xix. 13). He is the Temple, the living Temple of the New Covenant, and the High Priest also who ministers in the Temple. He is also Himself the sacrifice, so that it is in accordance with "the analogy of the faith" to say that the other Angel of our text (Rev. viii. 3) represents our Lord, just as the other mighty angel of Rev. x. 1—3 is our Lord, though it is our Lord Himself who is unfolding and mediating the whole vision. For other instances in which God Almighty and our Lord are represented by Angels, see Exod. iii. 4; Mal. iii. 1; Acts vii. 30, 35; Rev. xxii. 9.

and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers, &c.] Although the apostasy of ch. xi. 3 was already in process, there still remained an elect remnant of saints and also of men to whom repentance was now open, see chaps. vii. 3; ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 13, 17; xiii. 7, 8, 15.

The worship described in our text (ch. viii. 3) is the new covenant worship spoken of by our Lord here assuming a more definite character. The old Tabernacle and Temple worship passed away with the destruction of Jerusalem and the way into the holiest is opened, Heb. ix. 8.

1 [An evident trace of Persian angelology refracted through a Jewish medium; comp. the Amesha Spentas of the Zoroastrian system. Ed.]
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

The Temple in the Heavens is opened, the new and living Temple (see Mark xiv. 58) inaugurated at Pentecost (Acts ii. 1) now comes upon the scene, and the prayers of the Saints ascend through the Angel of the Covenant to the throne of God.

the golden altar which was before the throne] This is the altar of incense, Exod. xxx. 1—6; Rev. ix. 13. Under the Law this Altar stood outside the vail, and was separated from the holy of holies by the vail. Under the new covenant and in the new covenant worship the vail is done away, and there is nothing intervening between the altar of incense, the golden altar, and the holy of holies, where the divine presence was under the Law, manifested over the ark of the covenant.

4. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, &c.] See note to v. 3, p. 528. The idea conveyed by the Greek text is that the prayers of the saints were carried by the incense into the presence of God, as though too dense to ascend of themselves. The grace of the mediating angel, the Angel of the Covenant, i.e. our Lord (Malachi iii. 1), mixes itself with the prayers of the saints, and in that incense and through that mediation the prayers are sanctified and sublimated.

5. And the angel took the censer, and filled it with fire of the altar] The fire of the altar of incense is the Holy Spirit, as is also the fire of the altar of burnt-offering (the Cross), the same Spirit under different conditions. Our Lord offered Himself a sacrifice on the altar of the Cross in the fire of the Holy Spirit; in the fire of the same Holy Spirit are the prayers of the saints offered on the altar of incense and ascend through the mediator to God. This fire of the altar, the Holy Spirit, is also that fire of which our Lord spoke, Luke xii. 49, "I am come to send fire on the earth;" this fire of the Holy Ghost was shed by our Lord at Pentecost on those prepared souls on whom faith had already done its work of preparation. Pentecost was the beginning of the day of Christ; then at Pentecost the fire of heaven came upon souls who were waiting in holy expectation for the gift of the Father which
voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake.

the Lord Jesus had promised before the Ascension. Here in our text (Rev. viii. 5) the prophetic vision deals with a more advanced period in the day of Christ. The apostolic period has now passed away, Jerusalem had been destroyed, and the seer has entered in vision on that period in the day of Christ when the way into the holiest has been opened, and our Lord as King and Priest ministers in His Melchizedek-priesthood in the heavenly places. We have reached in vision the day of the Lord's Parousia, though as far as earth is concerned we are still occupied mainly with Israel, and that period in the history of Israel which stands between the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment of the old world period, as described in Matthew, chaps. xxiv. and xxv. Israel, as a theocracy, may be said to have ceased to exist, but Israel as a race was still existent, still impenitent, still in rebellion against God and Christ save only the elect remnant (Rom. xi. 5; Rev. vii. 3). The fire of the golden altar which inspires the prayers of the saints and sublimes and sanctifies them has a very different effect when cast on the unbelievers on the earth. The object of this act in the vision of casting fire on the earth (the same word βάλλω is used both in Luke xii. 49 and here, Rev. viii. 5) appears to have been to divide the precious from the vile by ferment. Just as our Lord says of His own work, "I came not to send peace, but a sword" (see Matt. x. 34), the coming of the Holy Spirit, whether to the soul or to the world, produces a ferment before it produces peace. To the rebellious soul it is not peace but hell-fire; it separates the precious from the vile; it works repentance and salvation in those who accept it, through ferment, but in those who reject it and fight against it it works a ferment of anguish. This fire from heaven resolves those things on which it falls into their constituent elements; its working as described in our text is as a ferment on earth, a ferment in which judgment and suffering are the prevailing features. But we may believe that it may have worked repentance in some, and the xxvth chapter of Matthew leads to the supposition that there were yet elect souls in Israel, and souls that might be brought to Christ, even up to the close of the old world period and the judgment day of Matt. xxv. 31—45, when Israel's day of grace was closed; see Rom. xi. 14, how Paul yearns after Israel if by any means he might save some of them.

and cast it (i.e. the fire) into the earth: and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake] See Rev. xi. 19; xvi. 8. "An earthquake," σεισμός,
CHAPTER VIII.

6 And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound.

a shaking; such is the ferment which this act of the angel produces on the earth, and it is on rebellious Israel that the fire comes; we have not yet reached in the vision the times of the Gentiles. See the vision in Ezekiel, ch. x. 2, how coals of fire were cast over the city, when the glory of God was departing from it, see vv. 4—18. In the vision of the Apocalypse Israel is [morally] drifting back into Egypt from whence she had been redeemed. The cry at the judgment-seat of Pilate "We have no king but Caesar" is being fulfilled in this vision, see notes to v. 7 below. The manifestation of the way into the holiest figured in these words, ch. viii. 1—5, after the destruction of Jerusalem, is the great event of the 7th seal period. It begins with the opening of the 7th seal, it is marked by voices, thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake; it is the coming in of the power of the Lord's priesthood, the Melchizedek-priesthood of the Parousia. We find the consummation of these things in ch. xi. 19, at the close of the 7th seal period, when "the Temple of God was opened in heaven," &c., and then were again as here, "lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail," see xi. 19, n.

6. And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets, &c.] This vision comes under the seventh seal vision as a vision within a vision. Again the vision of the seven thunders (ch. x. 3) comes under the sixth trumpet vision as a shrine within a shrine; the whole of the seventh trumpet vision and the whole of the seven thunders vision come under the seventh seal period. These seven trumpet angels constitute only a fresh scene under the seventh seal period; we are still in the vision witnessing the events belonging to the opening by our Lord of the seventh seal of the book of the new creation, the first seal of which when opened revealed the advent of the Lord conquering and to conquer, see ch. vi. 1, 2, n. The seven trumpets herald the woes that had yet to come on Israel under the seventh seal period, of the book which was opened by our Lord, chaps. v. 7, and vi. 1, 2 (see notes there). We are now in the day of the Lord's Parousia, but in that part of it which is overlapped (so to say) with the last days of Judaism. This is the period with which the 1st Epistle of John is concerned. It was the "last hour" of the last times of the old world period; see notes to 1 John ii. 18, 27, 28; v. 20. The judgments heralded by the seven trumpet angels on Israel are as much in mercy as in anger, "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness;" Isaiah xxvi. 9. It is the last call to Israel before the judgment day of
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

Rev. xi. 18; “Compel them to come in,” Luke xiv. 23; see Ezek. xxxviii. 22, “and I will plead against him (remedial), with pestilence and with blood,” &c., &c.

7. [hail and fire mingled with blood] We find the same combination of elements of judgment in Ezekiel xxxviii. 22, pestilence, and blood, hailstones, fire, and brimstone, comp. Joel ii. 30 and Acts ii. 19. The first judgment of the seven trumpet angels is the analogue of the plague on Egypt, Exod. ix. 9, 23, 24, 25. The plagues of Egypt from which Israel of old was spared are now in the Apocalypse seen in vision as about to fall on the nation in the last days when, having crucified their leader Christ, they are about to return spiritually into Egypt (see John xix. 15, note, “We have no king but Caesar”) Israel returns into Egypt and brings the plagues of Egypt upon herself; see Deut. xxviii. 64—68; Hosea viii. 13, “They shall return to Egypt”; Hosea ix. 3, “Ephraim shall return to Egypt.” Still the Egyptian plagues come on Israel here, not only in judgment but in mercy, in mercy if by any means Israel or any in Israel may be brought to repentance, ch. ix. 21; Rom. xi. 14, see also Ezek. xxxviii. 22 (for a case in point), “I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood,” &c. the judgment has a remedial character.

The judgments of the Trumpet Angels unlike the judgments of the seals, ch. vii. 3—8, fall on nature in the first instance, though the last three judgments of the Trumpet Angels, the three woes of ch. viii. 13 fall on men (see ch. ix. 1 to ch. xi. 15). It is singular and not without meaning that throughout this chapter it is the third part τὸ τρίτον that is particularly the subject of judgment, see νῦν. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, also ch. ix. 15—18. In ch. xii. 4, we find again τὸ τρίτον, the third part. It is worthy of note also how these last woes on Israel find their parallels in the last woes on the Gentiles in ch. xvi., where the seven last plagues of the Angels of the vials are described, leading up to the destruction of Babylon and the judgment day of the Gentiles, ch. xx. 11—15.

8. And the second angel sounded, and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea] Here, as
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.

in v. 7 (see note), there appears to be a mystical reference to the Old Testament history of Israel. In v. 7 to the plagues of Israel, here to the Mount Sinai, "The mountain burning with fire," ὁ δὲ μὲν ἐπὶ καῦμανον, see Deut. iv. 11; v. 23; also Heb. xii. 18; also Exod. xix. 18. The vision does not import that a mountain was literally cast into the sea, but "as it were a great mountain"; the similitude however suggests associations with the Mount Sinai, "the mountain that burned with fire," Heb. xii. 18, and if it represent Mount Sinai we may say it represents the Old Covenant with its carnal ordinances, its curses and threatenings; and yet more, we see in the other features of the judgment on Israel under this, the second trumpet angel, another scene from the O. T. history of Israel in Egypt, with this difference, that the plagues which formerly fell on the Egyptians are now in the vision in the Apocalypse about to fall on Israel (see Exod. iv. 9; vii. 17). In what sense this judgment fell on Israel between the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment of the old world period, whether spiritually or physically, we know not, we have no history of the period. These things are lost in silence just as the voice of the seven thunders are, ch. x. 4.

11. And the name of the star is called Wormwood, &c.] Wormwood, ὁμβρός, "absinthe." Here again as in vv. 7 and 8 there is probably an allusion, with a meaning, to the bitter waters of Marah, see Exod. xv. 23, in the wilderness journey. We are told, in loc. cit. that Moses cast a tree into the waters of Marah and the waters were
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 inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels, which are yet to sound!

made sweet. Here the act is reversed, the burning star wormwood is cast into the waters, and the waters become wormwood. Israel is here, in the mystery, going back step by step into Egypt, the land from which she had once been brought out, and is reaping the fruit of her apostasy, she is consummating the act to which she committed herself when she cried, "We have no king but Caesar" (also v. 7 above).

12. And the fourth angel sounded, &c.] Here as with the seals, ch. vi. 7, 8, and with the vials, ch. xvi. 9, the fourth angel ends one series of judgments and a new series begins with the fifth angel, a series of different texture (see v. 13). Whether to any, or to what, period of the history of Israel this alludes does not appear, and the parallel vial in ch. xvi. 8 does not assist us. Here the lights of heaven are obscured, and the seer is conscious of an overspreading gloom, whilst with the corresponding reference, Rev. xvi. 8, the sun had power to scorch men with fire. Following the O. T. parallel from Exod. xv. 23, the children of Israel came to Elim (27) and thence to the wilderness of Sin. Here they murmured and wanted to go back into Egypt; this gloomy period in the history may be set forth in the mystery (Rev. viii. 12) as we find it, the scorching heat of the desert, Rev. xvi. 8; the gloom of Egypt, Rev. viii. 12.

13. And I beheld, and heard an angel, &c.] For angel, read eagle, ἀετός, an eagle according to amended text. The idiom is the same as in ch. iv. 7, where the fourth living creature is described as like a flying eagle, ἄετος πτερωμάτως, so in our text ch. vii. 13, the eagle is spoken of as ἀετός πτερωμάτως a flying eagle, A flying eagle in mid-heaven,

1 Not only is one of the living creatures of ch. iv. 7 described as like a flying eagle, but in ch. xii. 14 we read of the wings of the great eagle, see also Exod. xix. 4; Isai. xl. 31.
CHAPTER IX.

1 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 saying with a loud voice, Woe, woe, woe, to the inhabiters of the earth by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels that are about to sound. This sign in mid-heaven both separates and connects the first four judgments of the trumpet angels with the remaining three (ch. viii. 12 with ch. ix. 1). It introduces a new order of Judgment, just as we found also in the vision of the seals, as also we find in the coming vision of the vials. There is a change in the character of the vision, see ch. vi. 9 and note above, also ch. xvi. 10 and note below, and notes to ch. vi. 8. The sign of the flying eagle in mid-heaven is the presage of woe, a thrice-uttered woe, a woe for each one of the three trumpets that have yet to sound. Israel is drifting back into Egypt, John xix. 1, 5, n., see ch. viii. 7, p. 532. The plagues, and the woes, and the darkness come thick upon her, if so be any in Israel may be brought thereby to repentance. When the Lord's judgments are in the earth the inhabitants will learn righteousness.

1. and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth] [Not fall or falling, but fallen—the ptcp. perf. active.] John does not say that he saw a star fall, but he saw a star already fallen. Isaiah speaks, ch. xiv. 12, of Babylon as Lucifer fallen from heaven, "How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning?" see also Luke x. 18.

and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit] I.e. the key of the Abyss. See v. 2. In ch. i. 18 our Lord is said to have the keys of death and Hades, "the Abyss," see vv. 2 and 11 below, also ch. xi. 7; xvii. 8; xx. 1—3, see also Luke viii. 31 (the demons). When we read in our text "to him was given the key," &c., it implies permission; it implies that the evil one is still subject to our Lord who holds the keys of death and Hades; but that Satan, the evil one, the usurper, once in heaven, but now cast out (John viii. 44 n.; Jude 6), is still God's drudge, His sword, to work His left-hand work, His wrath, Psalm xvii. 13, that even as a rebel and usurper he is ordained to work God's will. John, in the vision, does not see the evil one fall from heaven, but he sees him already fallen, and he sees committed to him the key of the abyss.

2. And he opened the bottomless pit; and there arose a
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.

smoke, &c.] Instead of bottomless pit read abyss, Joel ii. 2, 11; see below also Rev. xvi. 10 n. With this fifth trumpet angel the character of the vision changes, see notes to ch. viii. 13; see Exod. x. 22; Psalm lxxviii. 49; Israel is still in the vision drifting back to Egypt, the woes that are upon the nation are in character similar to the plagues of Egypt and the wilderness, see ch. viii. 7, note.

3. And there came out of the smoke locusts, &c.] Locusts, Exod. x. 4; x. 13, 15; Psal. cv. 34; Joel i. 4; ii. 25. The similitude of the Egyptian plagues is continued, though the order in which they are recorded in Exodus may not accord with the order here. Just as with the order in which the tribes of Israel are given in the Apocalypse, varying, as it were, with the O. T. order (see notes to ch. vii. 5, 8), so there may be here an occult reason for a variation in the order of the woes that fall on Israel as the nation drifts back again to Egypt, where [allegorically] our Lord was crucified, ch. xi. 8, n. The words in our text that unto the locusts was given power, "as the scorpions of the earth have power," indicates that the "locusts" seen by John were not "locusts of the earth," but supra-mundane things, swarms of evil powers and principles, evil angels, Psalm lxxviii. 49, locusts and scorpions, see notes to v. 5 below.

4. And it was commanded them that they should not hurt, &c....but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads] This implies that there were still on earth and in Israel men who had the seal of God in their foreheads; some of the elect probably who were sealed, ch. vii. 3, see note there; others to whom repentance was open, ch. viii. 3; ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 13—17; xiii. 7, 8, 15. In this fifth trumpet-vision, the first of
CHAPTER IX.

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.

the three woes of ch. viii. 13 (see notes), we find the woe fall on men, not on outward nature as in the cases of the four previous trumpets.

5. five months] We find this period of time repeated in v. 10 below. Although the expression is a figure of something else, yet it intends something definite; if 42 months, ch. xi. 2, represent in figure something definite; if 1260 days, ch. xi. 3, represent in figure something definite; if 1260 days, ch. xii. 6, represent in figure something definite; if a time and times and half-a-time, ch. xii. 14, mean the same thing, then also the period of 5 months mentioned in our text probably has a definite meaning of time to be measured according to the scale of the 1260 days period. What is that scale? ch. xi. 2, 42 months = 3½ years = a time (12), and times (24), and half-a-time (6) = 42, 42 months x 30 = 1260. Can it be that the times of the end from the destruction of Jerusalem until the day of judgment of the old world was a period of 42 years, about A.D. 70 to about A.D. 112, and that 5 months in the vision, or 12ths of 42 years represents 17½ years of human time? see notes to Rev. xi. 2. If, as I have supposed it to be, see notes to ch. xi. 9, the number 12 be the key by which the mystical numbers are to be brought into the compass of human arithmetic; then 5 months will equal 5 years, (5 x 12 = 60 months = 5 years), i.e. under the sixth trumpet angel there was a period of 5 years of torment, described in the Apocalypse as 10 months.

6. And in those days shall men seek death, &c.] John tells us in these words that the vision he is witnessing is a present vision of a future day. He sees in prophetic vision the fate of Israel for the period intervening between the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18, a period identical as I suppose with the period included between Matt. xxiv. 15, and xxv. 31—46, extending probably from 40 to 50 years. He sees in vision and under the similitude which he describes the woes that should come on the land of Israel, and on the men of Israel who still remained impenitent, the men who still repented not (see v. 20 below). And the similitude
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.

by which he expresses these woes contain in them the similitudes also of the Egyptian plagues; they are in fact the woes which Apostate Israel brings on herself by retracing her steps into Egypt (see John xix. 15, also Rev. xi. 8, and notes). The torments are spiritual rather than physical, though it may be that under these figures John describes the Roman armies that devastated Israel, and the terrible sufferings that came on the Jews wherever scattered up to the consummation of that age; see following verses.

7. And the shapes of the locusts were like unto horses, &c.] See Nahum iii. 17, &c., the woe on Nineveh.

9. And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron] Taking the words of the vision literally, these words would well describe the Roman armies, “chariots and horses running to battle” (see vv. 7, 8, n.), as would also v. 10; but v. 11 seems to give a mystical meaning to the whole scene, see next verse, note.

the sound of their wings, &c.] All these features peculiar to the locust have an occult meaning in the vision, shewing how there is a correlation of nature, and organ, and function, through all things, see note to v. 5 above.

10. And they had tails like unto scorpions] See v. 5 above; Deut. viii. 15; Luke x. 19.

five months] I.e. 5 years, see on v. 5. These accumulated torments under the fifth trumpet were probably torments of the soul rather than of the body; the instruments may have been physical, though the torments were of the soul, spiritual rather than material (see notes to ch. viii. 13). The torments do not produce physical death (see v. 6 above),
CHAPTER IX.

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,

as war and famine would do, they come out of the abyss, and their king is the angel of the bottomless pit, "the destroyer," see v. 11, n.

11. And they had a king over them, &c.] Better, They have a king over them, the angel of the abyss, whose Hebrew name is Abaddon, but in the Greek he hath the name Apollyon, both names, Abaddon and Apollyon signifying when personified "the destroyer." This passage, v. 11, gives a mystical meaning to the whole period. [Some Expositors here spell out a reference to Napoleon. Volkmar says "It is natural that writers since the year 1800 should have sought in the Antichrist for NApoleon as well as for Apollyon." In this connection the following jeu de mots may prove interesting:—

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{N} & \text{apolewv} \\
\text{A} & \text{poloev} \\
\text{P} & \text{olewv} \\
\text{O} & \text{leov} \\
\text{Λ} & \text{eov} \\
\text{Ε} & \text{eov} \\
\text{Ω} & \\
\end{align*}
\]

i.e. Napoléon being a destroying lion, going about demolishing cities. Ed.]

13. And the sixth angel sounded, and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, &c.] "The golden altar," see ch. viii. 3, n. "A voice," some read "φωνή μιᾶν" one voice, or the first voice. This may indicate that the voice from the golden altar in our text was the voice of the angel of the covenant, our Lord, the other angel of ch. viii. 3 (see note there). The sixth trumpet angel is the second woe of ch. viii. 13 (see note there).
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

Θεοῦ, sulphurous (3), and out of their mouths goeth forth fire (1), smoke (2), and brimstone (3); see Ezek. xxxviii. 22 “I will rain upon him—fire and brimstone” see also Rev. xiv. 10; xix. 20; xxi. 8.

18. By these three was the third part of men killed, &c.] I.e., by the fire (1), and the smoke (2), and the brimstone (3); Isaiah xxv. 33, “the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it” (Tophet).

19. For their power is in their mouth, &c.] as amended text, For the power of the horses is in their mouth, and in their tails: for their tails are like serpents, having heads, and with them they do hurt,” see 1 Cor. x. 9; Numb. xxi. 6; Deut. viii. 15. The judgments in the vision still partake of the character of those of Egypt and the wilderness journey, they are also such judgments as the prophets forewarned Israel should be their portion if they returned into Egypt. Israel is now in the vision passing back to the land from which they had once escaped, and reaping the harvest of woe with which they were threatened, see Isaiah xxx. 1—7, trouble and anguish, the lion, the viper, and fiery flying serpent; Jeremiah xlii. 15—19, &c.; cf. Deut. xxviii. 15, &c.; Hosea ix. 6, &c.

20. And the rest of the men which were not killed by these plagues yet repented not, &c.] See Rev. xiv. 10, n.; xvi. 9—11, n. By this and such like passages we learn that these woes even were in mercy, they were inflicted in order to bring men to repentance, see Ezek. xxxviii. 22, “I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood,” &c.; but they repented not; they might have repented but would not. There were still such, and even elect among the people, see chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4; ix. 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 13—17; xiii. 7, 8, 15. Note the Greek text in both ver. 20 and 21, “ôβ
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:

21 Neither repented they of their murders, nor of their
sorceries, nor of their fornication, nor of their thefts.

μετέργοντας &c., &c. ch. xvi. 9—11, "they repented not out of," &c.; true
repentance implies a forsaking the things repented of.

worship devils, and idols, &c.] All these things are in the
mystery associated with the plagues that had been bound at the great
river Euphrates (see note to v. 14). This idolatry at the Euphrates, in
the history, is spoken of, Joshua xxiv. 2, 3, 14, 15, the gods which their
fathers had worshipped [in the trans-Euphratean region]. In the mystery
Israel is not only reaping the plagues of Egypt and the wilderness, but
the plagues also from which Abraham himself had been redeemed when
he left his country and his kindred, to these apostate Israel is now
returning.

sorceries] φαρμάκων, drugs, chaps. ix. 21; xviii. 23; xxi. 8; xxii. 15;
the word φαρμακός (φαρμακεία) is used here as a term to express a wider
and more abstract idea, as also in v. 20. The worship of demons and
idols of gold and silver, &c., does not mean merely bowing down before
an image made of gold and silver, but rather covetousness, and the wor-
ship of the things of this world, in just such a sense as the Jews (and
Gentiles) those of this world, ever have and ever will addict themselves,
"covetousness, which is idolatry," Col. iii. 5.

At this point in the vision of the sixth trumpet angel there comes a break
in the record, an episode which still forms a part of the sixth trumpet period,
and which includes in its events the voices of the seven thunders (ch. x. 3)
which John is not permitted to reveal.

The seven thunders are themselves a mystery, a mystery unrevealed but
ranking under the sixth trumpet vision, as that again is one detail of the
seventh seal period (see note to ch. viii. i), a shrine within a shrine, mystery
within mystery.

The description of the sixth trumpet period which we are now considering,
the second woe of ch. viii. 13 (see note thereon), continues until ch. xi. 14 and
brings us up to the precincts of the last scene of the old world and Jewish
period, the day of judgment of the old world, ch. xi. 18; Matt. xxv. 31—45.
[The seventh trumpet angel (ch. xi. 15) reveals the vision of this great day
of assize of the old world period], and with the seventh trumpet vision closes
also the vision of the seventh seal which opened with ch. viii. 1.
CHAPTER X.

1 And I saw another mighty angel come down from

The vision throughout from ch. vi. 1 to ch. xi. 19 is really the vision of the seven-sealed Book of the New Creation which He Himself opens, and every seal of which is opened by Him. We are still in our subject (Rev. ix. 21) under the seventh seal. The seven trumpet visions all rank under the seventh seal period, as do also the seven thunders of ch. x. 3, a shrine within a shrine. The one great mystery out of which all the others open is the seven-sealed scroll of ch. v. i. 9 (see notes there).

This book reveals the secret things of the day of Christ between the destruction of Jerusalem up to the advent of the Lord in the glory of His Parousia, together with the judgments and woes that should come on rebellious Israel during that period and up to the judgment day of the old world. During this period, though the nation was impenitent, there were still elect souls in Israel and individuals who might be brought to repentance, the elect of ch. vii. 3, who lived into the 7th seal period of ch. viii. 1, and that repentance was open to others is evident from v. 20 above, where it is said of the many that they repented not. Our Lord's teachings also contained in the latter part of the xxivth chapter of Matthew, and the whole of ch. xxv. shew that there were among the survivors into the last times some who were gathered into communion with Him in His Parousia during this period, Matt. xxv. 1, &c. The time, as measured by man's measure, between Matt. xxiv. 28 and xxv. 31—45, which is about identical with the time from Rev. vi. 1 to xi. 18, may be estimated to cover a period of 40 to 50 years. Of this period ecclesiastical history gives us no record. It is almost a total blank, lost in silence like the voices of the thunders. It is the period of the Apostasy (see Rev. xi. 3, notes), out of which arose the beast of Rev. xiii. 11 and modern pseudo-Christianity.

1. And I saw another mighty angel, &c.] See ch. xi. 3, v. ἀγγελον ἀγχρόν, as in ch. v. 2. If the angel, "the mighty angel" mentioned in our text, be identical with the "the mighty angel" of ch. v. 2, it cannot be our Lord who is here spoken of. When, however, we read John's description of "the mighty angel" in our text the terms he uses are such as might well apply to Him. "Clothed with a cloud," see ch. i. 7; "Behold he cometh with clouds" "and a rainbow," see ch. iv. 3, this is one of the glories of the throne; "His face as it were the sun," see ch. i. 16, "His countenance was as the sun, and his feet as pillars of fire," see ch. i. 16, as if they burned in a furnace. The seven thunders which follow his voice indicate a glory such as seems properly to belong only
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,

to our Lord, ch. xi. 3, "I will give power," &c., which is the voice of this angel, appears to be the voice of our Lord. There may be angelic forms in which our Lord clothes Himself, as in ch. viii. 3 (see notes there), and in ch. vi. 2 (see notes there), varying in character according to the purpose for which our Lord in each instance comes forth from His presence-chamber, and this may be such an angelic form, see Dan. xii. 1—7. This vision of the mighty angel coming down from heaven, as also the vision of the seven thunders, belongs still to the period of the sixth trumpet angel, which again is, as already said, a part of the seventh seal period of ch. viii. 1. This mighty angel, and his message, herald the day of judgment of the old world period as instant; the message is that there shall be no longer delay (v. 6 n. below), but that in the days of the voice of the seventh angel (the next and last), the mystery of God should be finished. See Dan. xii. (throughout) for a parallel to this vision. In Daniel's vision there are two angels in the scene, Michael (ch. xii. 1), and the man clothed in linen (ch. xii. 7), see also notes to Rev. x. 5 on the question of the mighty angel of Rev. x. 1.

come down from heaven} This expression, see also v. 4, "from heaven," also v. 8, chaps. xviii. 1—4; xix. 1; and such like expressions throughout the vision shew, that whilst John was in spirit in the heavenly places, and whilst he had a vision of the throne and of Him who sat thereon, ch. iv. 2, &c., yet that the scene of this vision, and the scene of the visions that follow was not Heaven itself but some region of infinitude other than the home of the saints, there is a vast beyond of which John sees nothing, but from which come angels, and voices, and warnings, breaking through the turmoil and terrors of the scene, see e.g. Rev. xvi. 16 "Behold I come as a thief," &c.

2. And he had in his hand a little book open) "A little book," ch. x. 2, 8, 9, 10, βιβλίαριβλον, not βιβλίον as in ch. v. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, and therefore, as well as for other reasons, not the same as the book there mentioned. Had the "little book" in this verse been the same as the book (of the new creation) in ch. v., it is not likely that John would have given it a different name. Throughout ch. v. the
CHAPTER X.

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.

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book is called βιβλίον, a book or scroll; throughout this ch. x. the little book is βιβλαριδζον, a little book or scroll; though in v. 8 below (see note there) the reading is doubtful. Open, ὅρασεν (perf. part. pass.) that has been opened? see v. 8; the fact that it was “open” is one of the points not to be overlooked. This opened book has some deep meaning for John himself, but it has no such universal meaning as the seven-sealed book of ch. v. 1 (see notes there). The opened book of our text (x. 2) may have been the book of John’s future life, just as in ch. xx. 12 (see notes there), the books that were opened were the books of the lives of those who stood before the judgment seat, which were to be judged by the book of life—(but see notes on the meaning of the book vv. 10, 11 below)—more probably it would be the scroll on which the things were written that John was to declare to the world after he had eaten and digested it (consumed it).

3. seven thunders] Read “the seven thunders.”

4. I was about to write: and I heard a voice from heaven] Does this mean that these things were not to be written nor indeed uttered by John until he had first digested the book. As in vv. 1 and 8 (see note there) indicates that the scene of this vision which John is now describing was not heaven itself. There is no mention of the saints here, nor of the Mount Zion.

saying unto me, Seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered, and write them not] When we read that John was about to write the things which the seven thunders uttered we learn that he himself heard and knew what these things were. The command to seal up these things gives the things uttered by the seven thunders a marked character of mystery; we find a similar command given to Daniel,

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1 [βιβλίον is a diminutive of the word βιβλον, and βιβλαριδζον is a double diminutive of the same noun, and is literally “a small booklet.” This particular form of the word does not occur in classical authors, they wrote βιβλιάριον. Ed.]
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:

(Dan. xii. 4—9), respecting the times of the end. The 12th chapter of Daniel seems evidently to apply to the same events as those in the Apocalypse which we are now considering, the times of the end of the Jewish period, see Dan. xii. 1, of the elect remnant; *ibid.* v. 2 of the resurrection at the time of the end; *ibid.* v. 7, "and I heard the man, &c., when he held up his right hand and his left hand unto heaven, and sware by him that liveth for ever and ever that it shall be for a time, times, and an half," Dan. vii. 25; Rev. xii. 14. The silence in which the voices of the seven thunders are shrouded corresponds with some part of that period on earth between the destruction of Jerusalem and the beginning of ecclesiastical history, say A.D. 70 to A.D. 100—110, of which we have no human record; see notes to ch. ix. 21.

6. And sware, &c.] Dan. xii. 7. The terms of this oath, the swearing by Him who created all things, is an argument against the supposition that the angel here spoken of (the same as in ch. x. 1) is our Lord Himself; but the words in ch. xi. 3, "I will give power," &c., spoken by the same angel seem to point to our Lord as the speaker (see notes at large to ch. x. 1, on the question, as to the identity of the mighty angel).

that there should be time no longer] [More correctly, Delay shall be no longer], (ὅτι χρόνος οὐκέτι ἐτοιμά), the meaning of this expression is qualified by the words in the next verse, as also by the sense in which the word χρόνος as distinguished from καιρός (see ch. xi. 18) is used by John. The meaning appears to be, not that time in its wide sense shall cease to be, but that the protraction of that aeon, to which these things relate, the old aeon was about to cease. Not that time should cease and eternity begin, but that the then time, the period of that aeon, the Judaeo-Christian period should be brought to a close with the sounding of the seventh and last trumpet-angel who should usher in the judgment day (ch. xi. 18) of the old world period, [the grand denouement of Judaism.] John evidently had no intention of saying that
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.

this earth as a planet was to be destroyed, or that time in its ordinary sense should cease. He knew that when what he speaks of as "time being no longer" should come to pass, that the world as a planet was to have an existence of unknown time, as is evident from the subsequent chapters of the Apocalypse, and that he himself was to preach to the Gentiles the things which had been and were to be revealed to him (see on v. 11).

7. the mystery of God should be finished] I.e. the old covenant with its elementary principles (στοιχεῖα) and carnal ordinances should be ended, Jer. xxxi. 31; Heb. viii. 8. The unveiled glory was about to be revealed, with the sounding of the seventh trumpet was to come the removal of the vail under which the truth had heretofore been hidden. The way into the holiest, which had not been opened whilst the old Tabernacle was still standing (Heb. ix. 8) was now about to be opened. During the old economy, even during the Apostolic period, the truth of God had been wrapped up in a mystery in ordinances and ritual, and dark sayings; the Mount Zion of God was now about to be revealed in its glory, and for those who attain in Christ to that grace to stand thereon (Rev. xiv. 1—5), to such the truth in Christ is no longer wrapped up in a mystery. The truth of God, eternal truth, is ever a mystery when revealed under the conditions of time. Eternity as it appears in time is ever a mystery to man, but when man is raised in Christ above the conditions of time and space as he is on the Mount Zion of Rev. xiv. 1—5, then according to his stature in Christ and his attainment in the participation in the Lord's Parousia, man sees truth no longer under the mystery, but as it is, a great grace. Paul when he wrote his 1st Epistle to the Corinthians saw only in part (see 1 Cor. xiii. 9).

as he hath declared to his servants the prophets] Literally, as he (hath) evangelised his servants the prophets; where in the prophets do we find this? In Dan. ix. 24—27, we find a reference to these last times of the old world period and the consummation of the age (27) associated with the destruction of Jerusalem. In Dan. vii. 10 we find also a vision of the judgment day, and in Dan. xii. (throughout) there appears to be a reference to the closing days of the Jewish period. Jude (15) quotes the prophecy of Enoch as referring to the times then
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 present, the last times of the Jewish age, the times of which John is here speaking in the Apocalypse. Behold the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his saints, to execute judgment upon all, and to convince (convict) all," &c., Ezek. chaps. vi. and vii.

8. And the voice which I heard from heaven] I.e. the voice of v. 4 (see note there); this "voice from heaven," as also "the mighty angel from Heaven," v. 1 (see note there), shews that the scene of the vision is not laid in heaven but in some other spiritual region in the heavenly places into which John was lifted (see also chaps. xviii. 1—4; xix. 1, &c.

Go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel, &c.] Or, "Go, take the scroll;" these words compared with v. 9 shew that John himself was not a passive spectator of the scene that was passing before him, but had a part himself to play in the great drama. The reading here is doubtful, whether βιβλίων, or βιβλαρίων, little book, see also vv. 9 and 10 below; Alford reads βιβλίων, in v. 8.

9. And I went unto the angel, and said unto him, Give me the little book] With all the "insouciance" of a little child John goes to the mighty angel and says, "Give me the little book." There is some slight authority for "book" instead of "little book," see vv. 8 and 10.

And he said unto me, Take it, and eat it up, &c.] Not only was John commanded to take the scroll but to digest it. This scroll which John was commanded to take and eat is answerable to that of which Ezekiel speaks, chaps. ii. 9, 10; iii. 1—3, which was in his mouth as honey for sweetness, but was filled with lamentations, and mourning, and woe, Ezek. ii. 10.

Give me the little book] John was eager for the duty implied by taking the book and eating it. It seemed sweet as honey in the mouth, but was found at last to be bitter indeed in his belly (heart = belly), such was his mission, v. 11 and ch. xi. 1—3, as Ezekiel's book (Ezek. ii. 10) was [made up of] lamentations, and mourning, and woe.
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.

10. And I took the little book] Here as in vv. 8, 9 the reading is doubtful whether βιβλίον the book, scroll, or βιβλαρίδιον the little book¹. See Ezek. ii. 9, 10; iii. 1—3 where the prophet describes a similar scene.

The idea expressed under the figure of sweetness to the taste, but bitterness in the eating is probably joy at receiving the commission of preaching the things contained in the scroll, and bitterness in tasting and digesting the contents of the book so full of mourning, and lamentation, and woe.

11. And he said unto me] It is doubtful whether the reading should be λέγει “he saith,” or λέγοντων “they say.”

Thou must prophesy again] Here John becomes not only a spectator of the vision but an actor also in it, though perhaps unconscious that he is to be (if indeed he is) one of the two witnesses of ch. xi. (see notes. there). The word “again,” “prophesy again,” implies that John’s previous ministry as an Apostle is included in his prophetic work, that his ministry, in fact, was going on during the whole 1260 days’ period of ch. xi. 3. This command sheds light on the probable date of the writing of the Apocalypse. If it was written, as is contended, towards the end of the reign of Domitian A.D. 96 (see Introductory note to Rev. p. 444 et seq.), supposing John was about 20 years old at the crucifixion of our Lord, he would be about 86 years old when the mission (Rev. x. 11) was given him. It is quite improbable that such a commission would be given to a man 86 years old, but supposing as I do that the Apocalypse was written about A.D. 70, there would be nothing unreasonable in such a commission to a man about 60 years old. These words imply that John had already, before this point in the vision, been occupied with his prophecy; in fact, if John was what I suppose him to have been (ch. xi. 1—3, notes), one of the two witnesses, he must have prophesied for the whole of the 1260 days mystical, and

¹ [βιβλίον is a diminutive form of βιβλος, and βιβλαρίδιον a double diminutive; see ante, p. 545. Ed.]
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1 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.

must have been a witness and an actor in the plagues of the seven trumpet angels, see ch. viii. 6, 7, 8 above, which plagues resemble the Egyptian plagues, see pp. 532, 533 et seq.; connect this with ch. xi. 5, 6, below, where the two witnesses have similar powers entrusted to them, the powers of Moses and Elias, and we get testimony to the fact I assume that John the Apostle was one of the two witnesses of ch. xi. 3. John may not have been aware that he was to be one of the two witnesses if indeed he was one (cf. ch. vi. 3, see notes there), but he is here made aware that his ministry is not yet completed, that he has yet to prophesy before many peoples and nations, and tongues and kings (the very people who shall rejoice over his dead body, as one of the two witnesses, see ch. xi. 9, n.). He never supposes from v. 6 above, that the world is about to be destroyed, but only that the Judaeo-Christian era was about to come to an end, the day of grace for Israel. He was to minister in person (as one of the two witnesses) up to the close of that period, and even, when personally withdrawn, his Gospel and his 1st Epistle would and still do in a sense continue his ministry to the world in making known the truths of the Parousia, of which I suppose his Gospel to be the Gospel, and his 1st Epistle, the Epistle. Thus both as a living man, and as a dead man, his ministry was to last and even now is in operation. The commission was sweet to John's mouth, but bitter in his belly, see v. 9, note. In ch. xi. 1 we find a further enlargement of John's commission.

1. And there was given me a reed like unto a rod] The reading of the amended text is singular, "and there was given me a reed like unto a rod, saying (as though the reed itself said), Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein."

Rise] The word is emphatic ("Εγέρθαι) no word is here without signification, it denotes a new departure in the life of John. The reed here was a measuring reed, but it had also the character of a sceptre. "The temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein," describes the company of the saints, the church of the firstborn on earth, as distinguished from "the whole world that lieth in wickedness," 1 John v. 19. This indicates that to John himself was committed, as a part of his commission, ch. x. 9—11, the care of the church of the firstborn on
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earth, spoken of in our text as those who worship in the temple (παρεί
dyn, shrine). John is charged to shepherd the elect through the danger and
darkness of the apostasy during the 1260 days’ period, during which his
ministry as one of the two witnesses (see v. 3) was to continue. The
words “Thou must prophesy again,” in ch. x. 11, shew that John’s
ministry had been going on before this new commission, that his
ministry had been already in action, and was to continue during the
1260 days’ period until the sounding of the last trumpet (Rev. xi. 15;
1 Cor. xv. 52), and this identification of John’s ministry with the 1260
days’ period, gives us a chronological point, fixing the 1260 days’ period
during the lifetime of the Apostle.

This reed was given to John himself who had just been commissioned
to prophesy again. This connection between the period in the vision
and the mortal life of John gives a chronological point shewing that the
vision at this period synchronises with the life of the Apostle. The
things spoken of were in fact in John’s life, and at this period of it; and
it further shews, that if John was, as I suppose he was, one of the two
witnesses [see v. 3 note, and Excursus on “The Two Witnesses”], his
ministry lay during the 1260 days’ period. In other words, that the 1260
days’ period and the apostasy which then took place was synchronous
with the life of John the Apostle. This constitutes one of the few chrono-
logical points of the Apocalypse. And if it be queried yet further what
was the subject of John’s ministry during the 1260 days’ period, we may
say that one chief part of it would probably consist in that special wit-
ess to Christ our Lord of which we have the record in his 1st Epistle*
and in his Gospel; this testimony would constitute the main subject of
his ministry, and seeing that his ministry was rejected by the professing
Christian world it is no wonder that his Gospel and 1st Epistle were so
long unknown, and so little esteemed. Both John and his message were
rejected by the professing Christians of the period (see vv. 7—10 below).

The command to John in our text, “Rise, and measure the temple of
God, and the altar, and them that worship therein,” is a part of the
ministry committed to him, ch. x. 9—11, and his ministry as one of the
two witnesses (ch. xi. 3, &c.) is a part of that same ministry; compare
“the peoples and nations, and tongues and kings,” to whom John is
commanded to prophesy (ch. x. 11) with “the peoples and kindreds, and
tongues and nations,” of ch. xi. 9, who rejoice over the death of the
witnesses. Whatever John’s ministry may have been before the destruc-
tion of Jerusalem it was to continue and be in act during the 1260 days’

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1 The First Epistle of John was written in the last hour of the old world period; see 1 John ii. 18.
period, between the destruction of the city A.D. 70 and the coming in of ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism about A.D. 112, i.e. the coming in of the beast of Rev. xiii. 11 (see notes there). It is to be noted that the ministry of the two witnesses did not cease with their martyrdom (ch. xi. 7—10), but was continued at and after their resurrection (ch. xi. 11, 12). Their death and resurrection formed part of their work. The rod (ἰδρέψας) of our text is the symbol of that sceptre with which John was to rule the house of God, the Church, during the 1260 days' period. The word is frequently used in the Apocalypse. Of our Lord it is said, ch. xii. 5; xix. 15, "He shall rule them (the nations) with a rod of iron," and in ch. ii. 27 we find the promise applied to those who overcome of the church of Thyatira. This rod of iron, with which our Lord and certain of His elect shall rule the nations, is in one sense as the crook of a shepherd (μαχαιριόν, ch. ii. 27; xii. 5), and yet it has the inflexibility of iron, see ch. ii. 27, n., whilst the reed (καλαμος) is a measuring reed with which the shrine (ναός) and the worshippers are to be measured. The O. T. scriptures shed some light on the subject. In Ezek. ch. xl. 3, the prophet sees in vision a man with a measuring reed, who proceeds to measure the Temple in its minutest details, and having done so the house of Israel is commanded to measure themselves by the standard of the Temple, Ezek. xliii. 8—13. The Temple which Ezekiel here sees in vision is both a representation of the Temple at Jerusalem, and a representation in figure of Christ our Lord. When our Lord said (John ii. 19) "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up, he spake of the temple of his body." The Temple at Jerusalem and our Lord's mystical body, the church, are related the one to the other as type and antitype; so when Ezekiel in vision sees the heavenly Temple he sees in anticipation a figure of Christ, and when he is commanded to tell the children of Israel to compare themselves with the standard of this divine Temple, he is in anticipation affirming the great evangelical truth that Christ Himself, God's dwelling-place, is the living law of His people, the one standard by which they are to be measured, the law by which they are to live, Christ the Lord is our law and example, He is our living law. The law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus lifts us out of subjection to all other law. All who are found within the measure of this canon (2 Cor. x. 13) constitute the holy city of which John speaks in the next verse (see note there), the Bride, the Body of Christ; and not only Ezekiel, but Zechariah also (ch. ii. 1—5) sees in vision how Jerusalem shall be measured. It is thus that John in the Apocalypse introduces "the holy city" in its inception. It is here so small a matter that a man may measure it, but the subsequent mention of the holy city in chapter xxi. 2, 16, 23, its building and its beauty, when it is no longer
2 But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not; for it is given unto the Gentiles:

measured by any human measure, shews how great a thing and how glorious this small beginning was and is to become. When, as in our text, John is commanded to measure the shrine and the altar, and them that worship therein, the idea represented in the act signifies both separation of the holy ones from the world, and their tending with the crook (ἦλθος) with which they are measured off (see next verse, note). It is to be noted that the Temple and the worshippers therein are here mentioned as an already existent community, the church of the firstborn was already in process of gathering when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, see Heb. xii. 23. It was initiated at Pentecost. The elect number, the Body and Bride of Christ, had been gathering ever since Pentecost, but the progress toward the day of the Parousia is specially accentuated in the vision at chaps. viii. 1; xi. 1—19; and at ch. xiv. 1, the day of the Parousia becomes an accomplished fact. These allusions to the New Covenant Temple and Worship indicate the gradual process of the edification of the Temple of which our Lord speaks in anticipation, Mark xiv. 58; John ii. 19. This mention of the shrine and the altar, and the worshippers carries on the allusion to the times of the Parousia, which allusion we find in ch. viii. 1—4 (the 7th seal period); and again at the close of the 7th seal and the 7th trumpet period, ch. xi. 18, 19, we find the consummated act to which these allusions refer.

With the incoming of the new worship, all Old Testament worship and (mere) Old Testament Christianity is ended.

2. But the court which is without the temple leave out] Better, cast out (ἐκβαλεί), i.e. cast out of thy reckoning and measurement. The commandment to measure relates only to "The Temple," the church of the firstborn, who are not only distinct from the nations but distinct also from the rest of the saved. The command to John here in vv. 1, 2 has reference only to the elect Body of Christ; the Temple, Body, Bride of Christ, the holy city (πόλεις ἡ ἁγία) of our text which is the inception of (πόλεις ἡ ἁγία), the holy city of ch. xxi. 2; the new Jerusalem (see notes there, ch. xxi. 2, also) ch. xxii. 14—19. This holy city, the bride of Christ, His Body, the temple of God (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17), was initiated at Pentecost, but the way into the holiest was not made manifest until after the destruction of Jerusalem, Heb. ix. 8. This Holy City (mystical) is the subject of the command to John here; it is to John the Apostle that the holy remnant is committed; we find the command to
and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months.

measure with the rod (καβαθέας, crook), but we find no record of the fulfilment of the command here. The command was probably a part of the commission given in ch. x. 11, and was to be fulfilled by John as a part of his future human ministry among men. His ministry was to be a tending of the Body of Christ, the Church, of a gathering in of the elect, to their body rather than evangelizing the world. How small this elect body on earth was at the time here indicated in the vision, i.e. just before the sounding of the seventh trumpet under the seventh seal (Rev. viii. 1), (for we are still in the vision under the seventh seal), may be gathered from John’s own words in his 1st Epistle, written at the “last hour” (1 John ii. 18 n.) of the last time of the old world period1, 1 John v. 19, “We are of God, little children, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one.”

the holy city] The expression is used twice in the Gospel of Matthew (chaps. iv. 5; xxvii. 53), but in neither instance probably is it used in a strictly natural or historical sense. In the Apocalypse the expression occurs in chaps. xi. 2; xxi. 2; xxii. 19; always in the non-natural and mystical sense. These are the only instances in the New Testament in which the expression occurs.

shall they tread under foot] The holy city, as already said, is the Church, the Body of Christ on earth, identical with the Mount Zion, of ch. xiv. 1—5, identical also in a sense with ‘the holy city’ of ch. xxi. 2, in its inception, the difference between the two being that in our text “the holy city” is the Body of Christ, the Church on earth, whilst in ch. xxi. 2, “the holy city” is the Body of Christ, the bride, the New Jerusalem coming down from God out of heaven; both are essentially the same thing, the Church is both in heaven and on earth, at the same time, just as our Lord was (John iii. 13); the Church in heaven is gathered from the Church on earth. This vision in the Apocalypse is at this point just about to enter on the times of the Gentiles, “the holy city” of our text would include within its compass both Jews and Gentiles (in Christ) such as had been gathered during the Apostolic period, and also during the tribulation on Israel during the time with which this part of the Apocalypse concerns itself, from the destruction of Jerusalem to the

1 The 1st Epistle of John was probably written under the seventh seal period, when the way into the holiest was opened, Rev. viii. 1—4; but towards the “last hour” of it (1 John ii. 18), during perhaps the 6th trumpet period, but not after that, if John himself was one of the two witnesses of ver. 3.
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then approaching day of judgment of ch. xi. 18. This is the subject of the vision from Rev. vi. 2 to Rev. xi. 18; it is quite possible that the words in our text might be read, the holy city shall they (the Gentiles) frequent (as in Isaiah i. 12, "tread my courts"), not in any sense of profanation but as worshippers. But why the space of "forty-two months" is introduced is not quite clear, unless it be that this is the period with which the vision of the seven seals and the seven trumpets has to do, here the period (that is), between the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment of the old world period, the close of the old covenant times, which in the mystery is 42 months? and this is probably the explanation of the limit (42 months). This is the first mention we have of this mystical measure of time; we find it again repeated ch. xiii. 5, leading to the inference that the vision in ch. xiii. belongs also to the last days of the old world period immediately preceding or attending the judgment day of the old world, the point of time at which the old covenant and the old world period were passing over into the new aeon in the Parousia of our Lord. We find the measure of time 40 and 2 months repeated under various different forms, whether as 1260 days, Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6 (i.e. 42 months, x. 30 = 1260 days); are not all these, Rev. xi. 2, 3; xii. 6 and xiii. 5, identical measures (mystical) of time of the same period? Rev. xi. 9, there is also the measure given of 3½ days, see ch. xi. 9 n. Then we find in this same period of the vision, and confined to this period, the measure of "a time and times, and half-a-time," Rev. xii. 14; this measure of time we also find in Dan. xii. 7, a prophecy which relates probably to the same period of time as this portion of the Apocalypse, the end of the old world period, see also Dan. vii. 25. This period of "a time and times, and half-a-time," is (I say) probably identical with the 1260 days of chaps. xi. 3 and xii. 6, and with the 42 months of chaps. xi. 2 and xiii. 5, thus a time (1 year) + times (two years) + half-a-time (½ a-year) is 3½ years; now 3 x 360 + 180 = 1260. If these measures of time be all identical in meaning, then in Rev. xi. 2, the holy city is to be trodden down or frequented, or held under dominion of the Gentiles 1260 days; Rev. xi. 3, the two witnesses are to prophesy 1260 days; Rev. xii. 6, the woman is in the wilderness 1260 days; Rev. xii. 14, she is nourished in the wilderness 1260 days; Rev. xiii. 5, the Beast is to continue 1260 days. (The 1260 days' period is also the measure of the time between the close of the Apostolic period and the coming in of pseudo-Christianity, ch. xiii. 11, the second Beast; we find in the scrip-

1 The 42 months is the ordained period during which the Church was in the wilderness, see ch. xii. 6, before she found the shelter of the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1. During this period she was the sport and prey of the World and of the Beast, ch. xiii. 5, in the same time mentioned there.
3 And I will give power unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred and three-score days, clothed in sackcloth.

...tures other references which appear to have occult relations to these periods of 42 months, or 1260 days (see v. 5, note, 3½ years), or a time and times, and half a time as above, we have quoted Dan. xii. 7; vii. 25; (Dan. xi. 13?) In Numb. i. 33—50, we find the O. T. church in the wilderness occupying 42 stations; in Luke iv. 25, we find the time given during which there was no rain in Israel in the time of Elijah, 3½ years. We find also another mystical measure of time, 5 months, Rev. ix. 5. Can it be that this period of 1260 days, 42 months, 3½ years, represents in figure the period between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the old world period—about 42 years—to which period this part of the Apocalypse refers. Concerning the events of this period ecclesiastical history is silent, Eusebius refers his readers to Josephus for details of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem, Eccl. Hist. lib. iii., 5. Lightfoot, Philippians (p. 203); speaks of it as a "mysterious period" during which "episcopacy" was "mainly developed."

3. And I will give power unto my two witnesses] This mention of the two witnesses who were to prophesy during the 1260 days connects itself intimately with the commission just before given to John himself, and I suppose that John was perhaps one of the two. They were to prophesy, just as John was to prophesy (see ch. x. 11 n. above); they are called prophets (v. 10 below), and their work was placed in the 1260 days' period, just as John's work was in the 42 months' period (the two periods being identical with one another and identical also with the wilderness period of the Church, ch. xii. 6 n.). Although mentioned here for the first time their ministry had already been carried on during that part of the 1260 days' period which had already elapsed, just as John's own ministry had been already in process before this point in the vision, when this new commission comes to him (ch. x. 11 n. above). If the 1260 days mystical of Rev. xi. 3 = 42 months of Rev. xi. 2, represent a period of 42 years, and if this period of 42 years dates from the commission given to John in the vision, ch. x. 11, and not from the destruction of Jerusalem (A.D. 70), then the period between ch. xi. and the day of judgment of Rev. xi. 18, must be extended by several years. It must be left an open question whether the 1260 days' period is to be reckoned from the destruction of Jerusalem or from a later point.
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4 These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the God of the earth.

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.

6 These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not

4. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks] These words evidently are associated with the words of Zechariah, ch. iv. 3, 11, 12, 14, concerning "the two anointed ones;" see also Zech. i. 10; iv. 10 and compare Rev. i. 7, the seven spirits; see Hab. (LXX.) iii. 1, the two living creatures. The vision in the Apocalypse differs from that in Zechariah, in that, whilst Zechariah speaks of two olive trees he speaks of only one candlestick, a candlestick with seven lamps, as in Exod xxi. 37. We may take it that "the two olive trees" of Rev. xi. 4 are identical with "the two olive trees" of Zech. iv. 3, and that both are identical in some way with "the two witnesses" of our text.

standing before the God of the earth] [According to the amended text, which stand before the Lord of the earth.] See Zech. iv. 14 [and context from which the imagery is borrowed and extended]. This testimony from the Old Testament scriptures serves to magnify the greatness of the two witnesses and their ministry. They do in the New Covenant Church that which was represented in figure under the Old Covenant ritual. "The two witnesses" of our text do in reality what "the two anointed ones" of Zech. iv. 14 did in figure. They empty out of themselves the oil into the golden lamps (Zech. iv. 12, marg.); the golden lamps representing as we are told, Rev. i. 20, the seven churches who make up the Church universal. That John himself was [morally] one of the two witnesses, see ch. x. 11, he by his writings was and is in an especial manner an anointed one who has poured sacred oil ("the anointing," 1 John ii. 20, 27) into the churches.

6. These have power to shut heaven, &c.] In Luke iv. 25 we find that our Lord gives three years and a half as the time during which under Elijah there was neither dew nor rain in Israel (1 Kings

1 [Here and elsewhere the Apocalyptic writer utilises his acquaintance with the Prophetic records. Compare and contrast his application of Zech. iv. 14 with that of the Jewish Haggadist preserved in the Yalkut: — "Rabbi Yehudah said, This alludes to Aaron and David who were anointed in this world, and have (therefore) no need for anointing in the time to come (that is, in the days of Messiah)." Ed.]
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.

7 And when they shall have finished their testimony,

xvii. 1). This period of three years and a half is a time and times and half a time, and as a mystical period is probably identical with the 1260 days of v. 3. These words of our text (like v. 5) connect the two witnesses in character with the Elias ministry.

and have power over waters, &c.] This reference to the Egyptian plagues connects the two witnesses with Moses and his ministry. It also connects them with the plagues that came on Israel under the seventh trumpet period, &c., and supposing John to be one of the two witnesses links together the Law and the Prophets here and the ministry of John here with the seventh trumpet period. There seems no doubt that in these O. T. allusions John intends to shew how the ministry of the two witnesses is the N. T. equivalent of the ministry of Moses and Elias, the Law and the Prophets, their ministry was to be in the power and spirit of Moses and Elias, i.e. in a powerful witness to Christ the Lord, and the speedy coming in of the dispensation of the Lord's Parousia, Rev. xiv. 1—5. We may say that John's writings, his Gospel and 1st Epistle, contain such a witness, and the fact that they do so, that they are the epitome of John's testimony during the period, serves to confirm the idea that John himself was one of the two witnesses as already suggested above. It is to be noted (v. 7 below) that the time of the ministry of the two witnesses is placed during the 1260 days' period, but that their lives are cut short before the close of it. On the connection of John the Baptist with the Elias mission, see James v. 17; and Matt. xi. 14, 15; compare also Luke iv. 25 with 1 Kings xvii. 1; also Ecclus. xlviii. 1—3, 10; 2 Mac. ii. 7. Supposing the Apostle John to have been one of the two witnesses he must have lived until very nearly the close of the 7th trumpet period of the 7th seal period, Rev. viii. 1; xi. 15 (the last trump of 1 Cor. xv. 52) and that he did so live appears from 1 John ii. 8—18, n.

7. And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that ascendeth, &c.] This beast that ascendeth (τῶν ἀναβαστῶν, part. pres.) is probably identical with the beast of Rev. xvii. 8 (see notes there), who again is the beast of ch. xiii. 1 (see notes there), all representing different forms of the Roman Empire, and different periods of her manifestation and power. The warfare of the Beast against the two witnesses (in our text above) may have continued through
the beast that ascendeth out of the bottomless pit shall make war against them, and shall overcome them, and kill them.

8 And their dead bodies shall lie in the street of the

the whole course of their testimony, during, i.e., the whole course of the "1260 days" period, which was the time of their prophecy (v. 3).

"And when they shall have finished their testimony." This contingent expression is peculiar; John does not see the ministry completed in the vision. He does not say "when they had finished their ministry," but "when they shall have finished," &c. Can this in any way imply that John (if he were himself one of the witnesses) was not to live to see all that he speaks of in the following verses, though he sees it now in the vision, or what does it mean? Why the contingent form of the expression? when they shall have finished. Supposing that John himself was one of the two witnesses, either he was not aware of his own future part in their ministry, or else he veils his part under the contingent expression; perhaps aware that he was to be one of the two witnesses he views himself not so much in his own identity, as in the character of an impersonal actor in a scene of the future, which is at the time of writing passing before him in vision. If John was really one of the two witnesses of course he died before "the dead bodies lay in the street of the great city," &c. &c. vv. 8, 9, &c., though in vv. 11, 12 they were raised again to life and ascended to Heaven in a cloud, i.e. they were translated, as I suppose Paul and most of the other Apostles had already been, as they finished their course on earth; see 1 Thess. iv. 18.

out of the bottomless pit] Better, out of the abyss (in τῆς ἀβύσσου). In the N. T. ἀβυσσός is always used as a substantive ἀβυσσος, but in ordinary Greek it is used as an adjective signifying boundless, exhaustless, unfathomed. In New Testament and ecclesiastical Greek ἀβυσσός generally implies the underworld, the abode of the dead, specially of the wicked; we find the word in the N. T., Luke viii. 31; Rom. x. 7; Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11; xi. 7; xvii. 8; xxi. 2. The beast of the abyss here must be either Abaddon, the destroyer of ch. ix. 11, or the beast of chaps. xiii. 1; xvii. 8; xx. 1—3, and the allusion in our text will be to the heathen Roman power between A.D. 70 and 112, the 42 month (= year) period of vv. 2 and 3 supra.

8. And their dead bodies, &c.] For "dead bodies," read "dead body" (sing.), see note to v. 9 below, where the word πτωμα "dead body" occurs again once in singular and once plural; there is probably some purpose in this variation of number. And their dead body (πτωμα) (is) upon
great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified.

The street (highway), of the great city that which (γέρας) is called spiritually Sodom and Egypt where also their Lord was crucified. "The great city"1 here mentioned for the first time is Babylon (in the mystery), see Rev. xi. 8; xiv. 8; xvi. 19; xvii. 18; xviii. 10, 16, 18, 19, 21; the term is never applied to Jerusalem (Rev. xxi. 10, does not stand in amended text), though Babylon, Sodom, Egypt, and Jerusalem, are all clasped together (mystically) in our text, so also in O. T. Babylon and Sodom, Isai. xiii. 19; Jer. l. 40; Judah and Sodom, Isai. i. 10; iii. 9; Ezek. xvi. 46—48, 50 (see Rev. ix. 14, note on Euphrates). It is in the great city Babylon (mystically) that our Lord was, and ever is, crucified, so also (in the mystery) is He crucified in Sodom and Egypt. When at His last passover, the elect nation deliberately denied and crucified its Saviour Christ, saying, "We have no king but Caesar" (see John xix. 15 n.), they in effect denied their deliverance from Egypt, they declared their purpose to return into Egyptian bondage. For centuries the Passover had been the memorial rite of their deliverance from the slavery of Egypt, sign at once of an earthly deliverance in the past, and the hope of a spiritual deliverance in the future, the Lord Jesus came to fulfil in His own person the Messianic hope contained in the Passover festival. He was to accomplish in reality for the nation what the Passover represented in figure, deliverance from bondage. This drifting back of Israel into Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified, Rev. xi. 8, specially the Egyptian plagues are foretold, Deut. xxviii. 60, see the whole passage, Deut. xxviii. 54—68. At this very Passover when the Lord fulfilled in His own person the pledge contained in the Jewish symbol of the Passover, the nation whom He came to save from Egypt (mystically) refused the boon He offered, refused it with contempt, slew their king who would have saved them from slavery (the slavery of sin), and instead of the redemption from slavery which He, the Christ, came to give them, chose that earthly tyranny, which is spiritually and mystically Egypt. "We have no king but Caesar," see notes to ch. viii. 7, p. 532 (the going back into Egypt under the 7 trumpet angels). Whilst literally crucified in Jerusalem our Lord was, and still is crucified (Heb. vi. 6), spiritually in Egypt, Babylon, Sodom, and Jerusalem (Jerusalem now representing in the mystery [the Judaic] legal righteousness, [and perhaps] carnal Christianity?).

1 ['The great' is an adjective applied to Babylon; see Dan. iv. 27 (30). Note the words of the Angelic interpreter, ch. xvii. 18 infra. Ed.]
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.

12 And they heard a great voice from heaven saying

9. And they of the people and kindreds and tongues, &c.] Compare this with ch. x. 11 in the commission to John himself, and note the coincidence of terms as bearing on the idea that John himself was identified in some way with the ministry of the two witnesses, see ch. xi. 7, n. John himself was, I think, in all probability one of the two witnesses.

10. And they that dwell upon the earth shall rejoice over them, &c.] Men of the world rejoice that the testimony of Scripture is made of none-effect, they congratulate one another, and send gifts one to another, and yet they keep the Scriptures in their houses, in their cities, in their streets, and will not allow them to be put under ground. Outward respect for the Scriptures, with real contempt for them, such as we now see, so it was then.

these two prophets] The two witnesses are here described as two prophets; this definite and distinct term, “these two prophets,” constitutes a great factor in the question of what and who the two witnesses were, they appear to have been persons and not merely written records (the Law and the Prophets).

11. And after three days and an half the Spirit of life from God entered into them, &c.] If, as I imagine, the number 12 be the key to the interpretation of these numbers (mystical) relating to periods of time (see on v. 9), then this period of 3½ days becomes 42 days, i.e. there was a period of 42 days between the death of the witnesses and their ascension to heaven, the same period that intervened between our Lord’s death and His ascension.

12. And they heard a great voice from heaven, &c.] I.e. H.
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.

their persecutors among men were made witnesses of the triumph and ascension of the two prophets (v. 10), the two witnesses, whoever or whatever they were (v. 3). The tradition of John's own death, whether it be of any worth, or not, leads to the supposition that he was translated; but all this is a mystery of which we have no authentic record beyond the Apocalypse itself. There was a translation of the saints at the close of the Apostolic period, 1 Thess. iv. 17; 1 Cor. xv. 24—51; Matt. xxiv. 40, 41. There was probably also a translation of some at the close of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18.

And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud] See Mark ix. 7; Luke ix. 34.

13. was there a great earthquake] Earthquake, σεισμός, shaking, whether mystical or literal; this assumption of the witnesses was a great event and men's hearts were moved by it.

and the tenth part of the city fell] The city, i.e. Babylon (ch. xi. 8), which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt.

and the remnant were affrighted, and gave glory to God] This shews that there still were among the people those who might be brought to repentance even at the eleventh hour. The testimony of the two witnesses was not in vain; the judgments that attended their ministry and the close of it especially brought some to repentance. With this passage closes the account of the two witnesses (ch. xi. 3), and the two prophets (ch. xi. 10); and with this passage also closes the history of the period of the seventh trumpet angel which began at ch. ix. 13. We are still however under the seventh seal of the book of the new creation, the period that opened at ch. viii. 1. The seventh trumpet angel who is now about to sound closes both the vision of the seven trumpet angels, and also the whole vision of the seven-sealed book, the opening of which began at ch. vi. 1. The vision of the seven thunders is a vision within the vision of the seven trumpets, which again is a vision within the vision of the seventh seal of the seventh-sealed book. The seventh trumpet angel ushers in the day of judgment of the old world period, and the period between ch. vi. 1 and ch. xi. 18 constitutes the vision of the
CHAPTER XI.

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.

16 And the four and twenty elders, which sat before

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seven-sealed book, a period, mystical, of 1260 days or 3 1/2 years, a time and times and half-a-time, or 42 months, A.D. 70 to about A.D. 112.

14. The second woe is past] The second woe of ch. viii. 13 is the sixth trumpet angel of ch. ix. 14. The sixth trumpet angel has announced that there shall be no longer delay (ch. x. 6) but that in the day of the voice of the seventh angel the mystery of God should be finished (see notes to ch. x. 7). The seventh angel is now about to usher in the day of judgment of the old world period recorded by Matt. xxv. 31—46, foretold by Paul, Acts xvii. 31, the last trumpet of 1 Cor. xv. 24 and elsewhere; the great assize which ended the old world period and ushered in the everlasting righteousness of the New Covenant.

15. The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, &c.] The day foretold by our Lord, Matt. xiii. 39, 40—49, which was to come at the consummation of the Jewish age, was now here. The seventh, whether seal, trumpet angel, or vial, ever brings a crisis and opens a new scene. See on chaps. viii. 1; xi. 15; xvi. 17. The seventh trumpet angel brings in the judgment day of the old world (see n. 18, n. below), and with the close of the old world period the seventh seal period is also closed. The things that might be shaken (Heb. xii. 27), the elementary things of the old world period, all that is local and temporary in the old religions passes away, becomes a nonentity, and the everlasting righteousness comes in, Dan. ix. 24. The Mount Zion of God (Rev. xiv. 1—5) where the Lord reigns with His saints is henceforth the one place of worship, the one place of refuge, of rest, of joy and peace for the whole world. See notes to Rev. xiv. 1—5. The real triumphal reign of Christ our Lord on the Mount Zion now begins. The day of Christ in its initial form began at Pentecost, but the glory of His Parousia is only now about to be consummated, with the consummation of the old world period.

16. And the four and twenty elders, which sat before God, &c.] The twenty-four elders are first introduced in ch. iv. 4 (see notes 36—2
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,
CHAPTER XI.

our text is the consummation. The day of wrath on Israel began in its intense form at the destruction of Jerusalem with the opening of the seven-sealed book, and it continues throughout the whole of the 1260 days' period [mystically so-called], literally the 42 years from A.D. 70 to 112; then Israel was cast off as the Covenant people and another people was called into the election. The "wrath" here spoken of is specially wrath on Israel. This wrath was on Israel even at the time of 1 Thess. ii. 16, but the great assize has now come. The wrath of God, who is love, is a mystery. It is God's "strange work," Isaiah xxviii. 21. In Isaiah xxvii. 4 we read "Fury is not in me." We may believe that that which causes wrath and desolation is to be felt in the human soul, that in God which causes wrath and misery to be felt is quite some other thing from the feeling of wrath which men entertain and nourish one against another. Wrath in God may be defined as love hindered of its purpose. God in Christ wills to reveal Himself to all men as their highest good and blessedness. If God's purpose in this regard fails, it fails because there is something in man that hinders that purpose, something in the soul that prevents the love and light of God manifesting itself in that soul, and this conflict in the soul of love striving against darkness and self-will manifests itself as wrath, it is felt as wrath. But the wrath is not in God, it is in man. Still the Almighty permits wrath to work wrath, "the wicked which is thy sword," Ps. xvi. 13. Wrath may be illustrated, as of man, and not of God; thus a soul walking in the light and love of Christ, and rejoicing therein, knows with certain knowledge that were it to sever that bond that unites it to the Lord, were it by its own wilful act to separate itself from Christ, it would by its own act and in the nature of things be cast into the outer darkness, not by any act or edict of the Lord's, but by its own act. To such an one love would become wrath, light would become darkness, heaven would be hell, and the perdition would be of itself rather than of God, save only with the condition that underlies all things and all contingencies, that everything is what it is because God is what He is, and therefore, looked at in a certain light, God may be said to be author of whatever happens. Applying these thoughts to our level, Rev. xi. 8, and specially as the words apply to Israel the elect race and nation, Israel was elected to be the firstborn of the nations, the Lord's peculiar portion, they were ordained to hold a great place in the love of God. They had the entail, so to say, of the kingdom, and yet when the time of consummation came for Israel to inherit the kingdom the people refused to have it. God's love was hindered by something in their heart, not in God's heart, and the day of love became by their own act a day of wrath. So also is this true in a wider sense
and the time of the dead, that they should be judged,

with all mankind, when we consider the aeons of aeons that have passed in preparing the earth for man, and in educating man to a capacity for sonship; and now when all is prepared and God has Himself become man in Christ, that man may, in Christ, become one of the family of God in sonship, and when we in wilful folly and madness reject God’s gift, frustrate His purpose of love towards us, when His love is hindered by our refusal to accept it, there must needs be wrath and anguish somewhere, and the wrath and anguish are man’s doing and begetting and not God’s. God’s love is hindered of its purpose, and falling on a nature that will not accept it, it is as sunlight, which good in itself produces effects according to the material it shines upon: it may be life, it may be putridity. Our Lord told the Jews (Luke xiii. 28) there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when they should see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom and they themselves cast out, cast out, i.e. from that very kingdom, by their own act, which Divine love had prepared for them as much as for Abraham himself. Their own act was the efficient cause of their own anguish. Throughout the Apocalypse wrath is viewed very much from the O. T. standpoint, the view that makes even evil, permitted evil, the work of God, and it is true, in that all things are what they are, because God is what He is (God does not burn me for putting my hand in the fire, but He permits fire to burn me). God appears to us, His appearance to us is governed by what we ourselves are, “To the froward thou wilt shew thyself froward,” and “Such as the principle of every spirit is, such is God in that spirit,” Sterry, ii. 300.

and the time of the dead, that they should be judged] The judgment day of the old world period was come, the consummation of the age spoken of by our Lord, Matt. xiii. 39, 40—49, &c., see on v. 15. The day of judgment was to be a day of joy for the saints and of terror to the wicked. This day of judgment of the old world period differs from the day of judgment of Rev. xx. 11—15 in this, among other things, that in xi. 18 both saints and sinners appear, whilst in ch. xx. 11—15 the saints do not appear in the dispensation of the Parousia, of which ch. xx. 11—15 is the judgment day; the saints are already reigning with Christ in millennial glory, see notes to ch. xx. 1—6, specially ch. xx. 6, according to our Lord’s own word, John v. 24, see notes there. The day of judgment of Rev. ch. xi. 18 is that of which Paul speaks, Acts xvii. 31, also Rom. xiv. 10, and 2 Cor. v. 10, in which both saints and
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.

sinners appear; see also the drag-net, Matt. xiii. 47—50, good and bad alike are gathered to judgment.

and that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants the prophets, and to the saints, &c.] Not until the coming in of the day of the Parousia did the prophets and saints obtain their reward, see Heb. xi. 39,40; therefore it was that the men of old looked so earnestly for that day. It is not so now, the "henceforth" of ch. xiv. 13 implies that now, in the day of the Parousia, there is no delay for the holy dead, the dead in Christ.

19. And the temple of God was opened in heaven] "Temple," ναός. This opening in heaven of the temple of God preludes the manifestation of our Lord in the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, n. of the dispensation of the Parousia (see notes on ch. xi. 1, the temple of God, the holy city). The closing act of the old world period with its woes and terrors, its turmoil and trouble, is the prelude to the glories of the Mount Zion of Rev. xiv. 1—5. Great portents attend the transition from the old world period to the new, "lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail."

earthquake] Lit. shaking, σεβασμός, the removing of those things that are shaken as of things that are made, Heb. xii. 26, 27. This verse, ch. xi. 19, brings us to the close of the seventh seal period, the period in the vision that represents the opening of the way into the holiest by Christ our Lord. The seventh seal period began with ch. viii. 1, when there was silence in heaven, and when v. 3 our Lord was represented as offering the prayers of the saints in the Melchizedek priesthood of His Parousia. He is there represented as initiating the new worship, the everlasting righteousness of the new covenant in the opened heavens. There was silence in heaven at the expectation of it, v. 1; then voices and thunderings, and lightnings and an earthquake. In Rev. xi. 19 we reach the close of the seventh seal period, the further consummation of
And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars:

the opened heavens and this consummated act which is spoken of in this 19th verse as the temple of God opened in heaven, is also accented by lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake. Then after other visions follows the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5. John's 1st Epistle appears to have been written under this seventh seal period, the "last hour" of the old world period, 1 John ii. 18, and yet in the light, the very light (1 John ii. 8), of the Parousia. If John was one of the "two witnesses," he must have written his Epistle under the sixth trumpet period of the seventh seal period.

I. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, &c.] Better, a great sign, σημεῖον μέγα. Here, for the first time, John uses the word σημεῖον, the word he uses so frequently in his Gospel to express the outward signification and proof of an unseen thing. This vision of the woman and the man child, the Church and Christ, associated as it is with the 1260 days' period (v. 6 below), "a time and times and half-a-time" (v. 14), belongs to the period that has just closed in ch. xi. 18, 19, the period between the coming of the Lord in the destruction of Jerusalem, the day of judgment of the old world period. It describes in figure how the Church fared during that period, the Judaeo-Christian period, from about A.D. 70 to A.D. 112, the period during which the two witnesses of ch. xi. 3—12 were prophesying on earth. During all that time the Church had been gathering, and this short vision of the woman and the man child describes in figure the fortune of the Church during that period. Just as the two witnesses were clothed in sackcloth during their 1260 days' ministry (ch. xi. 3, n.), so was the Church during this time in the wilderness, "a time and times and half-a-time" (v. 14 below). The vision of the woman and the man child belongs to that period, but it is introduced only at the close of that period, because it constitutes a connecting link between the two. The Church of Christ is common to both periods, and, surviving as she does the day of judgment of the old world period, ch. xi. 18, she forms the point from which the Gentile period proceeds. The Church in the wilderness, as here described, is the prelude to the perfected reign of Christ the Lord in His Parousia on the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5 (see notes there), and thenceforward to the final triumph of the Church, ch. xxi., and the new heavens and the
2 And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.

3 And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads.

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.

5 And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule

new earth. The woman clothed with the sun, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars, represents in figure the Apostolic Church of the new covenant: the twelve stars represent the twelve apostles (but the whole vision is not easy of consistent interpretation). Some say that the woman [clothed with the sun] represents the Old Testament Church, the twelve stars being the twelve patriarchs, and the man child may be considered to denote the New Testament Church begotten of the Old and caught up into the heavenly places.

2. And she being with child cried, &c.] Our Lord speaks of labour pangs (ἔθροπος), Matt. xxiv. 8; Mark xiii. 8. [Cf. the ἄλοις ἀπόθεσιν of Jewish writers.] These things are the beginning of labour pangs, see also the great tribulation, Matt. xxiv. 21—29; Mark xiii. 19—24; Luke xxi. 23; 1 Cor. vii. 26; 1 Pet. iv. 18; see also on the daughter of Zion travelling, Micah iv. 10; Isaiah lxvi. 8—10.

3. And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon] In v. 9 below this fiery red dragon is spoken of as "that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan," see also ch. xvii. 3, 9, 10; see also ch. xiii. 1.

4. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven] Not that John saw this done, but that this is the description of the work of that old serpent the devil. The allusion is probably to the fall of the angels "who kept not their first estate," Jude 6, and of Satan "who abode not in the truth," John viii. 44; see also Luke x. 18, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven," "for to devour her child," "against thy holy child Jesus," &c. The devil, through wicked men, sought to make away with the Saviour Jesus (?) Acts iv. 27.

5. And she brought forth a man child, &c.] The woman is not the Blessed Virgin, but "the Church," but the instance of the
all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne.

6 And the woman fled into the wilderness, where she hath a place prepared of God, that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred and threescore days.

Church and the man child is an instance co-ordinate with that of the virgin and the infant Jesus; there is a mystery here similar to the mystery of the incarnation. As in the incarnation of our Lord He was born of a woman, His mother who was a part of His own creation, so here in the Apocalypse the man child is begotten of the Church which was itself the creation of the man child. The mother of our Lord, in the flesh, was His own offspring; and here in the mystery also His mother, the mother of the man child, the Church, is of His own creation (see Luke ii. 7). In Gal. iv. 26, Paul speaks of the Church, "the Jerusalem which is above, as the mother of us all;" in Gal. iv. 26, he speaks of the Jerusalem which is above as our mother; in Gal. iv. 28, he speaks of our being the children of promise.

who was to rule all nations] [Literally, who is about to shepherdise, ὃς μῆλης ποταμῶν] He whose qualities and tenderness are such that He will not break the bruised reed, or quench the smoking flax, in the jealousy of His love breaks in pieces as with a rod of iron those things which hinder the perfecting of His love (see on ch. ii. 27).

6. And the woman fled into the wilderness, &c.] This period, 1260 days (42 years), brings us back into the period of the two witnesses, see ch. xi. 3, the forty and two months of ch. xi. 2, and if my interpretation of that period be right (see notes to ch. xi. 9, p. 561) it relates to the period between the destruction of Jerusalem A.D. 70, and the end of the old world period about A.D. 112; a period of about 42 years, from Rev. vi. 1—2 to Rev. xi. 18. The birth of the man child is placed before the wilderness tarriance of the woman, she flees into the wilderness at and after the birth, where she remains 1260 days, or (v. 14), a time, and times, and half a time, which mystically is the same as 1260 days (mystical), see Rev. xi. 9, notes. If this be the true interpretation, then the point of time of the birth of the man child is left undetermined. It may have been at Pentecost, it may have been after that time, but before the destruction of Jerusalem, before i.e. the beginning of the 1260 days' period which began with that event, see Rev. vi. 1—2, n.; and Rev. xi. 2, n. It may have been at our Lord's
7 And there was war in heaven: Michael and his

resurrection, in which, as Paul says, our Lord was declared to be the
Son of God with power, see Rom. i. 4.

7. And there was war in heaven, &c.] It does not appear
whether John himself witnessed this scene as a then present fact, or
whether this war he speaks of in heaven was a past event, or whether even
a future event, a vision within a vision as in ch. vii. 3 and x. 3 (see notes
there), a vision closely related to the vision of the woman and the man
child, but not defined as to the date of its occurrence. It is an event
happening in the heavenly places, and an event that had consequences
bearing on the course of the Church on earth (therefore introduced here,
in connection with the vision of the Church). "The dragon" here is
the devil, see v. 9. In Dan. xii. 1, we find Michael the archangel
mentioned as the helper of the elect in Israel during the troubles and
conflicts of the last times (the times with which the Apocalypse is
concerned). Daniel also mentions Michael (ch. x. 13—21) as the
helper of Israel. In Jude 9 we have a mysterious allusion to him,
where he is called the archangel (i.e. the prince or chief of the
angels). The "war in heaven" spoken of in our text may have
been that rebellion of which we have mention in such passages as
John viii. 44; Jude 6; or were it not that in our text the con-
lict spoken of is between Michael and Satan, we might place
this conflict of the powers of evil with the powers of God, during
our Lord's incarnate ministry, when He came to destroy the works
of the devil, 1 John iii. 8, n. Such a conquest was potentially

1 [.Protocol (Michael) signifies "who is
like unto God"] "Quis ut Deus" (Jer.)
"The Rabbinical traditions about Mi-
achel are very numerous. They oppose
him constantly to Sammael, the accuser
and enemy of Israel. They give him the
title of the great High Priest in heaven,
and teach that wherever Michael is said
to have appeared there the glory of the
Shechinah is intended." "They intended
to typify the Messiah," Dict. of Bible,
Art. Michael.

Can it be that Michael is in our text
one of the forms under which our Lord
condescends to represent Himself? "The
Prince of the Angels," "who is like unto
God." And is the war between Michael
and the devil here spoken of, the war
which our Lord Himself as the Divine
Man in His incarnation waged with him,
and won for man the Mount Zion of God,
from which Satan is cast out, where he is
made of no effect. Philo speaks of the
Archangel as the Eldest Word standing
as a Mediator. [See Quis Rer. Div.
Haer. In Targ. Esther Michael is called
the Prince of Jerusalem. The Targum on
Exod. xxiv. 1 terms him "the Prefect of
Wisdom." The name מיכאל is regarded
as an epitome of יִּמְלָכֹת הָאַלְגָּא מ
Exod. xv. 11. See khamokha batlim
Yehovah. Ed.]
angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels,

8 And prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven.

achieved in our Lord's life, death, resurrection and ascension, when He having condescended to become man did, on the level of human nature, fight man's battles with Satan and by His death and resurrection win back for man the lost inheritance (see Col. ii. 15). In this conflict of our Lord with the powers of darkness during His human ministry¹, and in His death; in this leading captive in triumph (Col. ii. 15) the principalities and powers in His resurrection, it may be that Michael and his angels were also engaged, with our Lord, and it may be therefore to our Lord's conflict with and victory over Satan that our text (Rev. xii. 7) refers, and if so, the reason of the introduction of this scene in the vision of the woman and the man child is manifest, because it was by this conflict and this victory that a place was established and a region cleared, wherein Satan should no longer have absolute power to prevail against the saints (see n. to v. 9 below). The body of Christ, the Church, the Mount Zion of God was established "in the midst of his enemies," Ps. cx. 2; Rev. xiv. 1—5; 1 John ii. 27, 28, n.; 1 Pet. ii. 24. The strong tower to which the Lord's little ones entering through Him the door find a place of safety, where the power of the devil is made of none effect through our Lord's own work in the flesh. If this work be referred to in the conflict spoken of in our text, the vision was fitly introduced here as the prelude to the vision of the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5. This victory, this realized deliverance is attained by believers, if they follow our Lord along the new and living way, Himself, which He has established as their means of escape from the darkness and unrest, the sin and misery of this world through His own death and reconciliation to the Mount Zion of God (see on Rev. xiv. 1—5). This is the calling and glory of believers in this Dispensation. It is only as we thus come out of the world and enter into communion with the Lord Jesus that this day of Christ becomes to us a joy and a delight. If we abide in the shadows of this world even though we may not be numbered with the beast and his image, yet if our faith does not bring us to the Mount Zion we shall be ever halting

¹ It is worthy of note that our Lord's ministry on earth was probably 3½ years, a time and times and half a time, just as the time of the woman in the wilderness was. Ch. xii. 14.
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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.

on our way, ever faithless, ever subject to the assaults of the Evil One, who still has power over those who abide in Babylon and who either fail to find, or will not find the Mount Zion of communion, where alone there is safety and rest and peace (Rev. xiv. 1—5). The “one” truth that in the conflict between the powers of sin and righteousness our Lord’s victory has established a kingdom in which the power of the Evil One is made of none effect for those who abide in Him, is true throughout the whole range of the Divine government, whether in the dispensation or in the soul of man in heaven or on earth. Whether the conflict between Michael and the devil here described by John is introduced as a present event, or as one past or as one that was yet in the future, when John wrote, whether it belonged only to the 1260 days of the wilderness estate of the Church, vv. 6 and 14 or not, it is still true, that just as the angels are ministers to the saints, Heb. i. 14, so do the powers of evil war against the angels in their ministry and hinder them so long as the soul is still in the mists and darkness of Egypt.

9. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, &c.] This casting out of the Devil and his angels, as the result of the warfare described (in ver. 7) above represents (I believe) the great fact that the Mount Zion, the city of God, the place of joy and peace and rest for the saints (see ch. xiv. 1—5) can no longer be defiled by the Devil and his angels. This Mount Zion is the dwelling-place of the Lord in His Parousia on earth, as also in heaven in the midst of His enemies. As yet we see not the full consummation of His redeeming work, as yet we see not all things put under Him, Heb. ii. 8. “But we see Jesus crowned,” Heb. ii. 9. We see the Mount Zion established in the midst of the nations, the sign of

1 This casting out of Satan, this preparation of a place of safety for the saints, leads on to the manifestation of the Mt. Zion, which is the N. T. equivalent for the expressions we find, Psalm xviii. 2, “The Lord is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer...and my high tower;” xxxi. 2, 3, “Be thou my strong rock for an house of defence to save me. ...Thou art my rock and my fortress;” 4, “Thou art my strength”; Dent. xxxiii. 27, “The eternal God is thy refuge”; Isaiah xxxv. 4, “A refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat;” xxxii. 2, “As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;” xlix. 2, li. 16, “In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me;” Psalm ix. 9, “The Lord also will be a refuge;” xiv. 6, “The Lord is his refuge;” xlv. 1, “God is our refuge and strength;” xxvii. 5, xxxi. 20, xl. 2.
10 And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, 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.

His conquest, and the pledge that the Mount Zion of God shall ultimately dominate the whole scene, see Rev. xxii. 3, 4; 1 John ii. 27, 28; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 10—13. Satan is cast out of this glorious Mount Zion, the city of the saints, the Church of the firstborn, see Heb. xii. 22, 23. He and his angels are cast out into the earth, that is, into the state which is described as Babylon, Egypt, Sodom, the seat of the Beast, the whole region outside of the Mount, inhabited by the "men of this world," here Satan still dwells and reigns. This is the state of the world now. It is the habitation of evil spirits as well as of human beings, and yet there is in the midst of it as a place of safety and peace, and rest and joy, the Mount Zion of God, Rev. xiv. 1—5; 1 John ii. 27, 28; see 1 John v. 19 (written in the times of the Parousia), "we are of God and the whole world lieth in the wicked one." In the Millennial age (see on. ch. xx. 1—3) Satan is to be cast even out of the earth into the abyss.

10. And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ] (See ch. xi. 15, n.) This song in heaven is the song of victory over the evil one, and the song of praise in the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth, and the power of His Christ in the Mount Zion, see ch. xiv. 1—5, notes, the reign of Christ in His Parousia, the established glory of the day of Christ, pledge and assurance that the kingdoms of this world shall ultimately become the kingdoms of our God and of His Christ, ch. xi. 15. That potentially they are so already, that ultimately they shall so be, both potentially and actually, the future conquest lies in the present, as the plant in the seed, it is there potentially. The new heavens and the new earth are already potential facts.

cast down] See on v. 9.

the accuser of our brethren...which accused them before our God day and night] It is noteworthy in this connection that,

1 This Mount Zion, the place of the Church of the firstborn, is no existing Church, yet doubtless composed of numbers gathered out of all human churches and societies.
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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.

12 Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitors 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.

in the tradition books of the Jewish Church, it says, that “every day except the Day of Atonement Satan is the accuser of men,” Vayikra Rabba, sect. 21.

11. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb] Better, because of the blood of the Lamb. It was because our Lord’s blood had been shed, because of His death, and yet more because of His resurrection, that the saints (ἁγιά) overcame and still overcome the evil one, loving not their lives (life, ψυχή); they conquer through our Lord’s death and resurrection (see Acts xvii. 3; John xii. 24, 25, notes), and the total surrender of their lives, even to death, unto Him.

the word of their testimony] See v. 17 below, “the testimony of Jesus.”

12. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them, &c.] The note of rejoicing is here continued, but a note of woe is added, for those among whom the devil is come to dwell, “having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.” This short time may be the part of the 1260 (mystical) days that remained, and it may relate to some special persecution of the Church during that period, between the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the old world period of which Ecclesiastical History gives us no record, of which we have no account save only this prophetic vision in the Apocalypse. This short time may be thus interpreted, but it may be that it relates to the period past, present and future, between the day of judgment of ch. xi. 18 and the day of judgment of ch. xx. 11—25. The one only place of safety from his assaults is the Mount Zion of God (Heb. xii. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 10; Rev. xiv. 1—5) where our Lord reigns in

1 [This weird superstition is conjured out of the fact that the numeral letters ῬΩΜΗ i.e. the Satan amount to 364 (= 50 +9 +300 +5) which equals the days of the year minus one, therefore the Jews infer that he controls all the year round except one day—viz. the Day of Atonement. This portentous fact is asserted in the Talmud, Yoma, fol. 20a. Ed.]
13 And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child.

the glory of His Parousia in the midst of His enemies, Psalm cx. For the "short time," short as measured by eternity, the devil has power for the time, i.e. between the end of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18, n., the setting up of the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5, until the Mount Zion shall dominate the whole scene and the new heavens and the new earth shall take the place of the old, Rev. chaps. xxi. and xxii. There may be saved souls in this multitude among whom the devil works, but they are not where they ought to be in the glory of the Parousia, separate from the world. They have not fled for refuge to the hope prepared for them, see v. 9 above. They have not surrendered themselves wholly to Christ, they have not reached the Mount Zion through the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, v. 11, n.

13. And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, &c.] This casting out of the dragon from the heavenly places into the earth represents (as already said, see notes to vv. 8, 9, 10, 12 above) the casting out of the evil one from the Mount Zion, the establishment of some region (the Mount) in the heavenly places (mystical) which shall be impregnable to his attacks, a city of refuge for the saints, the dwelling-place of Christ and His holy ones (see notes Rev. xiv. 1—5), where the evil one is made of none effect (1 John v. 18). This Mount Zion above, the city that hath the foundations (Heb. xi. 10; xii. 22), had ever been the hope of the saints to which they looked forward by faith. This vision of the woman and the man child leads up to it, as also does this war in heaven, but the manifested fact does not appear in the vision until ch. xiv. 1—5 as one of the great facts of the Parousia.

he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child] This portion of the Church subject to the assaults of the evil one represents her in that intermediate state between the destruction of Jerusalem, Rev. vi. 1, 2 and the day of the manifested glory of the Parousia of our Lord, ch. xiv. 1—5, she was then in the wilderness; this was one of the dispensations of tribulation that the Church had to pass through, the 1260 days' period (mystical). The woman, the Church, and her seed (v. 17) were as sheep in the wilderness subject to the assaults of the wild beast, without the place of refuge, that was preparing but was not then as yet manifested, the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5; (see Heb. xii. 22, 23). There were throughout the 1260 days' period souls
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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.

that belonged to Christ (see notes to chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 13—17; xiii. 15; xiv. 7, 8); but they were still in the world, not gathered yet into the shelter of the Parousia of the Lord, and of the Mount Zion. There may have been during the Judaeo-Christian period (1260 days mystical) some special troubles of the saints about which history is silent; certainly there was the death of the two witnesses and the subversion of the truth they preached, A.D. 70 to A.D. 112.

14. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, &c.] "The great eagle," ὁ ἄεις ὁ μεγάλος, from this definite mention, had probably some recognized meaning at the date of the Apocalypse, a meaning of which we have no record. All we can understand by it is that the Church was removed into the wilderness and nourished there according to the divine purpose for "a time, and times, and half a time," see v. 6, n. above. It is to be noted in our text that the "time, and times, and half a time" is the measure only of the wilderness period of the Church, not the period of the persecution of the serpent (the Devil), the dragon (see v. 9, n. above). The dragon, the serpent, the devil, and Satan are here various forms for one being, see v. 9, n. above. The time of the persecution is not defined. It might be that this vision relates only to some particular persecution of the Church during the period of "a time, and times, and half a time," or it may be that the "short time" of v. 12 above carries us on to the close of our aeon when "death and hell shall be cast into the lake of fire," ch. xx. 14; see notes to vv. 12 and 13. "Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" Matt. viii. 29. Anyhow the Church on earth was in her wilderness state for the period of "a time, and times, and half a time," until, may we not say, the consummated reign of our Lord on the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, in the glory of His Parousia, see notes [ad loc. cit.].

15. And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, &c.] This is a mystery; what was the water which the H.

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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

serpent cast out of his mouth? How was the woman, the Church, to be carried away with it? It might be some form of heresy, such as that by which the beast from the abyss, ch. xi. 7 (see note there), made war against the two witnesses. It may possibly be the same heresy under another form, by which the very existence of the Church was threatened during the “1260 days” period.

16. And the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, &c.] In some way or other the threatened fate of the Church, the woman, is averted by what appears to be her enemy (the earth). This circumstance of the purposes of the dragon is somewhat similar to the circumstance by which Babylon is ultimately to be destroyed by her own people (see on ch. xvii. 16). The earth here takes service against the dragon, just as in ch. xvii. 16 the powers of this world make Babylon desolate.

17. And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, &c.] Failing in his assault on the Church, the devil proceeds to “make war with the rest of her seed who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus.” See on chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 3, 13; xii. 13—17; xiii. 7, 8.

the remnant of her seed] The elect remnant at this time composed of Jews and Gentiles. Not only the references throughout the 1260 days of the vision, and also the fact that they were written by John, Rev. xi. 19, in anticipation of there being such a remnant to profit by his prophecy; but also the fact that John himself survived into the latter part of the 1260 days and wrote his First Epistle during “the last hour,” all shew how throughout the whole period the golden thread of the

1 [In the legendary lore of Jewry, a similar story is related among the adventures of Abraham. Satan we are told conjured up a stream to thwart the sacrifice of Isaac, but in answer to prayer, ‘the stream vanished away;’ after which Satan made several other abortive attempts to turn Abraham from his purpose. The parallels are obvious and their relationship is equally apparent. Ed.]
keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIII.

1 And I stood upon the sand of the sea, and saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten crowns, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy.

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.

Elect carried on the truth from age to age, and came out brightly in ch. xiv. vv. 1—5, the prelude to chaps. xxi. and xxii.

1. And I stood upon the sand of the sea] The amended text reads, and he stood upon the sand of the sea, in which case these first words of our text would belong and probably do belong to the previous Chapter.

and saw a beast rise up out of the sea] That is, it arises in the vision as the sun rises; it now became a part of the vision. It did not now begin to be, but now it appeared to view.

2. And the beast...was like unto a leopard, &c.] See Dan. vii. 3—8. There is a remarkable resemblance between the vision here described by John and the vision described in the seventh chapter of Daniel; the variations in the parallel strengthen the idea that both visions deal with the same thing. Daniel in vision sees four great beasts arise from the sea, the first like a lion with eagle’s wings, the second like a bear, the third like a leopard, and the fourth dreadful and terrible and strong exceedingly with teeth of iron. These four beasts in Daniel’s prophecy are generally supposed to represent the four great empires of the world, the Assyrian, the Medo-Persian, the Greek, and the Roman, and each appears before him in succession as a single beast (wild beast). John however in his vision sees only one beast, but the beast he sees unites in its character the features of the first three beasts of Daniel’s prophecy and is generally interpreted as identical with the fourth and last beast of Daniel, and as representing the Roman
3 And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to
death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the
world wondered after the beast.

4 And they worshipped the dragon which gave power
unto the beast: and they worshipped the beast, saying,
Who is like unto the beast? who is able to make war
with him?

Empire which at the time John wrote had absorbed into itself the other
empires.

3. And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to
death, &c.] The words "I saw" are not in the Greek text, the words
read, "and one of his heads as it were wounded (perf. part.) to death
and his deadly wound was healed" (i. a. pass.). The words simply
describe the beast as John saw him, "with a deadly wound healed." The
wound and the healing are no part of the action of the drama, they are
simply descriptive of the beast (just as colour or size might be). The
marks of some past event were still on the beast when John sees it, as
in Rev. v. 6 of the Lamb, "a lamb as it had been slain." The deadly wound
would probably be some event in the preceding history of the Roman
power, such perhaps as the passing over from the Republic to the Empire,
through a period of danger¹, a wound that was healed when John saw
the vision, but the marks of which were still evident. In v. 14 below
the wound is spoken of as "a wound by the sword."

4. And they worshipped the dragon, &c.] This all appears
to relate to Pagan Rome, and to the assumption of divine honours by
the emperors (Nero, Domitian, &c.), and also the worship of the effigies
and insignia of empire, whether statues of the emperors or the symbols

¹ The deadly "wound by the sword" (ch. xiii. 14) may have been the conspir-
acy of Catiline, or the death of Caesar (Julius), or the Social or the Servile War,
B.C. 88—71, any one of which might be termed a deadly wound, a wound of
which the scar was still visible.

The mysteries of history are hidden
under these figures of the beast. It may
be said, why does John conceal his mes-
sage under such hieroglyphs? The an-
swer is that the vision was revealed to
John in this form and John only records
what he saw, just as Daniel did; and
though John himself understood the hid-
den mystery, and though John's disci-
pies (such as had the key) could interpret
the hieroglyph, yet the very form in
which the vision was revealed to John
was purposely adopted in order that
"the world" should not see and under-
stand (destroy when it understood) the
prophetic record of its own Evil likeness.
5 And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months.

of their rule, also the images of the Roman gods. We find the record of such things in Pliny’s letter to Trajan about A.D. 107.

5. And there was given unto him a mouth speaking great things, &c.] The latter part of this sentence is, word for word, from Dan. vii. 8 (LXX.); see also Rev. ch. xvii. 3.

and power was given unto him to continue forty and two months] [Lit. and authority was given to it to work forty-two months.] This word ‘to work,’ and the limit of ‘forty-two (mystical) months,’ both point to the conclusion that the time referred to in our text is the forty-two years or thereabouts between Rev. vi. 1 and Rev. xi. 18, between the destruction of Jerusalem and the day of judgment of the old world period, or according to human chronology the time between A.D. 70 and about A.D. 112. During this time it was given to continue to make war against the saints (see v. 7), and though during the time the care of the Lord was still over His Church, yet the reign of Christ in the glory of the Parousia on the Mount Zion (ch. xiv. 1—5), was not as yet an accomplished fact. This mention of 42 months fixes the term of the working of the beast in the vision to the same period as that mentioned in ch. xi. 2, which is, in all probability, identical with the 1260 days of ch. xi. 3, and ch. xii. 6; identical also with the time, and times, and half a time of Daniel vii. 25 (LXX.), where the prophet, speaking of the fourth beast (the Roman empire (?)) “who shall devour the whole earth” (Dan. vii. 23), says the saints shall be given into his hand until a time, and times, and the dividing (half, LXX.) of a time (when his dominion (over the saints) shall end), meaning, as I suppose, that the time of the saints on earth during the 1260 days’ period was to be a bad time for them (see ch. xii. 13—17, note), and not until the establishment of the reign of Christ in the glory of the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, would there be that strong tower, that place of refuge and safety, where the power of the devil and the beast cannot work: his writs do not run in that land. The consummation of the reign of Christ in His Parousia would be throughout this period, as also it had been throughout the

1 The continuance of the beast for 42 months means probably that he had special power against the saints whilst the Church was homeless and houseless in the wilderness during this her appointed time, see ch. xii. 6, before the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1 was established as her place of safety and shelter.
6 And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.

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.

Apostolic period, the one hope of the saints. It was in process through-out, but was not perfected as was also the Church, as was also Anti-christ, I John ii. 18. The establishment of the Mount Zion as the place of refuge of the saints determines the limit of the period of forty and two months during which the beast has power to make war against them to overcome them. The Mount Zion presents a place of safety, “the secret of His tabernacle” wherein the saints are at rest; even the persecuted and slain (see Luke xxi. 16, 18, n.). The Mount Zion (ch. xiv. 1—5) appears in its glory at the close of 1260 days’ period, see notes to Rev. xiv. 1—5.

6. And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God] Cf. Dan. vii. 25, πρὸς τὸν Ἁγιασμόν.

to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven] The tabernacle here is God’s dwelling-place in Christ, dawning on the earth throughout this 1260 days’ period, Rev. viii. 3, 4, n.; and xi. 1, 2, n., consummated at the close of this period in ch. xiv. 1—5, when the Mount Zion is established in the midst of the earth, the city of refuge for the saints, see notes on ch. xiv. 1—5. Until that place of refuge is established the Church remains in the wilderness, ch. xii. 6—14, and the saints are persecuted by the dragon, ch. xii. 17.

7. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them, &c.] See Dan. vii. 21. So mighty was the power of the devil working through the beast, the power of iniquity working in and through the universal empire of pagan Rome, that the saints were overcome. In what sense this overcoming is to be taken is not certain. From the single evidence of Pliny’s letter to Trajan (quoted supra), it would appear that many who professed Christianity were overcome by the terrors of torture and death and renounced Christ, but these could not have been such as are spoken of in v. 8, their names could hardly have been in the Book of Life. This opens the question whether there is not a certain standing in Christ from which it is impossible to fall, and on the other hand whether there is not a state of pupilage in which believers may be overcome? see 2 Cor. vi. 1. In ch. xi. 7 we
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.

find the same expression used in regard to the two witnesses. In their case we cannot suppose that the overcoming was their perdition.

8. And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, &c.] These words (I suppose) express the universal dominion of pagan Rome, and also her power in subduing all the nations to her authority (see v. 7 above). All worship him (the Beast) (see vv. 1 and 2, n.) whose names are not written in the Book of Life, ἐν τῇ βιβλίῳ τῶν ἄγνωστων, see Rev. iii. 5; xvii. 8; xx. 12—15; xxi. 27; xxi. 19; Dan. xii. 1; this note of exception to those who could be overcome by the Beast, or rather, who worship the Beast, is a spiritual test. It is they, and they only, whose names are in the Book of Life who do not worship the Beast. This record in the Book of Life is a spiritual fact, and sheds back light to some extent on v. 7, seeming to give to the word "overcome" in that passage a mystical and spiritual rather than physical meaning, and to imply that the Beast by his power would overcome the faith of some of the saints. Still, it is not clear, because whilst the word is "overcome" in v. 7, it is "worship" in v. 8. At any rate they whose names are in the Book of Life did not worship the Beast, whatever other power he might have against them. All this is the permitted power of evil, part of the harmony of the divine Epos, but hard to understand; it all relates to the 1260 days' period (mystical), the 42 months (see v. 5, n. above). The Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5 was not established in the midst of the nations. The Book of Life of the Lamb, see notes to chaps. iii. 5; xvii. 8; xx. 12—15; xxi. 27; xxi. 19; Phil. iv. 3; Exod. xxxii. 32; Ps. xlix. 28; Dan. xii. 1. This Book of Life, by which the dead of this present generation are to be judged (see ch. xx. 12—15, n.), is the law of the spirit of the life in Christ Jesus; our likeness or unlikeness to Christ will judge us in that day. Do the books of our lives correspond with the Book of Life? In another sense, are our names there, or have they been blotted out? ch. iii. 5, n. It must remain uncertain whether the words "from the foundation of the world" belong to the word "slain," or whether they indicate that the "names" in that book were written there from the foundation of the world. [The balance of probability however is in favour of construing ἀπὸ καταβολῆς κόσμου with γέραται rather than with ἐσφαγμένον: the passage would then read, written from the foundation of the world in the book of the life of the Lamb who hath been slain. Ed.] See Ps. lxx. 28.
9 If any man have an ear, let him hear.

10 He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.

9. If any man have an ear, let him hear] [This injunction is intended to bespeak special attention to what follows.] This admonition carries us back to the addresses to the Churches, ch. ii. 7, 11, 17, 28; and ch. iii. 6, 13, 22. Such passages, and specially ch. xxii. 16, shew that the seven churches representing the Church universal are throughout these visions still in John’s mind. It does not appear whence this voice and the following (v. 10) comes, whether it is John’s own comment or a voice out of the infinite as in chaps. xiv. 12, 13; xvi. 15, &c. It specially accents the subject to which it relates, it was one of our Lord’s most frequent words when on earth.

10. He that leadeth into captivity shall go, &c.] Cf. Matt. xxvi. 52; Jer. xv. 2; lxiii. 11. Alford says, “the readings in this passage are in great confusion.” The reading of our Authorized Version would make the words foretell a day of retribution for Rome and her cruelties, but the suggested reading of Alford makes the passage an exhortation to the saints that they must submit to that which is ordained for them under the then dispensation.

He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints] See Jer. xv. 2, “Such as are for death, to death; and such as are for the sword, to the sword; and such as are for the famine, to the famine; and such as are for the captivity, to the captivity;” so also Jer. xliii. 11; Zech. xi. 9. They whose names are in the Book of Life are to accept what our Lord ordains for them. They are to accept the little moment of adversity, looking for the great to-morrow. The end crowns the whole. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints. With v. 10, the vision of the Fourth Beast, the Roman Empire closes: not that the empire was to cease with the close of the vision, but that another scene opens. Rome has been brought on the scene and remains, and becomes more or less identified with what follows. According to Daniel, chaps. vii. 11;

1 These words are open to a different rendering, but if applied to the Roman Empire (as the beast of ch. xiii. 1), they imply that retribution will come as it does in the vision (ch. xix. 20) on the Roman Empire that has been and is the kingdom of the beast, and in which such iniquities have been wrought. See also our Lord’s words, Matt. xxvi. 52.
CHAPTER XIII.

And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb, and he spake as a dragon.

25, the Beast, of which the Roman Power is here the symbol, is ultimately to be destroyed by our Lord.

II. And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth, &c.] The appearance and power of this second beast is no longer limited by the mystical numbers which have defined the periods from ch. xi. 2 onwards (the "forty-two months," "1260 days," "a time, and times, and half a time"). We have reached in the vision a period outside the mystical number, outside i.e. the period of about A.D. 112. We are emerging into the times when ecclesiastical history begins. No limitation is given to the period of this second beast who exerciseth all the power of the previous one, in his presence. It is identified with the previous one in that it works with his power, and in his presence, and magnifies him, but the time of its inception and termination is left indefinite. This second beast is probably, as Alford suggests (see Cr. Gr. Test. in loc.), the sacerdotal spirit, whether Pagan or Christian, as manifested in the Roman Empire = Church and State. It magnifies the power of Empire, it uses it, and makes men worship it. Paganism first did this, and ecclesiasticism followed suit, in the days of Constantine. This beast has the mark of importance upon it. It has the form of a lamb, but the voice of a dragon. The two horns may represent the twofold character of its power, Pagan and Christian, [the working partnership of] Church and State. The sacerdotal system under whatever name assumes a form of righteousness, but its words and acts are of the dragon (the devil, ch. xii. 9). Under the pretence of religion, it exercises the power of the State (the first beast) to carry out its own evil purpose. The Papacy is surely one of the instances in which this power has been manifested. Edified by man at the instigation of the beast (see v. 14 below) it is the ground in which sacerdotalism works. The introduction in v. 11 of the figure of the Lamb may not be without meaning in regard to the following vision, ch. xiv. 1—5, in which the Lamb on the Mount Zion is the prominent figure. It has been well said by some one that there is nothing in the Mount Zion of which the counterfeit may not be found in Babylon. This "Beast and his image" are closely associated with Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, see chaps. xiv. 9—11; xv. 2; xvi. 2, 10—13; xix. 19, 20; xx. 4, 10. This beast of v. 11 may be the antichrist of 1 John ii. 18—21; iv. 3? and the false prophets, chaps. xvi. 13; xix. 20; xx. 10. The
12 And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed.

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

The period of the power of this second beast is left undefined. In ch. xx. 4—10 mention is made of this beast, and we may conclude from the reiterated allusions that he exercises his evil power throughout the whole period to which the Apocalypse relates from this point onwards; see chaps. xiv. 9—11; xv. 2; xvi. 2, 10, 13; xix. 19, 20; xx. 4—10. Is this second beast Antichrist whose number is 666? John does not once mention "Antichrist" by name in the Apocalypse. Irenaeus speaks of the suppression of the name; see Eusebius, Eccl. Hist. iii. 18.

The first beast of v. 1, and the second beast of v. 11, whilst clearly differenced are still bound up so closely one with the other, that it is not quite clear to which the mystical number 666 belongs.

13. And he doeth great wonders, &c.] This second beast who worketh miracles is probably identical with the false prophet of ch. xix. 20, "who wrought miracles before the beast," and identical also with or closely allied to the false prophet of chaps. xvi. 13 and xx. 10, and also with Antichrist (see 1 John ii. 18, notes). The power of Satan (the dragon) working through Sacerdotalism under the power of the State is here described. But the bringing down fire on the earth, as Elias did (Luke ix. 34), in the sight of men must be left a mystery. It perhaps alludes to some of the deeds of sorcery (so called) which were rampant in the world at this time (see Renan on the 1st century, Matt. xxiv. 4).

14. We do not know to what extent the principalities and powers of evil (see Rom. viii. 38) have power over the elements of this world. Probably more than we imagine. The wonders here spoken of were permitted to the second beast (of xv. 11, 12) to be worked by him in the presence of the beast (i.e. the beast of ch. xiii. 3, who had the wound
15 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed.

16 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and

that was healed), (the power of Rome). The sacerdotal power was permitted to work such miracles before the powers of the earth, then the Roman power, so that men were deceived thereby (see 2 Thess. ii. 9, 10, a parallel instance), so deceived that they themselves made an image of the beast which "had the wound by a sword and did live" (see note to v. 3 above). Here only it is said that the wound was by the sword. The image of the beast, the image of empire, which the second beast caused the people of the earth to make, was and is probably that organized system of sacerdotalism based on the ideal of empire, which both Pagan sacerdotalism and ecclesiastical sacerdotalism has fabricated; all that is not of the mind of Christ whether in sects or Churches\textsuperscript{1}. Take for instance, as one out of many, the Papal system, of which the hierarchal system in the modern sects and churches is an offshoot. The Papal system is literally framed on the ideal of empire.

15. And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, &c.] I.e. the beast of vv. 1—2. Sacerdotalism in the hands of the false Prophet and Antichrist backed by the power of the State here becomes a living organized thing, persecuting and killing those who will not worship it; witness all the wickedness wrought in the name of religion and of religious systems from the 1st century onwards, specially when Ecclesiasticism got the Power of Empire in Constantine. These are the things that sacerdotalism whether Pagan or Christian has ever done. The "image" here is the outward form, "the organization" in and through which the sacerdotal spirit works.

16. And he causeth all] I.e. the second beast, the beast of vv. 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, who exerciseth the power of the first beast (v. 12), the power of empire and worldly rule of which Rome is the type (see

\textsuperscript{1} Lightfoot (Philippians, p. 100) says, "As late as the year 70 no distinct signs of episcopal government have hitherto appeared in Gentile Christendom, yet unless we have recourse to a sweeping condemnation of received documents, it seems vain to deny that early in the second century the episcopal office was firmly and widely established. The circumstances under which it was effected are shrouded in darkness; and various attempts have been made to read the obscure enigma."
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.

v. 2 above, n.); "And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark &c."

a mark] This "mark," χαραγμός, is to be found from this point in the vision forward to ch. xx. 4, shewing that the things with which this vision are concerned are not local and temporary but continuous. They are present with us now, as then, and as they will yet also be. This "mark of the beast" is in its character like the stigmata of which Paul speaks, Gal. vi. 17, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." A stamp or brand denoting ownership. Paul's was the stigma of Christ the Lord, John's is the stigma of the Beast. Each master stamps his own children with his own mark, both the Lord Jesus, and the Beast. "There is nothing in Zion of which the counterpart (or counterfeit) may not be found in Babylon." The elect of God were sealed in their foreheads (ch. vii. 3, n.), just as the servants of the beast are marked in their foreheads with the mark, or the name, or the number, of the beast, see v. 17.

17. And that no man might buy or sell, &c.] Better, that no man should be able to buy or sell, but he that hath the mark, the name of the beast, or the number of his name. As Alford says (Cr. Gr. Test. in loc.), "this seems to point to the commercial and spiritual interdicts which have, both by Pagan and by Papal persecutors, been laid on non-conformity." "The mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name." The two beasts, the one of vv. 1 and 2 and the other of v. 11, are so involved in each other's identity, and both with "the image" of the (first) beast (the image being man-made (v. 14)), that it is not easy to say whether the mark of the beast, and the name, and the number, in this verse (17), apply to the first beast (Empire), or to the second beast (Sacerdotalism), under the ministry of the false Prophet? "The number of his name," see ch. xv. 2. The subjects of the beast have in them the number of his name (see next verse), 666, i.e. millions of people past and present on the earth have on them somehow and somewhere the number of the name, and the number is six hundred and sixty-six, and yet no man can interpret it, or say what the number means (see notes to next verse). Which beast is here alluded to? Is it the beast of vv. 1, 2,
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.

the Roman Empire, or the beast of v. 11, Sacerdotalism? In v. 16 the beast (of v. 11) causes all to receive “a mark,” this in v. 17 is called “the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.”

Alford quotes a var. lect. for τὸν θηρίον, “of the beast,” ἄραρῶν, “of him;” this would indicate that the second beast and not the first was intended [instead of “the name of the beast,” the amended text would read “the name of him”]. The question is important, as bearing on the interpretation of v. 18, because the interpretation of this verse determines whether the number 666 belongs to the first or to the second beast.

18. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count, &c.] These words imply that the number of the beast may be interpreted. [The early Christian Church had a disciplina arcani of its own, and “Wisdom” seems here to be used in the sense of the Rabbinical term נאום (Kabbalah), as much as to say, Here is an abstruse proposition intelligible only to adepts and initiates. En.]

it is the number of a man, &c.] The number is a man’s number, ἄραρῶν ἄραρίῳ ἐκίσων. “It is a man’s number.” It is a human number, it is six hundred and sixty-six. “Let him that hath understanding interpret the number.” This is the challenge, which no one now seems able to take up. The numerical equivalent of the name is 666, this is its arithmetical value, what then is the name? Irenaeus suggested the word 

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666

1 [For several curious coincidences see Supplementary Note infra, pp. 590—592.]
THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE ON THE MYSTIC NUMBER.

X = 5.

[In regard to the solution of the Kabbalistic problem of Rev. xiii. 18] Alford considers Λατέινος as the best venture that has yet been made (see his Cr. Gr. Test. in loc., also his Proleg. to Rev. p. 199), see also Wordsworth, Cr. Gr. Test. in loc. Hippolytus quotes Λατείνος = Latin, as a probable solution of the number of the beast. The solution is reasonable in so far as the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2 (see notes there) is in all probability identical with the fourth beast of Daniel, chap. vii. 7, 8, 19—23, and is in all probability the symbol of the Roman or Latin Empire. But the beast of our text, ch. xiii. 18, is not probably the Roman Empire, and it is to the second beast (the beast of ch. xiii. 11) in all probability that John refers when he says that the number of the beast is 666.

If the word Λατείνος [= Latin] is really the equivalent for 666 in what sense can it be said in Rev. xv. 2 that the victorious ones on the glassy sea have overcome Lateinos [taking it to stand for] the Roman Empire? Perhaps in this, that throughout the vision the idea of the Roman Empire stands for the equivalent of Empire, the worldly spirit, the place where Babylon rules and reigns, "the spirit of the age," the world, and that the Holy Ones of Rev. xv. 2 have overcome the world. See Ἰ. John ii. 14, 15: "Ye have overcome the Wicked One; Love not the world." See also on Rev. xv. 2, and mark the force of [the preposition] ἐκ. They had come out victorious from "the world," there are many things in life which we have to escape from (i.e. out of) rather than vanish.

This second beast is identified with the first in many things, but the two are not identical powers. The latter exercises all the power of the former, and causes men to worship the former one, and to make an image to it (an image of the former, 15). When it is said of the second beast (the beast i.e. of v. 11) that he exerciseth all the power of the first beast (i.e. of the beast of vvr. 1 and 2), let it be remembered that it was the power of the dragon (the devil, xii. 9) and his throne and great authority that were given to the first beast. The principalities and powers of whom John here speaks are the principalities and powers of empire and sacerdotalism, of ecclesiasticism and antichrist working under the power of Satan.

At this period of the vision, Satan and his angels have been already cast down among men ("the inhabiters of the earth and the sea," v. 12), and the two beasts that are spoken of in this chapter as arising, one out of the sea (v. 1), and the other out of the earth (v. 11), are his ministers of wrath and darkness. They are of the same kindred also as the beast from the abyss of ch. xi. 7, and as, the destroyer of ch. ix. 11. All, together, they make one great power of darkness, instruments of the devil. Where Satan works they work, individually and collectively. The power of the Lord, in His Parousia, which cast out from the Mount Zion of the saints the devil and his angels,

1 The beast of ch. xi. 7 seems to be identical with the beast of ch. xiii. 1; see notes to ch. xi. 7.
cast them down, also may we not say? into the earth, where they work their
evil will (see notes on ch. xii. 9, 10; see also notes on the Mount Zion, ch.
xiv. 1—5).

[It is to be noted throughout the Apocalypse that John enters very little
into detail either of right or wrong doing. He speaks of principles and
powers, and the agencies, by which nations and peoples are influenced. He
attaches personality to these powers, but he seldom follows out these world-
comprehending powers into definite action.]

Here and there he throws in a touch of real life, as for instance in the
interdict of v. 17 against the exclusiveness of Roman sacerdotalism.
[Adropos to this inquiry we may remark that Lateinos is but one
of several correlative terms having the same arithmetical value, 666,
each of them qualifying as a witness for Rome in its capacity of Antichrist.
Every argument for ΔΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ applies with equal force to Ἐλληνιλ (Romish),
its literal translation into Hebrew, which version curiously enough presents
the same ominous total. Ἰατρικὴ Ἑλληνική, an Aeolian term, meaning "the
Italian Church," is another of these equi-numeral phrases, so also is Ἡ
Δαυτιρ Βασιλεία; the aptness of which is unmistakable. In the Latin
formulae Vicarvs Filii Dei, "the Vicar (or the Deputy) of the Son of God,
and Vicarvs generallis Dei in terris, "the Vicar-general of God on earth,
those letters which are Roman numerals add up to precisely the same
amount. Ἀκατάσταξ, "the western Father" or "Pope," may be equated to
the same numerical standard. Another noteworthy example is the word
Apostate, Ἀποστάτης, every letter of the word entering into the calculation.
This epithet, be it remembered, is the historical nickname of Julian who
abjured Christianity when he became Emperor of Rome (circ. A.D. 370).
The name of Nero Caesar may be interpreted in like manner, for its Greek
form Νερός Καίσαρ written out in Aramaic יְנָרַב renders the same result.
Some think that this ambiguous cryptograph alludes to Titus the destroyer
of Jerusalem under the name of Ταύς, a word subject to the same mysteri-
ous valuation? The name itself is aptly adopted from the giants in
classic lore are said to have besieged the abode of the gods, and were there-

1 [Διδεῖν = 30 + 1 + 200 + 5 + 10 + 50 + 70 + 500 in all 666, so Ψεύδειλ i.e. 666]
8 [I.e. 200 + 60 + 100 + 50 + 6 + 200 + 50 = 666, or by omitting the final
n (l) of the name proper it = 616 and thus
corresponds to a well-known various
reading in the stating of this problem.]
9 [Ταύς = 666 thus made up 300 + 5 + 10 + 300 + 1 + 50; and here again the
final n (r) being omitted we have 616.
616 is also the numerical valuation of the
two Caesars, i.e. Caligula, and
3 + 1 + 10 + 70 + 200 + 50 + 
1 + 10 + 200 + 1 + 100.]
fore Antitheists. At the head of this list might have been placed a symbolic term mentioned in Rev. xvii. 5, i.e. the word MYSTERY, for מִשְׁרָאְל its representative in Hebrew, the most natural expression of John, denotes numerically 666. This word has a special feature of interest which has not hitherto been pointed out, it is this—that by an exegetical device of the times the word might have been read Sôtér (σωτήρ), corresponding in sound with the Greek word for "Saviour," σωτήρ, but antithetic in import, the Aramaic term implying "a Destroyer," a presentable analogue to the name of Balaam, the Old Testament type of Antichrist, and also to Nicolas its New Testament apparnarion, thus forming a trinomial illustration of early Christian heresy. This view is substantiated by the Rabbinic appellation of Antichrist viz., Armillus, if the writer is correct in co-ordinating that quaint nomen et omen to the 666 standard. Taking this name as a version of the Greek ἐπιμάχως (that is 'a destroyer of the people') it may be written out in Hebrew characters so as to be equatable with 666, i.e. ש"טולא'). In like manner if we Hebraize the word Κοσμοδέσποτα, "the world deceiver"—as Antichrist is termed in "the Didache" or "the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles" (ch. xvi. 4), we get the same result.

This list of verbal exponents of 666 may fitly conclude with two other coincidences recently discovered by the writer. The first of these is נְבֵיא יִבְנֵי מֶשׁ לִיא (Tsara d'bi Mešiacha), i.e. "the foe of the house (or the household) of the Messiah:" the other exemplification יִנְבֵיא מֶשָׁא (Satana et Yeshua), viz. "the adversary of the cross of Jesus," tells the same tale as the significant phrase χαριτον που στάνει, spelt out as initialized in the three mysterious figures of Rev. xiii. 18, χ’ κ’ κ’. These analogues one and all harmonise with the keynote of Lateinos, the diapason being ROME, Imperial or Ecclesiastical. Ed.]

1 [666 = 300 + 6 + 400 + 60.]  
2 [In the Targum pseudo-Jonathan on Isa. x. 4 it is affirmed that "the Messiah will slay Armillus the wicked."]  
3 [666 = 300 + 6 + 30 + 10 + 40 + 100 + 10 + 70.]  
4 [שימסם i.e. 300 + 50 + 30 + 80 + 6 + 40 + 60 + 100 = 666.]  
5 [666 = 1 + 8 + 10 + 300 + 10 + 1 + 4 + 1 + 200 + 90.]  
6 [666 = 70 + 6 + 300 + 10 + 90 + 70 + 1 + 50 + 9 + 60.]
CHAPTER XIV.

1 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

1. And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb] [More correctly, And I saw, and behold the Lamb, &c.] The Lamb, ὁ ἄριστος. Throughout the Apocalypse John, in speaking of our Lord, continually uses this title. It was by this title "the Lamb of God" that John the Baptist first introduced our Lord to his disciples (see John, ch. i. 29, 36), and we may suppose to the Evangelist himself. The Church of the firstborn on the Mount Zion, eye cannot see nor ear hear the wonders and harmonies of this glorious company, but the spirits of the just even in this mortal state of being are permitted to have a part in the blessing, a foretaste even in this state of existence of the glories of the Bride, the Church, as she exists in the heavenly places with Christ the Lord on the Mount. This foretaste and pledge gives assurance of a future fruition in the fulness [of time]; it is itself the fruition of what we read of in chaps. viii. 1; xi. 1 (see notes there), the consummation of Heb. xii. 22, 23; the fulfilment of our Lord's words (Mark xiv. 58), "I will destroy this temple that is made with hands and...will build another made without hands." The Mount Zion of God now becomes in the vision a manifested fact, not only is it the fruition of ch. viii. 1, the Melchizedek Priesthood, but it is the fruition also of the kingdom that came on earth at Pentecost. The Lord is here reigning as King and Priest.

2. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters] See ch. i. 15, where the voice as of many waters was the voice of our Lord.

and as the voice of a great thunder] See ch. vi. 1, n.

the voice of harpers harping with their harps] ch. v. 8, n.

3. And they sung as it were a new song before the throne,

&c.] On the four living creatures, see notes to ch. vi. 6; respecting the elders, see on ch. iv. 4; the living creatures and the elders share in the
no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth.

4 These are they which were not defiled with women; for they are virgins. These are they which follow the

joys of the Parousia. This description of the joy in heaven at the establishment of the Mount Zion on earth carries us back to ch. v. 8, 9, and the joy in heaven at the opening by our Lord of the seven-sealed Book of the new creation. There was joy in heaven when the book was about to be opened, and there was the voice of thunder, ch. vi. 1, as there is also here when the result of the opening of that book is revealed in the reign of Christ on the Mount Zion with His Elect. The words in ch. v. 9, "Thou hast redeemed us unto God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," anticipate the day which in ch. xiv. 1—5 opens, the day of the new creation, the establishment of the Kingdom of Christ on Earth with the King in His Glory, a present fact, pledge and earnest of a vast future fulfilment described in chaps. xxi. and xxii.; a present fact, in which judgment is already passed on Babylon (see v. 8 below, n.). Just as in chaps. v. and vi. the heavenly host saw in anticipation the future incoming of the new creation as a then present fact, so here, in the incoming of the new creation, the Mount Zion of God is seen in anticipation as though it were already accomplished, the fall of Babylon and the judgment on the beast and his image, vv. 8—11. The thing is potentially done, in the establishment of the Mount of Communion in the midst of the nations, the kingdoms of the world were already potentially (then) the Kingdoms of our Lord, ch. xi. 15, n.

4. for they are virgins] This is one of the [well-defined] points of contrast between Mount Zion and Babylon. On Mount Zion they are [spiritually chaste], whilst those of Babylon present the antithesis. Note throughout the vision the contrast between the two cities, Rev. xvii. 5; and see especially the contrast between Rev. xvii. 1 and Rev. xxi. 9 (notes). Hence we see the reason of Paul's caution to the Corinthians in expectation of the speedy coming in of the times of the Parousia: "The time is closing in—it remaineth, that they that have wives be as though they had none," see 1 Cor. vii. 29, and Gal. v. 24. We are now living under the dispensation of the Parousia, and whoever aspires to be found on the Mount Zion with Christ must be found also under the conditions which are attached to that great grace. It is for those who are [spiritually pure]. It is for such Virgin souls that the home on the Mount Zion is prepared, even during the Apostolic period, before the
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Lamb whithersoever he goeth. These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb.

coming in of the dispensation of the Parousia. Paul magnifies the good estate of those who abstain[ed] from marriage [in the then present emergency], "He that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife. He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord," &c., see 1 Cor. vii. 32—35, and Gal. v. 24, "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the passions and lusts." Our Lord Himself [is our surest guide], He is our example. His character, He Himself, is the test and the touchstone by which all are to be tried, [and] by which all are to live.

These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth] These words describe the oneness that exists between our Lord and His Elect on the Mount, His will is their will, His way is their way, whithersoever He goeth they go.

These were redeemed from among men, being the firstfruits unto God and to the Lamb] Paul, speaking of this Church of the firstborn, 1 Cor. xv. 23, speaks of our Lord Himself as the firstfruit, "Christ the firstfruit, afterward they that are Christ's in His Parousia," meaning that our Lord is the firstfruit of His own work: also that in the dispensation of the Parousia, He is gathering, and will gather, this Church of the firstborn, of which John here speaks, every man in his own order. This Church of the firstborn, the Body of Christ, the Bride, the Church, stands higher in dignity than they who form the Kingdom of Christ, and beyond all conception higher than the innumerable company of the saved. As much higher as at the marriage-supper, the Bride (Rev. xix. 7; xxi. 2) is more honoured than the guests, and the guests than the spectators. It is to be noted that in the following visions in the Apocalypse which represent the times of the Gentiles, including the fortunes of the Church and the fortunes of Babylon, there is no such note of time; all time during this period is left indefinite, the length or shortness of the period, from Rev. xiv. 1 to the consummation of the closing chapters, is dependent on the completion of the elect number, the Church, the Body of Christ on Mount Zion. The incoming of souls to Mount Zion is the dial that marks the duration of the time that has to elapse. Therefore it is foolishness for men to attempt to prophesy when this or that event of the future shall happen —no man knows it. It is remarkable how small a part human effort plays
5 And in their mouth was found no guile: for they are without fault before the throne of God.

in the Apocalyptic vision in bringing about the glorious consummation in the new heavens and the new earth of the Bride, the Church. All that man can do is to come out of Babylon, and join the glorious company on Mount Zion, there to abide in rest and joy with Christ the Lord until the elect number is completed, to come out himself, and then to seek to bring others out also. Having done this he has done all; coming thus into the Divine purpose he has to abide faithful therein unto the end, called and chosen, and faithful. God works in such to will and to do of His good pleasure. Gathered out of the turmoil and unrest of Babylon into the vast ellipse of the Divine purpose into which the Church of the firstborn is gathered, and which it describes, they revolve around Christ the Lord as their centre, knowing little of the times and seasons of the aeons; but knowing that they are where their Lord and Master would have them to be, knowing that they are but working His will when they abide in their true orbit in Him, each forming one tiny arc in that vast curve which marks the course of the Church of the firstborn from her inception until her final glory. They form a part of that glorious Church, but the arc which each saved soul occupies in this vast ellipse is so small as to be too minute for measurement by the soul that occupies it; so that though a soul may be at rest in Christ and filling its place, each in order due and fit degree in its orbit, it cannot from its own tiny arc in that orbit calculate the times and the seasons, or say how near or how distant is the consummation of the aeon of the day of Christ. This is that rest in Christ, that true sabbath-keeping in which man ceases from his own work as God did from His. This is the Sabbath of Sabbaths in which human effort is exchanged for the rest of communion, but still, referring to the opening thought of this section and somewhat qualifying it; whilst human effort plays out a small part in the Sabbath of Communion, this Sabbath rest implies an escape from Babylon, and strong aspirations after the Mount Zion of God, and in these aspirations and this escape there is a conflict and a victory which involves often a whole life of effort in the exercise of the overcoming faith in which the Christian walks, and through which he enters on the Sabbath rest in Christ.

5. they are without fault] Better, they are "without blemish;" ἀμωμος the same word, is used by Paul, Eph. v. 27, for the Church, the Body of Christ, see also Col. i. 22, and of our Lord Himself, Heb. ix. 14. This verse completes the vision of the Mount Zion of God esta-
6 And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that

blished in the midst of the nations. The realized hope of Holy men, Prophets, and Apostles from all time. The vision occupies but a short space in the Apocalypse, but its importance cannot be estimated at too high a rate, not only as the completion of past hope, but also as the pledge of future expectation. The vision presents to us the first instalment in a realized form, of that great consummation which is contained in the last two chapters of the Apocalypse. It presents to us also a representation of the great things that are prepared for us in this dispensation of the Parousia, the great things that are given us in Christ, if only we will yield ourselves to Him in a full surrender of all that we are, and that we have. It represents to us the glories of that communion with our Lord in spirit to which we are called in this dispensation of His Presence (Parousia), “every man in his own order: Christ the first-fruit; afterward they that are Christ’s in His Parousia,” 1 Cor. xv. 23.

In ch. xvii. 14 we get a yet further word of honour in regard to the Church of the firstborn, who stand on the Mount Zion with Christ; they “are called, and chosen, and faithful,” see note to ch. xvii. 14.

6. And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel, &c.] [More exactly, in mid-heaven, ἐν μεσογαώνυμα. See also chaps. viii. 13; xiv. 6; xix. 17. This peculiar term may be not without its significance. It may imply that the Mount Zion which is to be henceforth the place of worship for man, the place where our Lord exercises His Melchizedek Priesthood and Mediation, the worship in spirit and in truth of John iv. 23, is in mid-heaven, i.e. midway between earth and heaven. The base is on the earth, the summit with the throne is in the heavenly places.

the everlasting gospel] [Better, an eternal gospel, εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον.] John nowhere, either in his Gospel or his Epistles, nor in the Apocalypse (except in this instance) uses the word εὐαγγέλιον in the conventional sense of “gospel.” He uses the verb εὐαγγελίζω here and in ch. x. 7, but in both cases probably in the sense of to declare. This vision of the three angels, see vv. 8 and 9, a vision which occupies from v. 6 to v. 13, is again complete in itself, yet is connected both with the vision of the Mount Zion, and the vision of Babylon that follows afterwards. “An everlasting gospel,” εὐαγγέλιον αἰώνιον; this term “everlasting” is nowhere applied to the Gospel, save only in this instance, and not without reason. It was with the establishment of the Mount Zion on earth, and with the incoming of the dispensation of communion described in
dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people,

7 Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters.

v. 1—5 above, that the everlasting righteousness of which Daniel speaks, ch. ix. 24, came in (see Matt. xxiv. 3). Whatever blessings may have accompanied the Gospel before this period, the dispensation of the Parousia, in other words, the establishment of the Mount Zion, was and is the fruition and consummation of all that had gone before, all was truth in part only, 1 Cor. xiii. 12, before this establishment of the kingdom in glory on the earth, as the home of the saints. The dispensation of the Parousia in which we are now living (blindly and ignorantly) is the crowning dispensation gathering up into itself all former dispensations and giving them a new glory, as "the everlasting righteousness" of the new covenant consummated. Hence here and here only, is this Gospel called "the everlasting gospel," because there is none other to follow it, though there are in the everlasting gospel glories as yet unfulfilled, such as are recorded in the Apocalypse, besides, perhaps, yet greater glories of which we have no record at all, and also the glories of eternity of which the best glories here are only foretastes. Therefore it is, in regard to this reign of Christ our Lord in glory as here set forth, that in v. 13, see note there, it is said, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth."

7. Saying with a loud voice, &c.] With the establishment of the Mount Zion, and the making manifest the way into the holy place, which was not before made manifest in its fulness (Heb. ix. 8), comes the call to the whole world to enter upon the true worship, of which the Mount Zion is the Temple, and Christ the Lord in His Melchizedek Priesthood the one High Priest and Minister. This is the worship of which our Lord spoke in anticipation John iv. 23. The way into the holiest is now made manifest. But the Revelation of the Majesty of Christ in His Parousia not only demands worship and praise, it works also fear—"Fear God," a reverent awe, bringing to repentance those who have not repented, working reverence in those who are made partakers of the glory. (The redeemed come to Zion with songs, Isa. li. 11.) The revelation of the Lord to the soul in the glory of His Parousia (see Paul's instance, 1 Tim. i. 16), is the dawn of a new day to the soul. To those who
8 And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication.

accept Him He gives repentance and remission of sin, and an entrance into glory even in this life. To those who are shamed [away] from Him in His Parousia (1 John ii. 28, n.), and reject Him, the glory becomes their shame and confusion. This vision of our Lord on the Mount Zion gathering the Church of the firstborn, His Body and His Bride, is left indefinite, and without limitation. It abides through all the following scenes of torment, and unrest, and judgment on Babylon, and reappears in glory, at the close of the book, as the great fact of the vision, the fact that dwarfs all other facts and before which all the intervening clouds and darkness disappear. "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment," Isaiah i. 27; "When thy judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness," see Tobit xiii. 5—9; throughout all the periods of judgment that intervene between this glimpse of glory and the final manifestation of triumph in chaps. xx. and xxii. we may believe according to 1 Cor. xv. 23, that the Lord is gathering by and into His Parousia, the Church, the Bride, the Body, for the marriage supper; see also Rev. xv. 2, n.

8. And there followed another angel] This angel is the second in regard to the one [mentioned] in v. 6 and the other [spoken of] in v. 9. Babylon is fallen] The thing is, as sure as though it was already accomplished. [In like manner] Isaiah (ch. xxi. 9) pronounced "Babylon is fallen," long before that event occurred. [Here the term Babylon is allegorically used for Rome pagan and papal. From the very dawn of history Babel has been the stereotyped symbol of opposition to God, a strange falsification of its name, Bab II, "the gate of God," (Assyr.) ED.] This is the first mention of Babylon by name in the Apocalypse, though the expression in ch. xi. 8, "the great city," is probably an allusion to Babylon. Babylon (mystical) in the "times of the Gentiles" is answerable to the outward Jerusalem of Gal. iv. 25, when Paul wrote. In both our Lord is ever crucified (Rev. xi. 8, n.). Babylon (mystical) is to the "men of the world," now, what Jerusalem was during the Apostolic period. The fall of outward Jerusalem and the fate of Jerusalem prefigured the fall of Babylon. This (v. 8) is the first mention of the mystical Babylon in the N. T., but the words imply that she had been existent before the announcement of her fall. At this point in the vision outward Jerusalem has already fallen, Rev. vi. 1—17 (see notes there),
9 And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand,

10 The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of though her name has not been mentioned, nor is once mentioned in the Apocalypse. When Babylon also falls (ch. xviii. 2—21) then the mystery is finished. Just as the fall of Jerusalem was to be the day of hope to the Saints (Luke xxii. 28), so the fall of Babylon with all the ruin it will bring on states and nations is the hope of the Saints. When Babylon shall have run her course the times of the Gentiles will be about to be fulfilled. When Babylon is finished, Jerusalem being already finished, then all is about to be finished, Jew and Gentile. The Gentile age is a vaster thing than the Jewish age, both more glorious and more terrible. It embraces the Mount Zion of God in its glory, with the Melchizedek Priesthood of our Lord (which was a far higher order than the Levitical, see Heb. vii. 1—3). It embraces also all the mysteries of wickedness hidden in that great city Babylon, all the glories of iniquity. What is Babylon? see ch. xvii. 1, 2, notes, for the direct relation in which kings and people stand to Babylon. Babylon, the enemy of the Mount Zion, is here brought upon the scene in marked contrast to the scene described in vv. 1—5 above. Babylon the great harlot, Rev. xvi. 1; the mother of the harlots, Rev. xvii. 5, (notes), as contrasted with the Mount Zion vv. 1—5 above, [the inhabitants whereof are not spiritually unchaste;] see the contrast carried out, comp. Rev. xvii. 1, n. with Rev. xxi. 9, 10 notes. Babylon "potentially" fell, see ch. xi. 14, the kingdoms of this world, &c. when the Mount Zion of God was established as set forth in this chapter; yet she has not yet actually fallen, she still exists, but as a doomed city, she fell "potentially" when her fall was decreed just as in human things a thing is done potentially as soon as it is efficiently resolved to be done, a wrong is righted in the conscience as soon as the will decrees its extinction.

9. And the third angel followed] This announcement of Mount Zion and its holy worship, and of Babylon and her abominations, and of the war between them, constitutes a vision of itself committed to the three angels.

If any man worship the beast and his image] These words shew how closely Babylon is associated with the vision of the beasts (see chaps. xiii. 1—11; xviii. 1—7, and notes).

10. The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, &c.] Such an awful thing it is to be identified with Babylon. We may
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God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb:

not attempt to soften the horror of the record, nor of the fact that this scene of torment is enacted "in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." We understand from chaps. ix. 20, 21; xvi. 9—11 (see notes there) that the plagues there spoken of were not merely punishments, but were intended also to bring men to repentance, they were remedial as well as punitive; so also here we are warranted in drawing the same inference. In Isaiah li. 17, Jerusalem, who had drunk the dregs of the cup of trembling, is called to awake, yea (Isai. lii. 1) to awake and put on her beautiful garments. In Ezek. xxxviii. 22 we read, "I will plead against him with pestilence and with blood," &c. The purging, purifying fire in which iniquity is consumed is ever burning, whether in saints or sinners, to the one it is joy, to the other it is torment. The breath of the Lord is as life to one, whereas to the other it is "a stream of brimstone" (θέον, Isai. xxx. 33). This fire and brimstone of our text has therefore one aspect of misery, but it has another aspect of the triumph of good over evil, light over darkness, truth over error, and in the light of eternity, the terror of the scene may even heighten the beauty of it, see 1 Cor. iii. 13. Again, when we consider that the Church, the Body of Christ, is to be known and shewn in eternity, the manifold wisdom of God (Eph. iii. 10), so also it may be that the torments of evil-doers are to serve as an everlasting warning to future aeons to keep them from transgression (see note below). If this torment, this fire, be remedial, as the word βαραίζω suggests, the horror of the torment ceases. The proving and testing (βαρανας), are for the good of the tormented, and are terrible only as a severe surgical operation for the saving of life is terrible. If, again, this spectacle of suffering is a necessary part of the Divine economy, to shew to future ages the outcome of sin, and that the soul that lives Hell, will have Hell. If in Divine wisdom and mercy it is ordained that souls choosing Hell shall have what they choose to have, but that their choice shall be made a warning to future ages, even then we can see, not merely wrath, but

1 We may however remember that the word βαραίζω from βαρανας, a touchstone, really means to prove by torture, "to put to the test," that βαρανας was the name of a stone in Lydia, by which gold was said to be tested, and that the word βαραίζω, to torture, comes from this word, and means to test, or try by torture.
11 And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name.

12 Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.

mercy also, in this awful scene. It is to be noted that it does not say that redeemed souls are witnesses to this torment—but the Lord and the holy angels—("seeking rest and finding none," Matt. xiii. 23; Luke xi. 24).

11. they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image] In ch. xv. 2 we see why it is so. It is that they may get the victory over the beast and over his image, and may stand on the crystal sea. It is ordained, it is in the nature of things, that they shall have no rest that they may seek (and find) rest in Christ.

12. Here is the patience of the saints] [Better, Here is the endurance of the saints.] This exclamation has reference to the voice of the third angel, v. 9; the worship of the beast and his image, and the claim it makes on the nations of the earth (v. 8), is the means whereby the patient endurance of the saints is tested, see ch. xiii. 10 for a similar ejaculation.

here are they that keep the commandments of God, &c.] [The best authenticated texts omit the words here are they.]

the faith of Jesus] Alford calls this the objective genitive which has Him for its object, but I say it is Jesus Christ's faith, which the believer into Jesus shares, just as he shares His joy, His love, His peace, His salvation, &c. The expression "the faith of Jesus" is used, Gal. ii. 16—20; iii. 22—25; Rom. iii. 22; Eph. iii. 12; Phil. iii. 9; James ii. 1; Rev. xiv. 12; and when we see how distinctly the expression is marked off from "faith in Jesus," we are justified in supposing that the two expressions mean different things, see Acts xx. 21; Gal. iii. 26; Eph. i. 15; Col. i. 4; ii. 5; 1 Thess. i. 8; Heb. vi. 1; the words "faith in Jesus" express the faith of the believer in the Lord Jesus. The expression "the faith of Jesus" means "Jesus Christ's faith," that faith in His Father by which in His incarnation as Son of Man and Son of God, He worked out God's will in the earth, and achieved the world's redemption, endured and suffered. The believer becomes united to Christ the Lord by faith in Him, but when raised into sonship in Christ, that same believer partakes of the "faith of Jesus," the faith of sonship
And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from which is a higher faith than the faith of discipleship. It is this sonship that makes us free indeed; [this grace of enfranchisement¹] the believer receives by incorporation into the Son of God, He shares His “faith” just as he shares His love, His peace, His joy, His righteousness. “Faith in Jesus” is the faith of the believer, “faith of Jesus” is the faith of sonship, they who are on the Mount Zion with Christ keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, see ch. xii. 10 n., “the faith of the saints” “the saints’ faith.”

And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, &c.] This command to write implies that John wrote the vision at the time he witnessed it, and not from memory.

Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord] The punctuation of this passage is doubtful, some place a period at “the Lord,” and begin a fresh sentence with “henceforth,” this slightly modifies the sense. [The phrase “which die” (ἀποθνῄσκοντες, partic. pres.), literally rendered would be who are dying] not a word about translation here; they who die “in Jesus” in this dispensation of the Parousia are specially blessed (see 1 Cor. xv. 23; Rev. xx. 6). This voice from beyond breaking in on the scene is not only peculiar from its abruptness, but is also one of those intimations of another world and other counsels beyond the scene which John witnesses in vision (see also chaps. xi. 12; xii. 10; xiv. 2, 3; xviii. 4; xix. 5; xxi. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; xxii. 1—5). This voice is again one of those messages that come as it were from another sphere, breaking in upon the scene, v. 12 above; see ch. xvi. 15, also chaps. i. 8—11; vi. 6; x. 4—8; xvi. 15—17; xix. 5. Write, the command is emphatic and charged with deep meaning, see a similar command, Rev. xix. 9 n. and xxi. 5. “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit.” Not only is there the voice from heaven, but there is the Amen of the Spirit also, declaring, that henceforth they who are in the Lord are blessed in some manner, heretofore unknown. This accents the fact that the vision has reached that period when the Lord is reigning in His Parousia on the Mount Zion, and that from this time, see marg., the holy dead, dying in the Lord, are blessed with a blessing till then unrealized². This all accords with what

¹ [The coincidence of sonship and liberty is aptly expressed in the Latin phrase Liberi sunt liberi. Ed.]
² The holy dead before the coming in of the Parousia did not receive their reward at death, see Heb. xi. 39, 40, hence their earnest longing for that day.
henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them.

14 And I looked, and behold a white cloud, and upon

we find in the Apostolic writings; they all looked on the "Parousia" as an event that should affect the relationship between God and man, should glorify that relationship and enrich it with untold blessings. We have here reached in the Apocalypse the period of the realized Parousia, the Lord is reigning in glory and majesty with His holy ones on the Mount, and gathering into communion on the Mount, the elect, they who are to constitute His Body, His Bride, the Church of the firstborn, see 1 Cor. xv. 23. This is the special glory of the dispensation in which we are now living, the dispensation of the Parousia; they who are "in Christ" in this dispensation of the Parousia are already in this life. To be on the Mount and the falling away of the mortal garment in death does not affect their spiritual union with Christ the Lord, save only to consummate that union.

that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them] Although in this life to be "in Christ" is to be at rest and to have ceased from self-working, yet so long as the spirit is attached to the mortal body there is ever something of conflict, some cause of unrest even in the rest in Christ. But when in death the mortal tie that joined the spirit to this world is severed, the rest in Christ becomes absolute, undisturbed. These words of our text incidentally imply that after death the memory of events on earth remains 1.

14. And I looked, and behold a white cloud, &c.] This is

1 Paul could say in writing to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 26), "Death the last enemy is made of none effect" because even then, writing during the Apostolic period and before the day of the Parousia, and in anticipation of that day (the day that is consummated in Rev. xiv. 1—5) it could be said for the dead in Christ, death was even then made of none effect: but Paul himself looked forward to the Parousia as the dispensation in which all the blessed promises in Christ should be greatly intensified and enlarged and completed, and the point we are now at in the vision (Rev. xiv. 1—13) affirms the fruition of that promise in regard to the blessed dead, of which Paul had spoken to the Corinthians (1 Cor. xv. 26) as even then the possession in anticipation of those who were in Christ. There might have been for them, when Paul wrote, an interval of waiting, as the souls under the Altar (Rev. vi. 9) had to wait for the day of which Rev. xiv. 1—5 was the consummated fruition. Anyhow, the "Henceforth" of our text implies that from the period in the vision at which Rev. xiv. finds us, the state of the blessed dead is supremely blessed, such as it had not before been. They are henceforth gathered into the joys of the Parousia on the Mount.
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.

a vision of judgment, corresponding in some sort with ch. i. 7, “behold he cometh with clouds.” He who is here described as sitting on a cloud “like unto the Son of man, having on his head a golden crown,” can be none other than our Lord Himself (?) The vision is a short one ending with v. 20, and including two distinct scenes, the first, the harvest, the second, the vintage. Our Lord Himself is the chief actor in the first scene, another angel is the actor in the second. The harvest, the first scene, vv. 14—16, carries with it no idea of wrath or judgment. But the vintage, vv. 17—20, shortly and sharply expresses a great and terrible judgment. The vision occupies a place beyond the 1260 days (mystical) and therefore a period later than a.d. 112, and yet it appears to me to relate to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles, save only that all that relates to the Jews has an incidental relation, as warning and teaching for Gentiles. The harvest reaped by our Lord Himself may represent only that natural course of events in which the corn fully ripe is gathered into the garner. There must have been elect souls in Israel, born during the 1260 days, who did not belong to the old world period, and therefore were not gathered to the day of judgment of that time, Rev. xi. 18, and yet were of the Jewish race. These would be gathered in the natural course of harvest. There remained also of the Jews men born under the 1260 days’ period, who had identified themselves with the crucifiers of our Lord, and on whom wrath had yet to come, even in this world. These two classes from among the Jews appear (to me) to be the subjects of this vision. It relates to Israel (see ch. xiv. 20, n.), but the vision is placed in the Gentile period, because it transpires after the day of judgment of the old world, a Jewish fragment, belonging to the period subsequent to the old world judgment day, ch. xi. 18, relating to Jews born before that judgment day, but not really belonging to the old world period (e.g. Timothy and others), (see 2 Tim. iv. 6).

15. And another angel came out of the temple] Our Lord Himself waits for the announcement of this angel before reaping. To us this seems strange, but we may learn from it that there is a divine order in the economy of the spiritual universe; we find our Lord in His
16 And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth; and the earth was reaped.
17 And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven, he also having a sharp sickle.
18 And another angel came out from the altar, which had power over fire; and cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle, saying, Thrust in thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe.
19 And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth,
and gathered the vine of the earth, and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God.

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

20. And the winepress was trodden without the city, &c.] See Joel iii. 19. This treading the winepress outside the city gives a Jewish complexion to the vision, and when we connect these words with the words in v. 19, "He gathered the vine of the earth and cast it into the great winepress of the wrath of God," the vision still assumes the character of some awful judgment on Israel. We read in Isaiah lxiii. 3, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury," and these words of the Prophet appear to point not only to our Lord's sufferings, but also to a vengeance that should come on His enemies, "For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come," Isaiah lxiii. 4 (see the text of LXX. in both cases), see also Lam. i. 15. This short vision included between v. 14 and v. 20 inclusive appears to me to relate to some awful judgment on Israel coming after the judgments which occupied the 1260 days' period, just as in the times of the Gentiles, Rev. xix. 15, we find a similar judgment coming on the Gentile world after the destruction of Babylon, "He treadeth the winepress of the fierceness of the wrath of Almighty God." We find [in the Rabbinical writings] the record of such a judgment in the reign of the Emperor Hadrian, when Judaea was again desolated by the Roman Power, and the slaughter of the Jews was so enormous, that their own writers say "the horses waded in blood up to the nostrils by the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs." This vision of judgment stands in the Apocalypse between two visions of glory. Between the Mount Zion of God, with Christ reigning in the glory of His Parousia, a possession of which Israel may almost be said to have held the entail in the promises, and the vision of the glassy sea with those who had gotten the victory over the beast and the image. The lesson and the warning seems to be that at the point of time of the establishment of these riches of glory, Israel who ought to have inherited them was drinking to the dregs the wine of the wrath of God. Such is the fate of those who refuse to have Christ for their Saviour.

1 See Lightfoot, iii. 352; Edersheim, III. 391—3; see also Etheridge, History of Jews, p. 226, and Smith's Dict. of Bible, Art. Jerusalem, p. 1014.
CHAPTER XV.

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

2 And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire: and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the

1. And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous] On the word “marvellous,” see v. 4 below. This is one of the great visions of the Apocalypse, it holds the same place in the Gentile period of the book, which ch. viii. holds in the old world or transition period. Just as ch. viii. introduces the seven trumpet angels with their series of judgments, which reached up to the judgment day of the old world period, ch. xi. 18, so does this vision of the glassy sea, and the seven vial angels carry on the times of the Gentiles up to the day of judgment of ch. xx. 11—15. The vision of the seven last plagues here corresponds in many other respects also with the vision of the seven trumpet angels of Rev. viii. 6, see the parallel drawn Rev. viii. 7, notes. This short chapter, the fifteenth, is the prelude and preface to the vision, serving to introduce the vision of the glassy sea, a scene, wholly different in character from the rest of the vision. The joys of redemption, and the glories of the redeemed (see next verse) preface the vision of the seven last plagues.

is filled up] Better, is [or was] completed (τελείωθη).

2. And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire] The description of the sea, “as it were of glass mingled with fire,” indicates the spotless purity, as well as the glory of that element on which the saints of victory stand. We have this same sea spoken of under the old world period of the vision, ch. iv. 6, but without the mention of “fire.” We may assume that the added glory “mingled with fire,” is purposely accented. May we not say that it is the former sea of ch. iv. 6, shining now in the glories of the Lord’s Parousia, now manifested, but not made manifest in ch. iv. 6. This sea of glory may be the representative figure of the unfathomable glory of the Almighty, the glory which surrounds His throne, just as the river of the water of life clear as crystal, ch. xxii. 1, represents the same glory flowing through the heavenly city.

And them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, &c.] [Lit. the overcomers of the beast and of its image]
number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God.

These "victorious ones" are (perhaps) not identical with the company of the 144,000 on the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5 (see notes there), they differ from "the Church of the firstborn," just as in Heb. xii. 23, the "spirits of the just made perfect" differ from "the Church of the first-born." These "victorious ones" on the glassy sea are described as τῶν νικῶντων ἐκ τοῦ θηρίου καὶ ἐκ τῆς ελεόνος αὐτοῦ καὶ ἐκ τοῦ ἀμβροσίου τοῦ ὄνοματος αὐτοῦ, "the overcomers of the beast, and of his image, and of the number of his name." The words "over his mark" are omitted in the amended text. In 1 John ii. 13, 14, John speaks of those who "have overcome the wicked one." Throughout the Apocalypse the promise is to "him that overcometh," the final promise in ch. xxi. 7 is "He that overcometh shall inherit all things." This overcoming implies a conflict—and not only a conflict—but a victory. Paul says (Rom. viii. 37), "we are made more than conquerors through him that loved us," and John again says, 1 John v. 4, "this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Two things are evident, first, that man has to overcome, if he is to have a place in the glory; secondly, that man can only overcome in and through Christ the Lord. The vision, like that of the Mount Zion, has no limitation of time; Zion is still redeemed through judgment, the judgments of the Lord teach righteously. In ch. xviii. 4, we still find the cry "Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins," shewing that throughout there were people of God even in Babylon, people who might come over, people who might overcome, just as we find (ch. ix. 21 n., &c.), those who might have repented. Throughout the whole period that intervenes for those who will accept it there is redemption in Christ and access to the Mount Zion.

and over the number of his name] This repetition of "the number of his name" shews how great a meaning John attaches to the number of the name of the beast, of which we know nothing except that the number is 666 or 616, but who or what is denoted thereby we cannot certainly say; [this cryptograph may be a covert allusion to] the spirit of Empire, the spirit of the age, the world from which these victorious ones have come out conquerors (see 1 John ii. 14, 15).

1 ["More than conquerors," ὄντες ὑπερειρία-μεν, from the Byzantine ὑπερειρία (ecl. Lat. superincio, Cyprian) "to subdue, more than subdue or vanquish." ʻΝικά καὶ μὴ ὑπερειρία (Leon. Tact. 14, 25). 
Subdue but do no more than subdue (that is, do not overdo your victory, do not press it too far.) Ed.]
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.

5 And after that I looked, and, behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened:

3. And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, &c.] See Exod. xv., specially v. 13, "Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed; thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation." The song of Moses, when Israel was delivered from the power of Egypt, is the song of the redeemed under the new covenant. The instinct that accepts the history of Israel in the type, as the figure of the history of a human soul passing out of spiritual Egypt into the rest in Christ, is here justified (see 1 Cor. x. 6 n.). They who have gotten the victory over the beast (Ἰὼ τοῦ θηρίου, from the beast), sing the song of Moses, 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, &c.] This ascription of praise anticipates the coming in of the Gentiles [for ἄθρω, of nations, is a well authenticated various reading for ἄγιον in the final clause of v. 3]. Zion is to be redeemed through judgment, and whilst this vision of glory is only as a momentary glimpse, as also is that of the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, yet they both abide as realities behind the scene, the glory of both abides, for the saints, during the judgments that come upon the earth, and finally the glory outlasts, and overcomes all the Babylonish gloom, see chapters xxi. and xxii.

for thy judgments are made manifest] More literally, for thy righteous acts (τὰ δικαίωματα σου [thy righteousnesses]) have been made manifest.

5. And after that] More correctly, after these things, μερὰ μερὰ. There was a break in the vision here, an interval we are not told how long; much less are we told what the interval shall be in the mundane
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.

history, between the things which go before and the coming forth of the angels with the last seven plagues.

the tabernacle of the testimony] The tabernacle of witness under the Old Covenant, Num. xvii. 7; xviii. 2; Acts vii. 44, was the type on earth of the house of God in heaven. The tabernacle of witness in our text is God’s dwelling-place in heaven, specially the body of Christ the Church, which is in an emphatic manner God’s dwelling-place, as it is said, Heb. iii. 6, “whose house are we.” Not only do redeemed souls constitute God’s house, but God’s house, our house from heaven, comes down on redeemed souls in this life, and they are clothed upon with it, 2 Cor. v. 1, 2. It is a mutual inter-habiting of the soul and the house from heaven, just as it is with Christ and the soul, there is a mutual intercommunion, both Christ in us and we in Christ. This temple of God in heaven, spoken of in our text, edificed of redeemed souls, was initiated at Pentecost (Acts ii. 1), but it receives its true form and glory only in the realized Parousia of our Lord, Rev. xxi. 22, “the Lamb is the Temple.” This living Temple, in whom the fullness of the Godhead dwells, of ch. xv. 5, and the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5, appear here for a moment—revealing their existence—only to reappear in their victory and triumph in chaps. xxi. xxii. They evidence the already abiding presence of the Lord Jesus in His glory.

6. And the seven angels came out of the temple] The whole scene of this vision of the seven last plagues so closely resembles that of the seven trumpet angels of ch. viii. 1—6, as to suggest whether the seven angels from the temple here (ch. xv. 6) be not the same “seven angels which stood before God;” ch. viii. 2, the seven trumpet angels—that the seven angels are identical, not that the visions are identical. It is to be noted, however, that the seven angels of ch. viii. are not spoken of as clothed in white with golden girdles, the priestly order. The former vision, that of Rev. viii., opened with the opening of the seventh seal of the seven-sealed book, the silence in heaven, and the ministry before the golden altar, of the angel of the New Covenant. It was a vision of glory, and yet it was the prelude to the woes and judgments of the seven trumpet angels. In the vision with which this fifteenth chapter is concerned the prelude (vv. 2, 3, 4) is yet more glorious than that of ch. viii., and it leads up to the pouring out on the earth of the seven last plagues, which, while corresponding in some sort to the
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.

judgments of the trumpet angels on Israel, lead up to the final destruction of Babylon, and the day of judgment of the Gentiles. The seven last plagues of chaps. xv. xvi. occupy in the Gentile period, and in regard to Babylon and the final judgment of the Gentiles, that place in the Apocalypse which the seven trumpet angels of chaps. viii. ix. x. xi. occupied in regard to Israel and the old world period to the day of judgment of that age. In chap. xv., and onward, both the glory and the final catastrophe is greater. The whole scene is now transacted in the dispensation of the Parousia, which comes on in its completeness in ch. xiv. 1—5, but it is also the dispensation of Antichrist and Babylon. The seven angels come out of God's dwelling-place from the very shrine of His holiness, clothed in priestly garments, see v. 6 above, also ch. i. 13; Dan. x. 5, all denoting intense purity, and yet their mission is a mission of woe to the earth. Such is the mystery of godliness; we have to reach victory through judgment—this is the teaching of the Apocalypse.

7. And one of the four beasts, &c.] I.e. one of the four living creatures of ch. iv. 6, 7 (see notes there). These living creatures are a part of the throne of God. The powers of nature that together with the ἄρχοντα καὶ ὄνομα energize this phenomenal world.

"I would not live
Save that I think this gross hard-seeming world
Is our mis-shapen vision of the Powers
Behind the world, that make our griefs our gains."

Tennyson, The Two Sisters.

It seems fit that one of the four living creatures (cherubim), one of the powers of nature, should give to the angels the golden vials which are to be poured forth upon the earth.

golden vials full of the wrath of God] In the economy of the house of God there are golden vials of wrath, and golden vials of incense, see ch. v. 8. These words may intend that these plagues were not so much the direct work of the Almighty, as that they arose in the nature of things [out of existing circumstances], that they were the necessary result of man's inhabitation in Babylon, the natural outcome of the violation of the laws of the Divine nature represented in the four living creatures, one of whom it is that furnishes the angels with their vials.
8 And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power; and no man was able to enter into the temple, till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 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.

8. And the temple was filled with smoke from the glory of God, and from his power] The meaning of the words that follow, "no man was able," &c. must be left uncertain; we can hardly suppose that during the whole period occupied by the seven vial angels in fulfilling their mission on earth, and up to the fall of Babylon, no one shall be able to enter God's Temple. Rather, does it not mean, that in the vision, and so long as John witnessed it, the glory of the Divine presence was such that it was impossible for any one to approach the shrine? see Exod. xl. 34, 35. Can it be that John intends to say that they only can enter the Temple in whom this mystery has been fulfilled, they only who have through the seven last plagues, through these seven steps and stages, reached "it is done" (ch. xvi. 17), reached the destruction of Babylon in themselves?

The promise is always to him that overcometh, see chaps. xv. 2; xxi. 7. Is this indeed the stern apprenticeship of those who are to form the body of Christ? Note that ἐλατθῶν "were fulfilled" is in the subjunctive mood, [and is literally should be finished].

1. And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels] See chaps. xv. 1, 6, 7, 8; viii. 7; see also ch. xv. 6, n. The function of the seven angels is to prepare those to whom they minister God's judgments for the day of judgment impending. The seven trumpet angels, ch. viii. 2, in relation to the day of judgment of the old world and Jewish period, Rev. xi. 18. The seven vial angels, in relation to the Gentile period and the day of judgment of Rev. xx. 11—15. The judgments in each case run on parallel lines, and both series of judgments find their original type in the history of Israel, specially in relation to the plagues of Egypt (see Rev. viii. 7). The angels in this vision are of the priestly order, see their clothing in
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.

ch. xv. 6, "clothed in pure and white linen, and having their breasts girded with golden girdles" (comp. ch. i. 1—13, n.). Their vials also (sacrificial bowls), see Rev. v. 8, are of a priestly character. These plagues poured out on the earth, and on the kingdom of the beast, are to bring men to repentance, see vv. 9 and 11, they are "to compel them to come in" to the marriage supper, Luke xiv. 23, n.; see Rev. ix. 20, 21, n.

The judgments under the trumpet period run parallel in a great measure with the seven last plagues of this chapter. Both are framed on the type of the Egyptian plagues (see on ch. viii. 7). Israel is the ground-plan by which the nations of the earth are governed, "When the Most High divided the nations their inheritance He set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel."

It is to be noted how indefinite all chronological record is left during this period, there is no record of time in any human sense; see notes to ch. xiv. 4.

2. And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth] See ch. viii. 7, n. Throughout these last plagues the pouring out is not only on the earth, and on the sea, and on the waters, but also on the throne of the beast, v. 10, on the men who are here described as having "the mark of the beast and worshipping his image." The noisome and grievous sores, in our text, appear to be the spiritual equivalents of the Egyptian plagues described in Exod. ix. 8, 9.

The points of coincidence between the plagues here and also in Rev. viii. etc., with the Egyptian plagues are placed without definite order. Indeed in the Old Test. itself where the Egyptian plagues of Exodus are elsewhere alluded to, as in Pss. lxviii. 43 sq. cv. 26 sq. there is no attempt to preserve the original order of sequence as they stand recorded in Exodus, see also Wisdom, ch. xvii.—xix. It is to be noted with the vial angels in this chapter that they "pour the plagues into" the earth ἀν τῆς γῆς, sea, &c. whilst with the trumpet angels in Rev. viii. 7, &c. the judgments are cast into the earth. These judgments, of the seven last plagues, are described in words expressive of physical evil, but they
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.

express in all probability a much deeper evil, a spiritual pollution, affecting the whole nature of man, soul as well as body. The sores, and the blood, and the darkness, and the gnawing of tongues, are the symptoms only of that pollution and that suffering which is the portion of those who are in communion with Babylonia. The unrest and tumult and turmoil and confusion, seeking rest and finding none, these are the joys of Babylonia!

3. And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea, &c.] See chaps. viii. 8, n.; and xvi. 2.

4. And the third...poured out, &c.] This turning of the waters into blood is the mystical equivalent for the first of the Egyptian plagues, Exod. vii. 17, 21—24; xv. 23; Psa. lxxviii. 44; cv. 29. It is to be noted however that in these plagues a distinction is drawn between the sea (v. 3) and the rivers and fountains of waters (v. 4), as indeed is also the case in ch. viii. between vv. 8 and 10, whilst in Exodus the sea is not mentioned. In what sense "the sea," and "the rivers," and "the fountains of waters," is to be understood, must be left; anyhow it means that some great perversion of the elements, whether natural or supernatural, shall be inflicted, as one of the judgments on the kingdom of the beast (vv. 2, 10, the beast).

5. And I heard the angel of the waters say, &c.] In the Targum of Palestine on Gen. xi. the Lord assigns to each of the 70 nations of the earth its own angel. The words "and shall be" are struck out in the amended text. This expression, "the angel of the waters," like the similar expression, "which had power over the fire," ch. xiv. 18, sheds light on the question of the ministry of angels, and ἀρχαὶ καὶ ἀρχωνίαι, that energize the world of nature, see chaps. xv. 7, n.; also iv. 6, n. on the angelic world, see 1 Cor. iv. 9, note. In the mystery, not only are the sources of life turned into blood, but men shall (spiritually) drink blood for water, "they deserve it;" v. 5 reads (probably), Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, the holy one (or holy).
6 For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy.

7 And I heard another out of the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.

8 And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch men with fire.

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.

6. saints and prophets] There were still such in the midst of the evil times, see also chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4; xii. 17; xiii. 7, 8, 15.

7. And I heard another out of the altar say, &c.] Lit., "And I heard the altar saying," &c. In the living temple of God (see ch. xv. 5, n.), everything in the temple is living, "and in his temple doth every one (every whit of it, marg.) speak of his glory," Psalm xxix. 9. This is another Amen to vv. 3 and 4.

8. And the fourth...poured out his vial upon the sun, &c.] See Rev. viii. 12, n.; Exod. x. 22—23; xvi. 2, 3: desert heat and gloom. Just as water is changed to blood (in the mystery) for those who form the kingdom of the beast (v. 2), just as the function of the elements is changed for those who pervert their own nation, so the influence of the sun (in the mystery) is changed from life to death, according to that law of compensation which runs through all things; see Rom. i. 28, men receive in themselves the recompense of their own deeds. They esteem God to be ἄδικοι, and become ἄδικοι in doing so. All these woes associated as they are in the text with outward nature have a mystical interpretation, all outward judgments have a teaching beyond the outward seeming.

9. which hath power over these plagues] This expression is singular and might be taken to imply the plagues were in some sort directly the work of the Almighty (see v. 5 and note).

and they repented not] These words explain the intent and object of the plagues, they are still to bring men to repentance, to force men out of Babylon, before her day of judgment comes. They repented not, they might have repented, see v. 11 below, note; see also notes to ch. ix. 20, 21.
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,

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

And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried

10. the seat of the beast, &c.] The seat or rather throne of the beast of ch. xiii. 2, i.e. the western nations (see on ch. xiii. 2) and the dragon (the devil) gave him (the beast) his powers and his throne. This "throne of the beast" is the seat of his power.

and his kingdom was full of darkness] See Exod. x. 21, 22; Psa. cv. 28; Wisdom xvii. 2, &c.

and they gnawed their tongues for pain] These plagues still point back to the plagues of the Jewish period, ch. ix. 2, and to the Egyptian plagues.

11. And blasphemed the God of heaven...and repented not] Thus do the children of Babylon choose their pains and their sores and their gnawing of tongues and their blasphemies, instead of the glory and rest of the Mount Zion. These pains and sores and torments in the nature of things belong to Babylon and to the throne and kingdom of the beast. Here as elsewhere the torments are not punitive only, but remedial, they are intended to lead men to repentance.

and repented not] The words imply that they might have repented but would not (see v. 9 above, n., also ch. ix. 20, 21, n.). To whatever date (A.D.) in the times of the Gentiles this present dispensation, these words may relate, Babylon is ever the same: we in this day, just as it is said in the vision, prefer Babylon and her torment to the Mount Zion of God. We prefer the pains and the sores and the gnawing of tongues and the unrest ("that unrest which men miscall delight") of Babylon to the rest and peace and glory of the Mount. Some of the children of Babylon mourn over their sufferings, yet "they will not repent," they will not so repent as to forsake the thing repented of, they will not come out of Babylon by repentance. We are sorry for our suffering, but not for our sin.

12. And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates] This sixth vial prelude to the seventh and last, brings us (in the times of the Gentiles) to the very confines of the
up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared.

destruction of Babylon, the Millennial reign and the day of judgment of the Gentile period, ch. xx. 11—15; just as in the Jewish period the sixth trumpet angel, ch. ix. 14, n., brought the vision under that period to the confines of the seventh trumpet period, and the judgment day of the old world, ch. ix. 18. It is probable that the 17th, 18th, and 19th chapters which follow the seventh vial period here are not so much continuations of the history as the illustrations in detail of events epitomized under the summary contained in vv. xvii. 20 of this 16th chapter.

and the water thereof was dried up] Whether in the fact or in the mystery, Euphrates is closely associated with Babylon. Euphrates was one of the glories of ancient Babylon. The ancient city sat upon her river, just as in the mystery, Babylon sits upon her waters, which are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues, see ch. xvii. 15, n. It was by the drying-up of her river that Babylon of old was captured by Cyrus, Isaiah xlii. 2; xliv. 27; xliv. 1; Jeremiah l. 38; li. 13, 31, 32, 36. Cyrus, “the anointed of God,” “the shepherd” came, as God's judgment on Babylon, to subvert the empire and to deliver the captives, Isa. xliv. 13 (see notes on ch. xvii. 16). Isaiah and Jeremiah speak of the overthrow of Babylon and the drying-up of Euphrates in occult prophetic terms. (Daniel speaking of the same event does not speak of the drying up of the river as the way in which the city was captured.) It is from profane history [Herodotus, Berosus, Xenophon, Ctesias, &c.] that we obtain the details of the taking of Babylon by Cyrus [King of Elam, not of Persia as commonly said]. This is another instance of non-Christian testimony to divine truth (see on Rev. xiv. 20).

The drying up of the (mystical) Euphrates in our text towards the end of the sixth vial period portends a drying-up and diminishing of the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues, on which Babylon sitteth; [this heterogeneous concourse constitutes] the Roman Empire, the beast of chaps. xiii. 1, 2 and of xvii. 1—3.

that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared] "of the east," ἀντὶ ἀναπολῆς ἡλιοῦ (see ch. vii. 2); lit. "from the rising of the sun," ἐκωμασθῇ, might be made ready. This gathering together of the kings from the sunrising is not a work of mercy but of judgment. The kings of the east will come down in vengeance on the dried-up and impoverished western nations to the great slaughter of Harmageddon, see v. 16, n., also ch. xix. 19, n. The way for the coming in of these
13 And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet.

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.

eastern hordes shall be made ready by the very thing which shall also destroy Babylon (mystical), see ch. xvii. 16, 17, n., i.e. the drying-up with distress and suffering of the European nations, with their decrepitude, their mutual conflicts among themselves and their sufferings during the seven last plagues, and their conflict with Christ the Lord, chaps. xvii. 14, n., and xvii. 16, n. Then the pride of Babylon will be brought low. It is doubtful whether Isaiah xi. 15, the destruction of the tongue of the Egyptian sea, has any reference to the drying-up of Euphrates.

13. And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs, &c. Or, “as it were frogs” according to another reading. The mention of “frogs” here serves as a verbal connection with the plagues of Egypt, Exod. viii. 2, 7; Psa. lxxviii. 45; cv. 30; just as the word “Euphrates” serves to connect v. 12 with Rev. ix. 14 (see notes on Rev. viii. 7, p. 532). “The mouth of the false prophet,” this is the first mention in the Apocalypse of “the false prophet” [as such], we have it again afterwards ch. xix. 20; xx. 10. The dragon (the devil, ch. xii. 9), the beast, ch. xiii. 1, 2, and the false prophet, ch. xiii. 11, are here classed together as they are afterwards also’ ch. xx. 10, “unclean spirits, like frogs, see 1 John iv. 1—3, spirit of antichrist, “spirits of demons working miracles,” v. 14. The three unclean spirits like frogs issuing out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet, are three forms of iniquity which shall arise, perhaps are arising, in the last days of the times of the Gentiles before the destruction of Babylon. They may be the powers under which Babylon herself shall be divided into three parts, see on v. 19 infra.

14. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, &c. [The word σημαία is “signs” rather than “miracles.”] The signs of the last times of our dispensation are similar to the last times

1 “The false prophet” here is probably the beast of Rev. xiii. 11, who is there classed with the dragon of Rev. xii. 4 and the beast of Rev. xiii. 1. As the false prophet is classed here with the dragon and the beast, probably only another name for antichrist, 1 John iv. 18, 22; iv. 3.
Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame.

of the Jewish period (2 Thess. ii. 9, 10; Rev. xiii. 13; xix. 20; 1 Tim. iv. 1; see also Rom. viii. 38, 39. *Which go forth unto the kings of the whole world,* τὰς αἰγύπτιες τῶν. These signs, worked by the unclean spirits of v. 13, are something other than false doctrines, though false doctrine may form part of the mystery (the false prophet, v. 13). They are probably those lying wonders and signs that human nature under certain conditions is able to work, phenomena of which we have no science, and the limitations of which are as yet uncertain. In this direction there are probably many things possible to man, unlawful, lawless things in which he is not yet aware of his power to work.

**15. Behold, I come as a thief**] A voice of warning breaks in abruptly on the vision. It comes as a warning and a terror. It advertises the men of Babylon that Babylon is not the only world and the only power with which men have to do. It warns also the people of God in Babylon of their madness that they should be soiling their garments with the filth of the great city. “Babylon is a golden cup in the Lord’s hand, the nations have drunken thereof, therefore the nations are mad,” Jer. li. 7 “Come out of her, my people,” Rev. xviii. 4. The abruptness of the call is a part of the terror of it, just as in the din and the clatter of life the voice of the Lord arrests a soul in its course, and for a moment the soul trembles with terror. Thus, as a thief, did the Lord come also in the last days of the old world period, 1 Thess. v. 2; 2 Pet. iii. 10. Thus did He speak of Himself in the days of His human ministry, Matt. xxiv. 43; Luke xii. 39; Rev. iii. 3. Thus will He come on Babylon. Thus does He come in judgment and in mercy, in the day of visitation, to the men who dwell in Babylon, saints and sinners. Lightfoot, *Temple Service,* p. 51, suggests whether the allusion here to “keeping his garments,” may not be suggested by the custom in the Temple service, of the watchman going his rounds in the Temple courts at night, and setting fire to the garments of such of the Levites as he found asleep. But the more probable idea is that of defiling the garment with uncleanness or of being found not clothed upon, with the house from heaven, the garment of Christ, whenever summoned, 1 Cor. v. 2, 3. *Behold I come [as unexpectedly] as a thief,* this voice from the far beyond, resembles in its abruptness the voice in ch. xiv. 13 (see notes thereon). I come to break in upon, and to break up the dream of life, to dissolve the life of the world into a
16 And he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.

17 And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne, saying, It is done.

dream, to steal [as it were], and despoil all thy goods, to leave thee poor and naked, and miserable. This coming “as a thief” is applicable rather to the individual experience, than in a dispensational sense.

Our Lord’s coming dispensationally on Israel (Rev. vi. 1, 2) and His future coming dispensationally towards the close of the Gentile period (Rev. xix. 11), has as viewed dispensationally another aspect, but to the individual it is still “as a thief” to deprive him of all the shadows which he esteems his goods, to terrify him out of his false rests [supports].

16. And he gathered, &c.] Properly, according to amended text (συνήχεος, Sinaitic MS.) and they gathered, &c.

a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon) The word Har-Mageddon is probably taken from Megiddo, part of the mountain chain of Carmel. The word “Megiddo,” means a place of troops [i.e. a rendezvous or camping ground]. It is probably in the name and its Hebrew meaning that the fitness of the word lies. The place or places called Megiddo, in Canaan, were places of slaughter, or spoil, or multitude; the title “Megiddo” was probably given them because they were so; so here the mystical place of slaughter, in the Apocalypse, is called by that name, see ch. xix. 18, 19, 21; “the place.” Megiddon, see Zech. xii. 11, valley of slaughter, LXX.; Judges v. 19, 20, waters of Megiddo; Psa. lxxxiii. 9; 2 Chron. xxxv. 22; 2 Kings ix. 27; xxiii. 29. This gathering together is a preparation only for the great slaughter which is to follow, ch. xix. 12, 13. It is not the slaughter itself. This ch. xvi. is probably an epitome preluding the events which are described more at large in the following chapters, a prophetic summary of coming events, a description in brief of events described at large in the following chapters xvii.—xix.

17. And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple...from the throne, saying; It is done] The seventh vial brings the climax, up to which all the others have been leading. It is with the pouring out of the seventh vial, the last of the series, as it was with the seventh seal, ch. viii. 1, and the seventh trumpet, see ch. x. 7; xi. 15, that the aeon comes to an end, though in each case (as in Matt. xxiv. 14) the end itself constitutes a period in which great events transpire. The
18 And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great.

19 And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.

seventh vial, with the events that happen under it constitutes the fulfilment of the times of the Gentiles. There are yet however great transactions before the final triumph of the Mount Zion, and the marriage supper, and the new heavens and the new earth of chaps. xxi. xxii. The seventh seal closes the period, and it is quite possible that the details in chaps. xvii.—xix. are an extended description of the events that belong to the seventh seal period, as they are summed up in vv. 17—21 below.

18. And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake] "Earthquake," σεισμός, shaking, the word may mean "shaking" of people just as much as "shaking" of the earth. The seventh seal, ch. xi. 19, and the seventh trumpet, ch. xi. 19, both close with similar portents as the seventh vial. The "hail" which attends the portents in ch. xi. 19 is added here in v. 21. The final ruin that comes with the seventh vial and the fall of Babylon is more terrible and more absolute than any that has gone before. A great earthquake (shaking) such as was not from the time there was a man upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake and so great (implying, by the way, that there was a time when there was not a man upon the earth).

See also Gen. chaps. i. 26; ii. 5; Deut. iv. 32.

19. And the great city was divided into three parts,... and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, &c.] See ch. xviii. 5, n. "the great city," see chaps. xi. 8; xiv. 8; xvii. 18; xviii. 10, 16, 18, 19, 21. "The great city" (evidently) Babylon (mystical), "was divided into three parts," see ch. xi. 13; a tenth part of the city fell, see also Rev. viii. "the third part" (repeated also ch. ix. 15, 18). The tripartite division of Babylon may be the work of the three unclean spirits like frogs of v. 13. An unfulfilled prophecy, to be left, until interpreted in its fulfilment. The woe on Babylon is described at large in ch. xvii., which see. It is probably the detailed account of what is here given in epitome. Doubtless, when the destruction of Babylon comes, then this tripartite word will find its interpretation. Perhaps the three
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20 And every island fled away, and the mountains were not found.
21 And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.

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1 And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters:

divisions into which Babylon shall be split may have some relation to the dragon, the beast and the false prophet. The beast and the false prophet survive Babylon, ch. xix. 20; and the dragon (Satan) survives them all, ch. xx. 7, 8.

20. And every island fled away, &c.] See ch. vi. 14 (belonging however to the sixth seal period, not as in ch. xvi. 20 to the seventh).

21. great hail] As in the seventh seal period, ch. viii. 7, and also the seventh trumpet period, ch. xi. 19. What is the mystical interpretation of hail I know not, see Job xxxviii. 22, "Hail, which I have reserved against the time of trouble, against the day of battle and war," see also Exod. ix. 18—23; Josh. x. 11; Psa. xviii. 13; lxxviii. 47; cv. 32; cxlviii. 8; Isaiah xxviii. 2; xxx. 30; Ezek. xiii. 11, 13, &c. &c.

and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail] Here the judgments end in blasphemy. In ch. xi. 13, "the remnant were afraid, and gave glory to God." This epitome of the seventh seal period in vv. 17—21 is probably, as often suggested above, the summary of the events described at large in chaps. xvii. xviii. xix., which bring in the millennial reign and the day of judgment of ch. xx., the end of our dispensation. If so, the seventh seal period in this dispensation brings in the end of it just as in the old world period the seventh trumpet angel brought in the end of the old world and Jewish period, see chap. xi. 15, 18 notes.

1. And there came one of the seven angels, &c.] One of the angels, i.e. of chaps. xv. 1; xvi. 1, see notes there. This seventeenth chapter (as also chaps. xviii. xix.), is probably (as already suggested), a pictorial illustration, a replica, of the epitome of events recorded
2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication.

3 So he carried me away in the spirit into the wilderness: and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns.

in the seventh and last vial period, ch. xvi. 17—21, see notes there. In ch. xxii. 9 we have a similar occurrence so far as the angel (of the seven) and the invitation are concerned, but the spectacle John was called to witness was the very opposite of this. Here he is called to look on Babylon, the mother of the harlots, there he is summoned to look upon the Bride, the Lamb’s wife. Babylon and the Mount Zion are the two extreme contrasts, the two opposing cities between which there can be no reconciliation, the Harlot city and the Virgin city. Judgment on Babylon had been already pronounced in ch. xiv. 8 n., when the Lord was manifested in glory on the Mount Zion; the execution of this judgment comes under the seventh seal period, ch. xvi. 19 n. The seventeenth and eighteenth chapters are devoted to a description of Babylon and the manner of her destruction. The word Babel [is Hebraized as meaning] confusion. Confusion is her life, the law of her existence, and yet there is in Babylon a certain order; in her, ruin is organized; in her, nature and art, beauty and deformity are worked up into attractive and alluring forms to seduce human souls. This crowning mystery of iniquity, Babylon, is represented as a woman, she is “the mother of the harlots and abominations of the earth,” 1—5.

3. So he carried me away in the spirit] Better, “in spirit,” ἐν πνεύματι, see ch. i. 10; iv. 2; xxi. 10.

into the wilderness] Into a wilderness, is more correct, as there is no article in the original, εἷς ἵππος. In ch. xii. 6, 14, where “the Church,” “the woman,” is spoken of, the expression is εἷς τὴν ἱππον, “into the wilderness,” this use of the article may be intended to difference the wilderness here [mentioned] from the wilderness of ch. xii. 6—14.

and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast] Here, and here only, we are told that the beast which carries Babylon

1 [Its proper signification is “Gate of God”—Bab II, see ante, p. 599. Ed.]
2 [The Targum on the Prophets or rather the tradition it embodies was evidently known to John the Revelator—comp. ch. xii. 1—6 with the Targum on Micah iv. 8, etc. Ed.]
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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: and when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration.

(mystical), the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2 (see notes there), is "a scarlet-coloured beast." That this is the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2, see chaps. xvii. 7—11; xix. 20. This woman is the Harlot, who, through the power of the beast, rules over the nations and usurps the place of the woman—the Church—even elect souls mistake her for the Church and [go astray] with her.

4. And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet, &c.] The woman, Babylon the Harlot, assumes the royal colours for her clothing [like the bona roba of Roman life].

5. upon her forehead was a name written] [Another matter of fact reference to the custom of the kētarai of the time. Seneca testifies to this (Controv. i. 2, ap. Wetstein) "stetisti puella in lupanari...nomen tuum peendit a fronte." Juvenal relates the same of the profligate Empress Messalina (Sat. vi. 123). Ed.]

MYSTERY] [The Harlot’s name ‘MYSTERY,’ in Heb. בִּנְדָּר (= 666, i.e. 200 + 6 + 400 + 60), may be a covert allusion to the mysterious nomen et omen of ch. xiii. 18. It should however be noted that it may be construed adverbially, i.e. "a name written mysteriously." Ed.]

MOTHER OF HARLOTS] More correctly, the Mother of the Harlots. Harlotry is her calling, see v. 1, carnal and mystical harlotry, of which are born (all) the abominations of the earth: she is highly esteemed among men.

6. drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus, &c.] By a Divine intuition John perceives all this: he is not told it, but perceives, that the woman is drunken with the blood of the saints, &c., see ch. xviii. 24.

I wondered with great admiration] [Better, I wondered with great wonder.]
7 And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.

8 The beast that thou sawest was, and is not; and shall ascend out of the bottomless pit, and go into perdition: and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is.

7. the beast...which hath the seven heads and ten horns] Here we find the beast (v. 3), on which the Harlot (Babylon) sitteth, again identified with the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2. This beast (as already said) is the Roman Empire in its widest sense, or rather "the peoples and multitudes and nations, and tongues" (v. 15), who constitute the Roman Empire, past, present, and future. Respecting the seven heads and ten horns, see vv. 9—12 below.

8. whose names were not written in the book of life] See on ch. xiii. 8. This implies that there still are those whose names were not written there from the first, those who might have repented (chaps. ix. 20, 21), and those who were children of God; see chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 17; xiii. 7, 8, 15; xvi. 9, 11, 15; xvii. 8, 14; xviii. 4.

the beast that was, and is not, and yet is] The words "and yet is" are omitted in the amended text, and in their place we have the phrase "and shall be present" (καὶ πάσης τιμίας). If this reading be correct, as it seems to be, it would appear that the Roman Empire, in something of its former integrity, is to be restored again, before the final destruction of Babylon. [In other words] that the peoples and nations and tongues who then represented the Roman Empire, the beast on whom the harlot Babylon sitteth, ch. xvii. 3, 7, shall yet again be gathered into one great federation of nations in character such as Rome was when John wrote the Apocalypse.

Remembering that John is now contemplating in vision a point of time still in the future, even for us, and therefore very distant from the point of time (about A.D. 70) when he wrote the Apocalypse, he could truly say, speaking prophetically of the Roman Empire as it now is in this A.D. 1881 (and for how long a future we know not), that the beast, the Roman Empire, was, and is not, and yet is. To us, to-day, the
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9  And here is the mind which hath wisdom. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth.

10  And there are seven kings: five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh, he must continue a short space.

11  And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, and goeth into perdition.

Roman Empire as it existed A.D. 70 is not, though it was existent in A.D. 70 when John wrote: now it is not, and yet is, (i.e.) it is not what it was when John wrote, and when Rome ruled the nations; and yet the Roman Empire still exists [in ecclesiastical parody], in a [travesty] sense the Empire is still represented. "The beast that thou savest was, and is not," "the beast that was, and is not, and yet is," "and shall ascend out of the abyss," see ch. xi. 7, n. These last words "shall ascend," &c., seem to point to some arising again of the Roman Empire before the final destruction of Babylon.

9. The seven heads are seven mountains, on which the woman sitteth] The seer here gives another clue connecting the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2, and of ch. xvii. 3—8 with Rome; see also Dan. vii. 7. Rome was known as the seven-hilled city (see v. 18 below, n.). Here in our text the seven heads of the beast on which the woman sitteth are seven mountains (κατὰ ἄγρα), seven hills. The coincidence seems almost too definite for the character of the Apocalypse, which is mystical in its definitions, but we see other such instances in the book, see chaps. vi. 6, n.; xiii. 20, n. Propertius, 3. 11. 57, says, "septem urbs alta jugis tota quae praesidet orbi," ap. Alford in loc.

10. And there are seven kings] Or rather, And they are seven kings. As Alford and others read it, according to the amended reading, this text would imply that the seven heads of the beast represent not only seven mountains, but also seven kings, or kingdoms (Dan. vii. 17, 23, kings = kingdoms); seven forms of dominion, of which the five have fallen, the one is, and the other is not yet come; and when he cometh he must continue a short space. The seventh king or kingdom which has yet to arise is to be the prelude to some form of restoration of the Roman Empire (see v. 8, note), see also v. 11 below. This was all to be in the remote future to John. It is in the future even for us. It will precede the fall of Babylon.

11. And the beast that was, and is not] I.e. the beast of v. 8
12 And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, which have received no kingdom as yet; but receive power as kings one hour with the beast.

the restored Roman Empire, even he is the eighth, and is of the seven, i.e. he arises as the seven do, out of the multitudes and peoples and nations and tongues that now constitute the Roman Empire (v. 15). He shall arise, i.e. out of his own self, "and go into perdition," see v. 12, note. This king under whom the mystical Babylon is to fall (see on v. 16) will be answerable to Cyrus of old, who by means of Euphrates took Babylon and overcame the Babylonian Empire. Here one of the seven kings is to be the eighth; also he is to be in his own person the king and the personal embodiment of the Roman Empire, and it may be a federation of European nations representing the diffused Roman Empire, or a democratic multitude gathered out of the nations under this eighth king.

12. And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings, &c.] When "the beast that was and is not" (v. 11, n.), "that was, and is not, and yet is," see v. 8, amended text, i.e. (as I suppose) some restored form of the Roman Empire, the beast of ch. xiii. 1, which shall be federated out of "the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" (v. 15) which now represent the beast that was, and is not—when this beast, the restored Roman power, shall arise, shall ascend out of the abyss (v. 8), then shall these ten horns (ten kings or powers) receive their power as kings one hour with the beast. That is, before the final fall of Babylon there shall arise some vast dominion, answerable to the ancient Roman Empire, which shall arise out of the elements which now constitute the diffused Roman Empire (v. 15); and with this restoration shall these ten horns of the beast receive power to reign with the beast, who is the eighth also of the seven heads or kings, see v. 11, note, both king and people in one. These things are all to lead up to the destruction of Babylon. These ten horns shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate, v. 16 below. We need not attempt to identify these ten horns with any of the Roman emperors of the past, they belong to a period which has not even yet arrived, a period in the future, when the ten horns shall have power as kings for one hour with the beast (i.e. with the eighth king of v. 11), when the beast shall again assume a power similar to that which the Roman Empire formerly wielded (a federation of ten kings). How or where this shall be does not appear, but such an event, perhaps a federation of the western nations, must come before Babylon finally falls (see v. 17, n. below, also v. 8 above). Her fall must come
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13 These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast.

14 These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with him are called, and chosen, and faithful.

through such a channel; she will fall by the hand of those upon whom she has depended for her existence.

13. These have one mind, and shall give their power and strength unto the beast] "shall give," lit. shall hand over, δαυδίσωσον. When the beast of v. 11 shall arise (who shall be the beast also of ch. xiii. 1 sqq. in a renewed diffused form) then shall arise ten kings (v. 12) together with the beast, and they shall be of one mind with him and give him their strength (δυνάμεις) and authority (δυναστεία) (see v. 17 below), "they agree to give their kingdom unto the beast."

14. These shall make war with the Lamb, &c.] The mention of our Lord as the Lamb (ἀρπακτός) brings us back to ch. xiv. 1—5, where the Lamb stands on the Mount Zion with His elect in the glory of His Parousia (see notes there). This war between the beast of v. 11, (the revived form of the Roman Empire, to whom the ten kings1 of v. 12 give "their power and strength," see v. 13) represents the continual enmity between the Mount Zion and the world, between the true Church and the Empires of the world, in whatever form they may appear, whether as the Roman Empire of John's day in its integrity, or as the European states now, and yet to be, which are the diffused form of the Roman Empire. This conflict is not the battle of Harmageddon, ch. xvi. 12—16 (see notes there), but we are advised that the Mount Zion of God with our Lord and His holy ones (ch. xiv. 1—5) still abides as the home of the elect through all turmoil and conflict and unrest of the nations, the place of safety for those who will repent and come out of Babylon (ch. xviii. 4, n.). Throughout all the periods and in the midst of the woes and judgments that fall on the earth there is a place of refuge in Christ for the saints. There are also among the children of this world and the children of Babylon souls that may repent if they will, children of God even in

1 [It is a noteworthy coincidence that France, Spain, Portugal, England, Scotland, The Empire, Sweden, Denmark, Poland and Hungary make up just ten states, which prior to the Reformation were constituents of the Papal domination.]
15 And he saith unto me, The waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.

Babylon, see chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4, 20, 21; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 17; xiii. 7, 8, 15; xvi. 9, 11, 15; xvii. 8—14; xviii. 4; the line of the elect running through the ages. Here (ch. xvii. 14) we get another description of the Church of the firstborn, who are gathered into communion with the Lord in His Parousia: not only have they the Lord's name and His Father's name in their foreheads, not only do they sing the new song, which no one else could learn, not only are they virgins, undefiled with women, who follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth, the firstfruits guileless and without fault before the throne (see ch. xiv. 1—5, notes), but they are also "called, and chosen, and faithful," "called" (καλεῖται), "elect" (ἐλεγχοί), "faithful" (πιστοί), see Matt. xx. 16; xxi. 14. The calling and the election are not of man, but the being faithful is. The called are many, the elect are few: "the called, elect, and faithful" are only as 144,000 (xiv. 1—5) compared with millions of millions. Therefore is it, in order that they may be faithful, that the "called" and the "elect" are passed through this probation. They are born in sin, and led out of sin into salvation in order that, knowing the misery of sin and the joys of salvation out of it, they may dread sin as the Hell fire that it is, and never return to it. The soul that has been raised by Christ out of the horrible pit, the abyss, is knit to Christ in faith and love, and though there is an intellectual possibility, and a freedom of will to be unfaithful, there is a moral certainty that such will abide faithful through all eternity, faithful by freewill, faithful of their own choice.

15. And he saith unto me, The waters, &c.] These are the waters on which Babylon sitteth, see v. 1 note, the harlot that sitteth upon many waters. But in v. 7 above (see notes there) "the beast" is that on which the whore sitteth; it follows therefore that the waters on which the harlot sitteth, see v. 1, "many waters," and the beast on which she sitteth are in a sense one. The beast is the beast of ch. xiii. 1, the Roman Empire, therefore also the waters are the Roman Empire, the Empire in that diffused form in which it now exists as "peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues." Therefore it was that John in v. 8 above (see notes there) could speak of the beast that was, and is not, and yet is. At this point of the vision, a point even yet in the future for us, the Roman Empire, the beast of ch. xiii. 1, is represented by the king of v. 11, the eighth of seven, who represents and includes in his personality that federation of nations which is to take place under his
16 And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, these shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her with fire.

reign. The other heads (kings) of vv. 10 and 11 (see notes there) have passed away, one king, the eighth, alone remains in the vision, as the impersonation of the nations that constitute at this point of time in the vision the Roman Empire. There remain also besides this eighth king the ten horns, who represent ten kinglings, under-kings, see vv. 12 and 13, notes. In other and plainer words, there will come a time preceding the destruction of Babylon, but leading directly to her fall, when "the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues" (the western nations?), the throne of the beast, ch. xvi. 10, now representing the diffused Roman Empire (the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2), will form some vast federation under one king (of v. 11), but having ten under-kings or rulers (the ten horns of vv. 12, 13), who shall unite in one mind with the supreme king (the eighth, v. 11) and bring their people under his dominion. They are powers of evil, not of good, for they have made war with Christ (v. 14) and been overcome by Him. But at the point in the vision at which we now are these evil powers have united together in one and are about to destroy Babylon (see vv. 16 and 17, notes). This may not be the motive for which they have thus united, but this is one of the results of their federation. It is quite possible that the threatened incursion of the kings from the sunrising (ch. xvi. 2, n.) brings about this joint federation of nations for mutual protection against the hordes of Asia. But whatever the motive, it is divinely ordered that this federation shall bring with it the destruction of Babylon, v. 17. Human prudence may dictate the doing away with all the pomp and luxury and abominations of Babylon, in view of the approaching terrors and portents, the coming of the kings of the East, the great battle that is about to be, chaps. xvi. 16, n.; xix. 17—19, in which the kings of the East are evidently to play a great part. The western peoples are here dried up with judgments, and in their distress they even decree the destruction of Babylon, see v. 16, n., see Isaiah xliii. 27; Jer. l. 38; li. 32—36.

16. And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast, &c.] Lit. "and" the beast, not "upon" the beast; what the ten horns are see v. 12, n. These ten horns, ten rulers, are of one mind with the beast, the restored Roman Empire, with its one king (see vv. 11, 12, 13, notes) in all that he does (see also on v. 15). These shall hate the whore
17 For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, and to agree, and give their kingdom unto the beast, until the words of God shall be fulfilled.

and shall make her desolate, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her up with fire, see chaps. xviii. 8—18; xix. 3. These ten horns of the beast appear (as already said) to be ten rulers of the peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues, who at this point of the vision constitute the Roman Empire in its diffused form, the western nations. From some political motive (fear perhaps of the kings of the East, see ch. xvi. 12, n. and xvii. 15, n.) these kings (horns) of the nations (western nations?) unite together in one great federation, under one supreme king, who represents in his own person the whole confederacy, and in whom the Roman Empire, which was and is not (v. 8, note) and again is, continues to be the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2 in a restored form. The Roman Empire again is under this king. The king, together with his ten under-kings or rulers, in federate union of nations, shall determine not from any God-serving purpose (for they have just before been fighting against Christ, v. 14) to make an end of Babylon. They determine of their own will, not as an act of religious service but as Sparta of old might have determined, that the pride and pomp, the luxury and licentiousness of Babylon shall be no longer permitted to exist. It will then come to pass that the very peoples and rulers on whom Babylon had been carried, and over whom she had ruled and whom she had made drunken with her cup, and with whom she had committed fornication, shall rise up against her and "make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh, and burn her up with fire." Babylon shall be destroyed by her own people, for it is the people of Babylon, the waters on which she sits, that do it, not the people of God; the people who destroy her are enemies of Christ (see on v. 14). There shall be an outbreak of democracy or of Draconic stoicism which in its own will (and yet according to the will of God, v. 17) shall determine that it will no longer tolerate the existence of Babylon. [See more on this topic at the end of this chapter.]

17. For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will, &c.] [Literally rendered, this verse reads thus, For God gave to their hearts to do his mind and to do one mind, &c.] This identity of purpose between the ten horns (rulers) and the beast (the federation of nations under one head) (see notes to vv. 12, 13, 15, 16) is absolute, the human motive of this federation is suggested (see notes to v. 16; see also notes to ch. xvi. 12, p. 618, the kings of the East). Yet all this
CHAPTER XVII.

18 And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth.

identity of purpose and confederation between the people constituting the beast and the rulers is declared to arise out of the purpose of God (on the co-action of free-will and the divine purpose, Acts i. 25; see on Rev. iii. 20, n., also Rev. xix. 2, n.).

18. And the woman which thou sawest is that great city, which reigneth over the kings of the earth] i.e. she is Babylon. This note of identification is added to make the whole question clear. The nation and their rulers shall combine in one great federation, and one of the first great acts of their united power shall be to execute sentence upon Babylon. What Babylon is, see note at end of this chapter. These things have yet to come to pass before the final triumph of the Church of the firstborn, the Body and Bride of Christ, chaps. xxi. and xxii. “That great city,” connect this with ch. xvi. 19, “the great city,” and connect (as elsewhere suggested) these details of the destruction of Babylon in chaps. xvii. xviii. with the epitome of the same event in ch. xvi. 19, 21; ch. xvi. 21 being (as I suggest) the same event preluded in epitome which we find in an enlarged form in chaps. xvii. xviii. Babylon (mystical) does not represent unregenerate human nature only, it represents unregenerate human nature running riot, unregenerate human nature sporting itself in all lawlessness and intensifying that ungodliness in which the Fall leaves it. Just as Cain (see 1 John iii. 12, notes), who was by nature a fallen human creature, but when he slew his brother he became something even worse.

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE. WHAT IS BABYLON?

This very federation of powers (which I suppose to be indicated, see preceding notes, by the text of the Apocalypse) shall be brought about for this very purpose, as its proximate end, though its ultimate object is the great battle of chaps. xvi. 14; xix. 19; and whilst the will of God is the ultimate power (v. 17) by which this federation is gathered, it is not the recognized motive among the peoples themselves and their rulers who represent the beast. They are people who deny Christ and His power. What shall be the impulse that shall thus gather the nations into this federation is not distinctly told us, but we may imagine what it is and shall be. We have already seen in ch. xvi. 12 (see notes there) the preparation of the kings from the sun-rising, preparing for the great battle of ch. xvi. 16. And we may suppose (as I have done) that this movement of the kings of the East is not a movement with any beneficent intent, but rather an intent
1 And after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven, having great power; and the earth was lightened with his glory.

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the

of hostility against the western nations. Now such an intent might be sufficiently alarming to knit together all the western nations in a federation more powerful than any other conceivable event in history. The spontaneous determination to destroy Babylon by those who have been her votaries might be brought about by some great national impulse, such as has before now driven a nation to forsake its pleasures and its luxuries for the sake of its national greatness. The threatened existence of the peoples of Europe by incursions of hordes of the eastern nations might produce such a determination. The fear of extermination might not only bring about such a federation as is suggested, for mutual protection, but also a federation for the destruction of Babylon (mystical), i.e. the luxury and pride and abominations of our modern civilization. The drying-up of the western nations, the waters on which the whore sitteth, the waters of Babylon (mystical), by the seven plagues of ch. xvi.; the war with Christ (v. 14 above); the pouring out of the vials of judgment—all these things may serve to "dry up" the nations (waters), so that the dread of the kings of the East, the hosts of China and India, the fear of such an invasion of the whole eastern world may bring about a federation of western nations, impossible under other circumstances. This might be the political impulse under which the western nations might be gathered, the will of God working His purpose through all. Thus the eastern nations and the western nations, both of their own will and of the will of God, are to be brought together in conflict for the great battle of chaps. xvi. 16, n.; xix. 19, n.

1, 2. after these things I saw another angel come down from heaven...And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, &c.] Isaiah xiii. 19—21; xxi. 8, 9. The doom of Babylon, first pronounced ch. xiv. 8 (see notes there), again declared ch. xvi. 19 (see notes there), is in this chapter represented as consummated. Her end is to be sudden and violent, xviii. 21, and, as shewn in ch. xvii. 16 (see notes there), she is to perish by the hands of the people by whom she has been sustained. Her own children are to make an end of her.
habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

3 For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the

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is become the habitation of devils] [Demons (and not “devils”) is the proper translation of the original.] Babylon then has some sort of existence even after her ruin, an existence such as the Babylon of history still had, and yet there is a mystical Babylon, an individuality that could not apply to the city itself. The ruin is rather that of a sensual voluptuary who after a life of excess falls into [a sort of] delirium tremens, the woman once full of voluptuousness literally becomes the abode of demons [gêmuves].

To us it appears a mystery how Babylon (mystical) can be considered as having personality, when she is (only) the aggregate of human abominations, but the difficulty arises from our imperfect knowledge of the laws of spiritual existence, the economy of the δρακά καὶ Κινωνίασ (see Eph. iii. 10; vi. 12; Col. i. 16; ii. 16, n.), who play so great a part in the unseen world. Babylon (mystical) is in one sense similar to those human ideals which grow up with the centuries and become powers moulding and affecting and guiding the history of the world, which to us have no definite personality (as we imagine personality to be), yet are mighty powers for good or for evil, powers with which the human spirit blends, and as with Babylon (mystical) powers with which we may commit spiritual adultery, or may have to war in deadly conflict, see Eph. vi. 12. There may be laws of birth-life and growth among these powers of which we know nothing. Babylon itself may have sprung up from some such beginning as the second beast of ch. xiii. 11, or even from the image of the beast, ch. xiii. 14, which men made.

3. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath &c.] Here as in ch. xvii. 2—18 (see notes there), (see also v. 9 below) the great ones of the earth are differentiated from the people in their relation to Babylon. The great ones of the earth are described as actively sustaining Babylon in her abominations; the people (as in this verse, 3) are spoken of as being made drunk by her, the relation of the kings, &c., is active, that of the peoples is more passive in relation to Babylon. The one class lead actively, the other follow. “Babylon is a golden cup in the Lord’s hand...the nations have drunken of her wine, therefore the nations are mad,” Jer. li. 7.
earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies.

4 And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.

5 For her sins have reached unto heaven, and God hath remembered her iniquities.
6 Reward her even as she rewarded you, and double unto her double according to her works: in the cup which she hath filled fill to her double.

7 How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her: for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen, and am no widow, and shall see no sorrow.

8 Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death,

Gen. xi. 4 the Babel builders said "Let us build us a city and a tower whose top may reach unto heaven."

6. Reward her even as she rewarded you] According to the law of compensation that runs through all things, Babylon has to receive back into her own self all the abominations and cruelties and wrongs that she has wrought, Ps. cxxxvii. 8; Jer. l. 15, 29; li. 24, 49. The wicked receive into themselves the recompence of their error, Rom. i. 27.

7. How much she hath glorified herself, and lived deliciously, so much torment and sorrow give her] Sowing and reaping, see notes to v. 6; Isaiah xlvii. 8. Babylon is here represented as having a personal character, as having the feelings, sins, ambitions, torments, sorrows, of a woman, see notes to v. 2 above. Whatever Babylon is, whatever she who says "I sit as a queen" is, her judgments will come on those also who abide in her and will thus find an intensely personal fulfilment. We are part of Babylon if we are living in her.

8. Therefore shall her plagues come in one day, death, and mourning, and famine, &c.] In Isaiah xlvii. 9 the judgment on Babylon is, "But these two things shall come to thee in a moment, in one day, the loss of children and widowhood." All these intimations point to the manner in which Babylon shall be brought down. The peoples (waters, ch. xvii. 15) on which she sitteth shall be dried up (with judgments?), and death, mourning and famine shall make her desolate. In their troubles the great men shall forsake her and leave her widowed, and the peoples shall hate her, in their own desolation.

in one day] The overthrow of (mystical) Babylon will be sudden and complete (see v. 21), and without hope of restoration. Sodom (mystical) may be restored (Ezek. xvi. 53) and also Egypt (mystical), as it says in Isaiah xix. 19—22, but there is nowhere any record of the restoration of Babylon.
and mourning, and famine; and she shall be utterly burned with fire: for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her.

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,

utterly burned with fire] Fire (of some sort) is to be a chief agent in the destruction of Babylon, see ch. xvii. 16, also ch. xviii. 8, 9, 18. Fire is one of the great purifying elements, whether in the spiritual world or the natural.

9. And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication and lived deliciously with her, &c.] [Lasciviously is a better rendering of σεμφυνάωσαν. Here as elsewhere (see v. 3 above, also ch. xvii. 2, 18) a distinction is drawn in the commerce with Babylon between the kings (great men) and the people: the relation of the great is active, of the peoples passive. "The smoke of her burning." See ch. xvii. 16, burn her with fire. See v. 8 above and v. 18 below, and ch. xix. 3. The enumeration here of the elements of which Babylon (mystical) is built up shews that the interpretations which would identify Babylon with the Papacy cannot be sustained. The Papal system, together with other ecclesiastical systems and superstitions and sects and societies, may constitute a part of Babylon, as being a part of that system which is the enemy of the Mount Zion of God, but Babylon as described in this eighteenth chapter of the Apocalypse is not limited to sacerdotalism (see notes to ch. xvii. 1, 2). Babylon is the great city (mystical) that reigns over the kings and peoples of the earth, ch. xvii. 18, whether they be papal or protestant, or be they what they may. In her are produced all those bewildering confusions with which the world is made mad—pomp and pride and luxury and harlotry and sensuality, and all that "the world" (as the enemy of Christ) esteems its good, as opposed to the Mount Zion. All the gods and graven images to which the world bows down and worships, whether with rebellious intent or whether in ignorance.

"Gods we ignorantly make and worship
Dreaming that we worship Thee."

Idols, not only ecclesiastical, but idols of the cave and of the city, of silver and of gold, of self and of sense, of lust, of harlotry, of pomp


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:

12 The merchandise of gold, and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all thine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble,

13 And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense, and wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep, and horses, and chariots, and slaves, and souls of men.

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

15 The merchants of these things, which were made rich by her, shall stand afar off for the fear of her torment, weeping and wailing,

16 And saying, Alas, alas that great city, that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls!

and pride. The catalogue of her wares in this chapter shews how little Babylon must be limited to sacerdotalism or false religion. It is singular how in this enumeration of the wares of Babylon the ruling thought concerns those things, those luxuries and gauds, which relate to trade and commerce: her harlotry and her sins are not forgotten (see vv. 3—5), but the details in this place (ch. xviii. 9—19) relate mainly to that commerce which ministers to pomp, and pride, and luxury, that commerce which is the pride of nations. At this present day Babylon mixes herself up in all the ways of the world, its religion, its commerce, its politics, its public and private life, its social intercourse, in a way such as probably was never before known so universally.
17 For in one hour so great riches is come to nought. And every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off,

18 And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning, saying, What city is like unto this great city!

19 And they cast dust on their heads, and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas that great city, wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate.

20 Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.

21 And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea, saying, Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.

20. Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets] This exclamation comes from the recorder of the vision [or from the Angelic hierophant], not from any of the actors in the scene. This cry of retribution closes the vision of the fall of Babylon. "For God hath judged your judgment upon her." What follows is a distinct vision. See ch. xvii. 6; xviii. 24; xix. 2.

21. And a mighty angel took up a stone like a great millstone] This is a fresh vision, which John sees as a present fact. A mighty angel casts a great stone into the sea, as a figure of the manner in which shall be fulfilled in the future the vision of which John has just before been the witness. It is a prophetic act, done in the presence of the seer. It is a present act, accenting the prophetic description just given. Although this vision is distinct from that described in vv. 1—20, yet it is probably still a part of the enlarged illustration of the events coming under the seventh and last vial period of ch. xvi. 17—21 (see notes thereon, and xvii. 1). The whole of chaps. xvii. xviii. xix. are probably a résumé of the events of the seventh vial period.

Thus...shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all] Babylon in her ruin shall cease to be what she has been, but even in her ruin she will still exist as "the habitation of demons," &c. v. 2, n. and ch. xix. 3, n. Just as the
22 And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers, and trumpeters, shall be heard no more at all in thee; and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be, shall be found any more in thee; and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee;

23 And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee; and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee: for thy merchants were the great men of the earth; for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived.

24 And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth.
CHAPTER XIX.

1 And after these things I heard a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, Alleluia; Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:

2 For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.

3 And again they said, Alleluia. And her smoke rose up for ever and ever.

of the seventh seal. The conflict and slaughter of ch. xix. 11—18 are probably the slaughter of Harmageddon spoken of in anticipation under the sixth seal period, ch. xvi. 16, n.

1. after these things I heard a great voice, &c.] The fall of Babylon raises a song of thanksgiving in Heaven. Here the scene of the vision passes from earth to the heavenly places, "Alleluia" (praise ye, Jehovah). This word is here introduced for the first time in the N. T., and the use of it is confined to this event (see vv. 1, 3, 4, 6), the fall of Babylon. The fall of Babylon is the pledge and surety of the final triumph of the Mount Zion. The great enemy of the Bride, the Church, is now overthrown, and the approaching "marriage of the Lamb" (v. 7) is announced.

2. he...hath avenged the blood of his servants] The ruin of Babylon is to come from her own people, and does so in the vision (see ch. xvii. 16 n.), yet it is God's judgment on her. Man's will is made to fulfil God's purpose, see Acts i. 25. Even man's unrighteousness is made to fulfil God's purpose ultimately. This retribution on wrong doing, whether we call it vindication or retribution, witnesses to that law of compensation that runs through all things, whether spiritual or material, evil deeds come back upon their authors in some way or other; as we mete, so will it be measured to us, so also as we forgive, shall we be forgiven.

the blood of his servants] See chaps. xvii. 6, n.; xviii. 20—24, n.

3. And her smoke rose up for ever, &c.] See ch. xviii. 9—18; and ch. xvii. 16, n. Fire (mystical or material) is one of the great purging elements. Fire and water, the two opposites, both bring destruction and salvation.
CHAPTER XIX.

4 And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, Amen; Alleluia.

5 And a voice came out of the throne, saying, Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great.

6 And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, and as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings, saying, Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth.

7 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready.

4. And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts, &c. "The elders" and the "living creatures" unite with the "much people" (v. 1) in Heaven in the song of "Salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God" (v. 1). They utter their "Amen; Alleluia." Other voices also join in the chorus (vv. 5, 6), so great an event in the history of redemption is the fall of Babylon. The establishment of the Mount Zion, ch. xiv. 1—5, was the potential doom of Babylon (ch. xiv. 8, n.), and "the elders" and "the living creatures" are introduced there also, ch. xiv. 3, n., as part of the glory of the scene. Here, in ch. xix. 4, they again appear, joining the redeemed in praise and worship at the destruction of the great city. See also how they rejoiced when our Lord took the seven-sealed scroll and opened it. As to who are the elders, and what are the living creatures, see chaps. iv. 4, 6, n.; v. 8—14, n.

6. And I heard as it were the voice of a great multitude, &c. These multitudinous voices respond to and echo back the songs of joy and triumph. The fall of Babylon heralds the approaching marriage supper of the Lamb, see vv. 7, 9, below. In the heavenly places "the marriage supper" is seen as just about to be, but on earth centuries may have yet to pass before it can be realized. The seeming incongruity may arise from the difference in the relative nature of time, whether viewed from the heavenly place or as viewed on earth.

7. Let us be glad and rejoice,...for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready] This
8 And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.

is the first mention in the Apocalypse of the marriage and the marriage supper of the Lamb, yet this is the great event to which the whole drama has been gradually leading up. This event which is to consummate the union between God and man in Christ associates itself with the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5. The Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5, where Christ and His holy ones are gathered in the glory of His Parousia is the Church of the firstborn, the Bride in her preparation, the Bride, the Body of Christ gathering. "Christ the firstfruits, afterward they that are Christ’s in His Parousia," 1 Cor. xv. 23. This is the Church of which Paul speaks (Eph. v. 27), "That He Himself might set side by side with Himself glorious, the Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that she should be holy; and without blemish." This is the Church which comes down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride, adorned for her husband, Rev. xxi. 2, n. The allusion to the marriage supper in our text, ch. xix. 7—9, is like the previous allusions to the stages in the inception of the Church, chaps. viii. 3, n.; xi. 2; xii. 1, 2; xiv. 1—5, n. It is very abrupt: the vision reveals a fact, but then again passes away from it, until in the closing chapters of the book these isolated references find their justification and fulfilment in the consummation of which they are all, as it were, fragmentary prophecies. They flash upon the sight for a moment in the story; and then vanish from sight until at last the Church, the Bride, comes forth in her glory, see ch. xxi. 2.

In the heavenly places the potential decree of the marriage supper is an ordained fact, and as such is celebrated, but in time the actualization is not yet. The vision of the Church flashes in the light and then disappears for a time.

"So long the city I desired to reach
Lay hid. When suddenly its spires afar
Flashed through the circling clouds; you may conceive
My transport. Soon the vapours closed again,  
But I had seen the city, and one such glance
No darkness could obscure."

BROWNING, Paracelsus, p. 147.

1 The marriage supper is [virtually] decreed here, but its consummation "in time" is after the millennium, see notes to Rev. xiv. 8, the potential and the actual.
9 And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

10 And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and

8. the fine linen is the righteousness of saints] "The righteousness" (ἐκαθάρωμαι), lit. the righteousnesses. The Bride, the Church, shines not only in the glory of Christ, but in those graces and righteousnesses with which she has been arrayed even in this life, the divine flowers and fruits that she has gathered in this world will form part of her glory at the marriage supper, see 2 Cor. vi. 16, on the individual and corporate beauty of the members of the Body of Christ. On the Church, the Body of Christ, see Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. vi. 15; x. 17; xii. 27; Eph. i. 14, 22, 23; iv. 12—16; 2 Cor. vi. 16; Col. i. 18; v. 23, 27. (The woman in ch. xii. 1 has on her head a crown of twelve stars.)

9. unto me...These are the true sayings of God] Note the emphatic manner in which this is given: note the blessedness of this call to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and yet man will not come. It was so with the Jews, see Matt. xxii. 2—10; Luke xiv. 16—24. As our Lord said, the called are many, the chosen are few, Matt. xx. 16; xxii. 14. We are pre-occupied with our buying and selling, marrying and giving in marriage, so that we perceive not the Parousia (Presence) of the Son of Man: we know not our day of visitation and so the day passes away, comes and goes in vain, Luke xix. 44; see Matt. xxv. 1, 13, &c. It is not clear whether our text, v. 9, relates to the blessed portion of those who are hidden to the marriage supper, or whether to the unimaginable glory and blessedness of those who form part of that Church of the firstborn which constitutes the Church Herself—the Bride. There are varied degrees of glory, the Bride, the unimaginable glory, the glory of the invited guests, the glory of the spectators: a multitude which no man can number.

10. And I fell at his feet to worship him, &c.] At whose feet? probably the angel of ch. xvii. 1—15 (see notes to v. 9 above).

See thou do it not] [As indicated by the italics in the text the original is very brief. See...not, "Opa μη", as Winer explains it an apopiosis, a sudden break in a discourse, generally for rhetorical effect; for the complete construction see Matt. viii. 4; xviii. 10. Ed.]

I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren having the
of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.

11 And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he doth judge and make war.

testimony of Jesus,...for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy] These words, "the witness of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy," indicate that the Apocalypse is, what the opening words (ch. i. 1) declare it to be, "the revelation of Jesus Christ." The unfolding of the mysteries hid in Christ, so far as they relate to the period with which the vision is mainly concerned, from the time (i.e.) just preceding the destruction of Jerusalem to the close of this present dispensation. The whole book is a prophecy of things that were still in the future when the book was written; a prophetic representation in cypher of events which were beginning to come to pass when the book was written, but extending into a remote future. It is to be noted that if the being who speaks to John here be "the angel" of ch. xvii. 1—15, then some of the angels, at any rate, belong to the human family, for this one, in our text, speaks of himself as a fellow-servant and brother of John, see also ch. xxii. 9, n. See also ch. xxi. 17, of a man, i.e. of the angel. On the Angelic hierarchy see 1 Cor. iv. 9, where the angels are distinguished from men.

11. And I saw heaven opened, and behold, &c.] Here, as elsewhere, we learn that heaven and "the city of God" are something distinct from the troubled scene of the vision, they lie in the untroubled calm of the great beyond. The Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5 is in the calm and rest, and yet it is also in the midst of the turmoil. On it the Lord is reigning in the midst of His enemies, Ps. cx. 2. It may be said to be the point of junction between earth and heaven as in the ancient temple at Jerusalem, the space between the Cherubim in the Holy of Holies represented the entrance gate to Paradise (see Luke xxiii. 45).

a white horse] Cf. ch. vi. 2.

and he that sat upon him] Lit. he that sitteth, δι καθημαν (pres. part.). See v. 9 above twice. Note how John uses the present tense here, "sitteth." "Doth judge," &c., vv. 12, 13, 15, 16; as also we find in the Gospel of John, v. 2, &c. Here a new vision opens. The Gentile period of the dispensations is drawing to a close; and as in the last days of the
CHAPTER XIX.

12 His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns; and he had a name written, that no man knew, but he himself.

13 And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood: and his name is called The Word of God.

14 And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Old world period, Rev. vi. 2, our Lord comes forth as the minister of judgment and justice on rebellious Israel, so here also He comes forth from the secret of His dwelling-place according to His warning (ch. xvi. 15) to execute judgment on the rebellious world. The glory in which He comes is that of a warrior rather than as the Prince of Peace. He comes forth as the ruler with the rod of iron [the iron mace] see v. 15 below. The Lord comes forth now, not so much in conflict, as in victory, not so much to fight with hostile powers as to execute judgment upon them. The destruction of Babylon, though one step towards the final triumph does not bring man under the Divine dominion. See what follows here.

12. His eyes were as a flame of fire, and on his head were many crowns] The use of the word ὁδήμαρα, diadems, here, instead of στέφανος, as in ch. vi. 2, is singular. The word "diadems" is used elsewhere (chaps. xii. 3; xiii. 1) for the diadems of the beast. It may be that the diadems described in our text as worn by our Lord, represent the spoils of victory, marks of Him who cometh forth "conquering and to conquer," ch. xi. 2, n.

a name written, that no man knew but he himself] It is a question whether this secret written name (names) applies here to the diadems or to our Lord Himself. We read, ch. ii. 17, n., that He that overcometh has also "a new name written, which no man knoweth but he himself." The secret of sonship, a thing that cannot be told.

13. his name is called The Word of God] [Ὁ λόγος τοῦ Θεοῦ here recalls מִלֶּלֶם Memra da-Yeya, of post-Biblical writers (cf. notes to John i. 1 et seq.) rather than the Hellenistic nuance of Philo-Judaicus. Ed.]

14. And the armies which were in heaven followed him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean] In these symbolic forms, the vision of Judgment is represented to John, portending one of the last great conflicts on the earth, in which man contending with man will make the earth a desert, see chaps. xvi. 12, 16, notes.
15 And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations: and he shall rule them with a rod of iron: and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God.

16 And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.

17 And I saw an angel standing in the sun; and he cried with a loud voice, saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven, Come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God;

The kings of the east will (probably) play some great part in working out the final ruin in which will end all man's toil and all man's ingenuity.

15. out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword] Note the present tense throughout, from v. 11 to v. 16. It is in the Apocalypse as in the Gospel John uses the present tense, though the event may be past or future (see John v. 2, &c.).

he shall rule them with a rod of iron] See ch. ii. 27; xii. 5. See Ps. ii. 9; see also the context Ps. ii. 2, "The kings of the earth... and the rulers take counsel together, against the Lord, and against His anointed (Christ), saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision....Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

the winepress] See ch. xiv. 19, 20. To us some of these illustrations may seem far-fetched and extravagant, but they probably had a significant meaning to the people of the East. How many of the resemblances in nature [there are] which one may think so forcible, have no meaning to another person!

16. And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS] (Note the present tense and see vv. 11, 15, n. above). See ch. xvii. 14.

17. in the midst of heaven] For the phrase see ch. viii. 13; xiv. 6. This is probably that great conflict already spoken of, ch. xvi. 16, in the place called Harmageddon, see notes there. This conflict includes among the enemies of Christ not only those nations who constitute the beast (i.e. the western nations, the diffused Roman empire, see chaps. xiii. 1, 2, n.; xvii. 3, 7, 8, 11, 12, 13, 14, &c. notes)
18 That ye may eat the flesh of kings, and the flesh of captains, and the flesh of mighty men, and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them, and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great.

19 And I saw the beast, and the kings of the earth, and their armies, gathered together to make war against him that sat on the horse, and against his army.

20 And the beast was taken, and with him the false
prophet that wrought miracles before him, with which he deceived them that had received the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image. These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone.

21 And the remnant were slain with the sword of him that sat upon the horse, which sword proceeded out of his mouth: and all the fowls were filled with their flesh.

with antichrist? 1 John ii. 18. Compare the description in ch. xiii. 13, with the description in our text, ch. xix. 20 (a worker of miracles). In ch. xx. 10 below, the dragon (the devil, ch. xii. 9, &c.) the beast and the false prophet are all associated together in one perdition.

These both were cast alive] They did not cease to be. See Dan. vii. 20 concerning the judgment on the beast of Dan. vii. 7, the Roman empire, the beast of our text.

a lake of fire burning with brimstone] See Luke xii. 49, 50; Mark ix. 49; xiv. 58, 59; 1 Cor. iii. 13. There is a mystery in the word θείων. It would appear as though among minerals sulphur represented the Divine essence. The Divine essence, minus the light of it (Christ). Burning sulphur does not shed light. Light is the joy of fire. For other instances of the use of the word θείων, see Rev. ix. 17, 18; xiv. 20; xx. 10; xxi. 8. Babylon has already been destroyed, and after the great conflict described in our text the beast and the false prophet are also put away, but not until ch. xx. 10 are we told that the devil also is “cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and the false prophet are.”

21. And the remnant were slain, &c.] We are not told whether this death is temporal or eternal: one thing only is evident, that in this great catastrophe a great part of the inhabitants of the earth will perish, specially that part which constitutes the diffused Roman empire, the beast of ch. xiii. 1, 2, the western nations, the very people who pride themselves on their civilization; the people who for ages shall have been striving to do without God and Christ in their affairs, and to build up human society in their own power into an enduring edifice.

“IT made without God a Paradise though it be of final sorrow, That shall shut out the cares and fears of the forthcoming morrow.”

This will be for them “the end of all the toil of centuries.” It will prove itself a Babel, see vv. 17, 19, notes. In these vast slaughters and deaths with which this portion of the Apocalypse deals we have no hint of what becomes of the souls and spirits of the slain; we may conclude that ch. xx.
CHAPTER XX.

1 And I saw an angel come down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit and a great chain in his hand.

11—15 gives the key to this question, where we come to the great day of judgment of the Gentile world (see notes there). It does not appear from the text that this coming of the Lord in judgment on the Gentile world will be a visible presence, but flesh and blood will perish under His presence, and evil principles and powers will be cast into the abyss in preparation for the new heavens and the new earth that are to follow.

1. And I saw an angel coming down from heaven, having the key of the bottomless pit, &c.] See ch. xii. 9, n. where we find a similar description of Satan at the inception of the Mount Zion, a casting out, however, not into the abyss but into the earth. Here in ch. xx. 3 Satan is described as cast into the abyss. This “abyss” has already been mentioned, Rev. ix. 1, 2, 11; xi. 7; xvii. 8; xx. 1. It appears to be that den of iniquity, the home of unclean and evil spirits out of which emerge in clouds the things that pollute the world, “a den of prey,” see specially ch. ix. 2, 11. In ch. ix. 11, the king of the abyss is styled Abaddon, the destroyer = Apollyon, the destroyer; whether this destroyer is identical with Satan is not told us. The abyss is not the ultimate destination of Satan. There is yet “the lake of fire,” ch. xx. 10, where the beast and the false prophet (ch. xix. 20) already are. This event, the binding of Satan for 1000 years, opens the millennial age. During this period of 1000 years certain of the blessed dead (and living) probably the Church of the firstborn on the Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1—5, notes; Heb. xii. 22, 23), shall reign in glory with Christ, (or probably all who have been raised from spiritual death into life during the Parousia), which would include more than the Church of the firstborn. The marriage supper has already been announced in Heaven (see ch. xix. 7, 9, notes), but so great an event is this marriage supper, so great both for the Bride herself, as well as for the hosts of Heaven, that there is yet a probation for the Bride to pass through, a probation of glory, not of suffering, before the marriage-day. Before the Lord Jesus sets side by side with Himself in glory the Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing (see Eph. v. 27), she must have passed through all the purifications that in the divine order of things it is needful for her to experience. This I suppose to be one, that she shall for 1000 years live and reign with Christ, as the prelude to that yet higher glory, when she shall come forth as “the holy city, the new Jerusalem,
2 And he laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the Devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years,

3 And cast him into the bottomless pit, and shut him up, and set a seal upon him, that he should deceive the nations no more, till the thousand years should be fulfilled: and after that he must be loosed a little season.

coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband” (ch. xxi. 2, see Dan. vii. 22—27). Who these are that share in the millennial glory, see v. 4, n. The period of “one thousand years,” must be taken literally and not as an indefinite term. The term is repealed six times over, vv. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and defines a specific period according to human chronology. Of course we know nothing of the manner of the computation of time in the heavenly places, or whether time in our sense exists. One thousand years may there be but as one day, but taking the record as it stands in the text of the Apocalypse, we must expect that during this millennial reign of Christ our Lord and His saints, the conditions of mundane life shall be in some marvellous way affected for the better for a space of one thousand years. That, in fact, there shall be a millennium on earth as well as a millennium in the heavenly places (see vv. 7, 8, notes). The earth will share, it appears, both in the glory of the reign of Christ with His saints and also in the binding of Satan (see v. 7, note). Lightfoot, 3. 361, says, “It is a tradition of the house of Elijah that the righteous ones, the blessed God shall raise from the dead, they shall no more return to their dust; but those thousand years that the holy blessed God is to renew the world, he will give them wings as eagles, and they shall flee upon the waters.” Aruch. “The days of the Messiah are a thousand years.” R. Eliasar.

2. that he should deceive the nations no more, &c.] Satan in the conflict with Michael (ch. xii. 7) had already been cast out of the heavenly places, he had been cast down unto the earth. Now he is cast even out of the earth into the abyss. This is to be one of the blessings of the millennial period, but it does not appear that “the nations” who survive the great conflict of ch. xix. 17—21 shall be all righteous people, though it does not appear as though they should witness with the Church on earth some of the millennial glories.

and after that he must be loosed a little season] See notes

[1 T. B. Synhedrin, fol. 92 a.]
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

to v. 7 infra. It may be queried shall this millennial reign of Christ our Lord take place on this very earth on which we are living. The answer is both "yes" and "no." Yes—inasmuch as it shall be on this very earth; no, inasmuch as this very earth shall be in some sense transfigured and glorified by the presence of the king, the Lord and His holy ones in glory. It will take place on this earth, but on this earth in something of transfigured glory. Our Lord and His holy ones will not come to reign in mortal mundane forms, but in the resurrection body, and the elect among the peoples still on earth will share in the glory of the king and His court, the glorified ones. The earth also will share in the glories of the Mount Zion, and though still the same earth will be the same earth transfigured.

4. And I saw thrones, &c.] During this millennial period the saints under Christ will be in dominion on the earth. It may be to this period that Paul alludes when he says 1 Cor. vi. 2, "Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world?" If so, this is another hint that Paul in his visions and revelations (2 Cor. xii. 1—5 and elsewhere) had seen some of the mysteries that John unfolds in the Apocalypse, see Heb. xii. 22; comp. Rev. xiv. 1—5, n.; 1 Cor. xv. 52; comp. Rev. xi. 15, n. We are not told who these are who sit on thrones and to whom judgment is given, but we may suppose that they are the Church of the firstborn, the Bride of Christ (see ch. xiv. 1—5). We find this throne glory promised by our Lord to those who overcome (ch. iii. 21). Paul also in speaking of the Church speaks of this throne glory (Eph. v. 27), "That he might set side by side with Himself the church glorious," &c. But there are others also specified, or at any rate there are other definitions given of those who shall share in the millennial glory, which is the first resurrection, v. 5, over whom the second death shall have no power, v. 6.

them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God] "Beheaded," πεσελακομένων. Perhaps a metaphor for martyrdom of whatever sort.

and which had not worshipped, &c.] And whosoever (ὁσιὼς) 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. The allusions here in ch. xx. 4 may
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

include both the dead and the living, both those who are on earth (in Christ) and they who are with Him in glory on the Mount Zion. The Mount Zion, the home of the saints (see ch. xiv. 1—5) where the Church of the firstborn are gathered into communion with Christ in His Parousia, includes among its inhabitants both the living and the dead, see notes to Rev. xiv. 1—5; Heb. xii. 22, 23). The souls of the martyrs are of course the souls of those who have suffered death, but "they who have not worshipped the beast neither his image," &c. may include both the dead and the living, the dead who had been already gathered to the Mount Zion during the dispensation of the Lord's Parousia, 1 Cor. xv. 23, as well as the living, who having remained loyal to Christ throughout on earth may have survived the great conflict with which the world is to be desolated as described in ch. xix. 17—21 (see notes there). These all shall live and reign with Christ a thousand years, all who are "in Him" whether they be numbered among the living or the dead when the millennial age arrives. This blessed number shall include also those who have overcome "shall not be hurt of the second death," Rev. ii. 11, n., and those also who having overcome shall sit with Christ the Lord in His throne, even as He also overcame and sat down with His Father on His throne, Rev. iii. 21, n. May we not say all who, through Christ and in Him, overcome the beast and his image and receive not his mark, shall share in the millennial glory, whether they be of the dead or the living when that day cometh. For "He that overcometh shall inherit all these things," Rev. xxi. 7. Here we see why the dead are so blessed henceforth, i.e. from the time of the perfected reign in glory of our Lord, see Rev. xiv. 13, "Write, blessed are the dead that die in the Lord from henceforth," i.e. from the inception of the Mount Zion, they pass at once to the glory at death.

a thousand years] The Rabbinical tradition is, "the days of Messiah are a thousand years." [This is the dictum of Rabbi Eliezer.]

5. But the rest of the dead lived not again, &c.] This is one of the few passages of Scripture which sheds light on the economy of the future state. Here there is evidently drawn a distinction in regard to the dead, between those who had been already gathered to Christ the Lord in His Parousia during this present life, and the rest (οἱ λοιποὶ) of the dead. It does not say that "the rest" were lost, but
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thousand years were finished. This is the first resurrection.

it does say that they lived not again (or came not again), "until the thousand years were finished." In what state they exist we are not told. They may be in some such state in Hades as were the spirits in prison during the old world period, 1 Pet. iii. 19. It would appear that they await the great judgment day of vv. 11—15 below (see notes there). They have no part in the first resurrection. The distinction is immense between those who have part in the first resurrection and those who have no part in it.

This is the first resurrection] Probably this was the resurrection which Paul was striving after, Phil. iii. 11, "the first resurrection." The first resurrection (i.e.) includes all who have been raised from death into life in Christ in this world, and who have been gathered into fellowship with Him in His Parousia, 1 Cor. xv. 23; Rev. xiv. 1—5, n. It indicates all of these whether they shall be still living on the earth, when the millennial period arrives, or whether they shall have already passed through the act of physical dying, the act of dying for such is not the same thing as that act is for "the rest" (of our text). They who are "in Christ" in this life are already in the resurrection (see John xi. 25, 26; 1 Cor. xv. 26). Christ hath made void [καταρρήσιαν, annulled] death for them and brought life and immortality to light, 2 Tim. i. 10; Isaiah, ch. xxv. 7, 8, speaks in anticipation of the blessedness in this respect of the inhabitants of the Mount Zion, "And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. He will swallow up death in victory;" note, it is "in this mountain," the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5, that this shall be realized, see Heb. xii. 22; 1 Pet. ii. 24; 2 Pet. iii. 10; iii. 13; 1 John ii. 27, 28, n. They who in this mortal life have already passed from death into life in Christ, are already in the resurrection life, see John xi. 25, 26, n.; to them death (the act of dying) is merely the consummation of the life in Christ which they already have; they are already, even in this life, on the Mount Zion, and death does not jeopardize their standing thereon. It merely removes that vail of flesh and blood which has heretofore stood between their souls and the glory. But "the rest of the dead," the millions of millions who may never have heard the name of Christ, or who having heard it, have never come to the knowledge of Him, or who having come to the knowledge of Him, have not abode faithful therein, to these death is quite another thing, they remain shut out from the millennial blessing awaiting the judgment
day of vv. 11—15 (see notes there). Nothing is told us of the condition of those of the nations who having survived the great conflict of ch. xix. 17—21 come under the power of the millennial reign. Though delivered from the power of Satan we do not read that they are righteous; they break out again (some of them) in rebellion in vv. 8, 9. Though delivered from the power of Satan, they are still living under the conditions of fallen human nature, “led away of their own lusts and enticed,” see James i. 14. But we may imagine that during the millennial period, when we may suppose that the Church on earth, “the beloved city,” “the camp of the saints” (v. 9) shall shine forth in glory and the power of the Lord’s Parousia shall be magnified, that many of the nations who have hitherto resisted His grace shall during that period of grace and glory yield themselves to it, and be raised out of the death of nature into life in Christ.

The millennial reign of Christ will be a time of mercy for such, and we may believe that many will then be gathered into the glory of the Mount Zion, and then probably will live and die as they do now, saints only and quickened souls remaining throughout the thousand years’ period. But many others we are told (vv. 8, 9) will go up on the breadth of the earth to compass the camp of the saints, and to fight under the usurper, when he shall again be released for a little season (v. 3). The first resurrection will include, we may believe, all who have been gathered into Christ during the dispensation of the Parousia whether before or during the millennial period. Over these the second death shall have no power (see on v. 6).

There is not a word here about any resurrection of flesh and blood, flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom (1 Cor. xv. 50). The flesh and blood of the dead saints who reign with Christ in millennial glory is turned into dust; dust they were and unto dust they return (Gen. iii. 19) so far as they are mortal flesh and blood (Job xxxiv. 15; Eccles. iii. 20; xii. 7.

All who have passed into the first resurrection in Christ, and all who shall do so, all who are to share the millennial glory, all who have or shall share in the first resurrection are unclothed of flesh and blood, their carcases are turned to dust, but their spirits are in glory, their spiritualized bodies have risen to the glory, their animal bodies are in the dust. Saints and sinners alike pass through the act of physical death, but the saints being already in “Christ the resurrection” (see John xi. 25, n.) pass to the Mount Zion at death, the sinners and such

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1 Whether the saints still living on earth shall be translated out of flesh and blood when the millennial period comes is not told us.
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6 Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first

men as have never been quickened from death into life in this world, await in Hades the judgment day of vv. 11—15 below (see notes there); see also notes to ch. xxi. 1, 24. The state of the dead “who lived not again” until the thousand years were finished is left untold, they remain in that deadness in which they lived on earth and in which they passed out of this life, the death of fallen human nature, dead to God, dead to Christ, dead to heaven, and yet they must have in them, where they have not destroyed it, that dormant kinship to Christ which He established with man in His incarnation, and where in the light of “the great white throne,” the glory of the Parousia, these souls are brought into the quickening power of the divine presence, we have every reason to believe that multitudes shall in that day of glory and terror be raised out of death into life and live eternally to praise God and Christ the Lord, see ch. xxi. 24, n. There was in the old world period a multitude that no man could number out of all nations, and peoples, and kindreds, and tongues, Rev. vii. 9, besides the elect number, and we cannot suppose that under the new covenant the harvest of souls shall be less than it was under the old, nay rather we are sure that it shall be exceeding great. And we may believe that in the great judgment day described in vv. 11—15 below there shall yet be of the rest “who lived not again until the thousand years were finished” a countless multitude of the saved. Their state in Hades before the judgment day is not told us, but we may suppose that they were in much the same position as the dead of the old world period were of whom Peter speaks, 1 Pet. iii. 19 et seq. We may imagine that they remained shut up in that prison of their own nature in which they had lived and died, some to arise again to joy and some to shame and everlasting contempt.

6. Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection, &c.] This is John's own spontaneous testimony in regard to what he sees in the vision before him. He sees the glories of the millennial reign of Christ the Lord and His holy ones, he sees thrones, and them that sit thereon, he sees the glory of the saints both of the dead and of the living, he sees also the portion of those who worship the beast and his image and who have his mark upon them, and then exclaims:—[Blessed and holy (is) he who has part in the first resurrection, over these the second death has no authority, but they shall be priests of God and of the Christ, and shall reign with him the thousand years.]

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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.

7 And when the thousand years are expired, Satan shall be loosed out of his prison,

the second death] This phrase was well known among the Jewish writers, see instances quoted by Lightfoot, iii. 364, from Onkelos and others. One instance there quoted is on Isaiah lxv. 6. Observe (he says) in the prophet that these verses speak of the ruin and rejection of the Jews, now a cursed people, and given up to the second death; and in ch. lxvi. 19—22 is told how the Lord would send and gather the Gentiles to be His people and would make them His priests and Levites. See also the new heaven and the new earth, Isaiah lxvi. 22, and the day of Judgment, lxvi. 24. From a comparison of the texts it appears that whilst they who reign with Christ in millennial glory shall not be hurt of the second death, an exemption which extends also to all who overcome, Rev. ii. 11; xxi. 7; see also iii. 21, n., and whilst all these holy ones thus exempted from danger shall not even come into the Judgment described in xv. 11—15 below, having already passed from death into life (see John v. 24, n.; xi. 25, n.), yet besides and beyond this blessed number, there will be also a multitude (let us hope innumerable, as in the old world period, Rev. vii. 9, n.) who though coming through the Judgment of xx. 11—15, shall also not be hurt by the second death (see notes to xv. 11—15 below); see also John v. 24; Rom. xiv. 10; 2 Cor. v. 10. They may not be priests of God and of Christ, they may not reign with Christ a thousand years, they will not form part of the Body of Christ, the Church, ch. xxi. 2, they may not even (many of them) have ever heard the name of Christ in this life, yet they may be saved through Him and by that grace in Him which draws all men to Him, John xii. 32, n. and i. 9, n. On the difference between the judgment days of the old world period and the new, see Rev. xi. 18 and xx. 11—15, notes. The state of those who die in Christ during the dispensation of the Parousia is specially blessed, Rev. xiv. 13, n. (1 Cor. xv. 23), the millennial glory belongs to such.

7. And when the thousand years are expired, &c.] (See v. 3, "a little season.") During the millennial reign of Christ and His holy ones, spoken of in the previous verses, there would still be among the nations that survive the great conflict of ch. xix. 17, 18, and who would be permitted to share to some extent in the millennial glory, multitudes who were still unregenerate, still in their old fallen nature
CHAPTER XX.

8 And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.

9 And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved

and who had failed as yet to reach the Mount Sion of God. At the close of the millennial period Satan would still have a work to do, as God's drudge, among these peoples, as His element to resolve them into their ultimate principles, to do as the tares did in our Lord's parable, Matt. xiii. 30; to do as the heresies did in the Corinthian church, 1 Cor. xi. 19; 2 Cor. vii. 12. Thus does even Satan serve a purpose in the economy of the kingdom of heaven: thus to the very hour of the great judgment day will he play a part in the mysteries and judgments through which the final consummation in glory shall be brought about. Sion is redeemed through judgment. The evil principle in its fermenting process, as a powerful acid in chemistry, has yet to work its work in resolving human nature into its ultimate condition. The chemistry of nature is a picture lesson on the level of physics, of the Divine chemistry in the spiritual world.

8. And shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog] See Ezek. xxxviii. 1, &c. Gog and Magog; so also in Rev. xx. 21, 22. The Jews themselves had traditions about Gog and Magog. It is in the Divine ordering that Satan shall thus go forth (see v. 7, n. above; see 2 Thes. ii. 11, 12, the old world period). The millennial age is preceded by a great conflict and wholesale destruction of human lives, Rev. xix. 17, 18. It is also followed by the conflict described in our text (see also v. 9, n.).

the four quarters, &c.] Lit. the four “corners” or “angles,” γωνίας, so Rev. vii. 1. It may be said that John was ignorant of the earth's form, or it may be said that he cites a common idiom, just as we do when we speak of the four quarters from which the wind blows, see Rev. vii. 1.

9. And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city] These words indicate that in the millennial glory, and in the conflict that shall come at the close of that period, the Mount Sion, the “camp of the saints, the beloved city,” shall have a palpable existence on

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city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them.

10 And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

this earth, such as it never before had had, such that the sons of Belial shall be able to compass, and seek to overthrow it. From this we may gather that the reign of Christ in millennial glory shall be on the Mount Zion of Rev. xiv. 1—5, which whilst it has its summit in the heavenly places, has also its place in the world the city of the saints (see Heb. xii. 22, &c.). The glory of the Parousia will probably shine through the persons of the saints upon the rest of the world. He shall come to be glorified in His saints and admired in all them that believe, 2 Thess. i. 10. Through this Church of the firstborn gathered on the Mount Zion the exceeding riches of God's grace and His kindness towards us through Christ Jesus will be manifested to the ages. Eph. ii. 7.

and fire came down...out of heaven, and devoured them] (As at Mt Sinai, Ex. xix. 12, &c.) The people who encompass the camp of the saints and the beloved city are consumed by fire from heaven. They are not cast into the abyss as is the devil (v. 10), they are slain, and as dead men they await the judgment day of vv. 11—15, together with the other dead of this dispensation. Even of them, some will be found whose names are in the Book of Life, v. 15.

10. And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, &c.] The beast and the false prophet were cast into the lake of fire, ch. xix. 20 (see note there). Now the devil also is cast in, but we are not told that the people who were consumed with fire from heaven (v. 9) are also cast in. As dead men they are reserved for the judgment day which now immediately follows (vv. 11—15, n. below). We see how throughout the whole vision opportunity for repentance is given again and again to man. Even here the enemies of the saints are not cast into the lake of fire. They are reserved for judgment. In that judgment day we know not what depths of mercy may be retained for man, see next verse (11). See instances below, how opportunity for repentance was given, chaps. ix. 20, 21, n.; xvi. 9—11, n.; how throughout the whole period there were the saints of God and those whose names were in the Book of Life, and how grace was still offered to all, chaps. vii. 3; viii. 3; ix. 4; xi. 1, 2, 13; xii. 17;
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11 And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them.

xiii. 7, 8, 15; xiv. 1—5; xvi. 15; xvii. 8—14; xviii. 4; 20—24; xx. 15, n. "The lake of fire," see vv. 14, 15 below; also ch. xiv. 10. Each goes to his own place as Judas did in Acts i. 25.

11. And I saw a great white throne, &c.] Or, a throne of radiant light (θρόνον μεγάν λευκάν). This is the light of the Parousia in its intensity. There is mercy and love as well as judgment in this great ordeal. The judgment day of the old world period is recorded in Rev. xi. 18; see also 2 Pet. iii. 10—12; but this great and final assize eclipses that day, both in glory and terror. It is the full manifestation of the Parousia, of which that other day was only the beginning. "And I saw a great white throne, &c." Before this piercing light we may imagine that all that is unclean, unholy, false, wrathful, all that is artificial and made up, all in fact that is at enmity with Christ and His truth and perfectness will shrink self-condemned¹, all whose Christianity is doctrine only or habit or behaviour. Still there may be millions on millions of souls, the souls of children, and of childlike people, who in the "insouciance" of their nature shall endure the fierce light unconscious of its dread significance, to whom it shall be no condemnation but joy. There may be multitudes who have never heard the name of Christ, to whom this glory shall be the first revelation of Christ to them, and they shall meet it with reverent joy, confessing that this is what they had sought but never yet found. We may have a sure and certain hope that in the closing scene of this economy the number of the dead who are saved shall far exceed that multitude under the old economy, Rev. vii. 9, which no man could number out of every nation and kindred, and people and tongue.

the earth and the heaven fled away, &c.] See ch. xxi. 1, n. New conditions of existence open, and all visible things as they have been previously perceived pass away. This present world is what it is only to beings organized as we are.

¹ We may believe that this awful judgment day, whilst intensely personal, will be in a large sense automatic in its action. Souls will only have to be brought into contact with this intense light to be revealed and made manifest for what they are. The sinner with his spotted leprous soul will stand self-condemned in that light. By its action everything will be resolved into what it really is, a divine chemistry acting automatically; see Mal. iii. 2, refiner's fire, and Rom. i. 22, 24, 27; Acts i. 25.
And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

For "stand before God," read with the amended text "stand before the Throne." This great assize includes "the rest of the dead" spoken of in v. 5 above. It includes all from ch. xi. 18 onward, who were not partakers in the first resurrection, all who are not included in the summary, 1 Cor. xv. 23, all who are excluded from the millennial glory. The previous day of judgment of the old world period, ch. xi. 18, included within its compass all the dead of that age, saints and sinners. In the day of judgment recorded in our text the saints appear to have no part. They do not appear in the judgment, they have already passed from death unto life in Christ (see John v. 24, n.).

and the books were opened] See John viii. 9, notes, "convicted by their own conscience." The book of each man's life, according as he had lived it. We are all writing books, consciously or unconsciously, not in ink but in living characters, day by day, and hour by hour. If the things we write are Christ-written, written after the example writing (ἱγραμμα) of our Lord Himself, then by virtue of our fellowship with Him in identity we need have no fear of the judgment; we are with Him in the resurrection life, the life that has conquered death.

and another book was opened, which is the book of life] "The Book of Life of the Lamb," ch. xiii. 8. This other book, the Book of Life, I suppose to be the person of our Lord, the living law of the New Covenant, the law by which all things and persons are to be tried in the last day (the living law, law and person in one). According as the individual books square with this book, accordingly will be the fate of each individual; those who have in them the marks of Christ will be acquitted. If these books have been written [as it were] by the Lord, and shew the marks of His mind, His grace and redemption, then the second death can have no power over such. If the books on the other hand contain one continued witness of sin and rebellion, and enmity to Christ, then condemnation must follow. What depths of mercy may yet be hidden in the provision of that day we may not speculate upon, doubtless there will be something of which we have no conception, see Rom. xi. 32, 33. Some go not into the judgment at all,
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13 And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works.

14 And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death.

15 And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.

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ythey have already passed through it here, John v. 24, or if they do pass through the light of the throne it is only to make manifest that they have already in this world passed through the judgment.

13. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it] These words have a strange significance, varying according to the conditions under which we contemplate "the sea," whether under storm, or under sunshine. The dark stormy sea with the sobbing rain does indeed appear like a great charnel house, a vast cemetery covering secrets of death and ruin, whilst in its brightness and beauty it looks like the sea of glass on which stand the hosts of heaven.

and death and hell (i.e. Hades) delivered up the dead which were in them; and they were judged every man according to their works] This is not a judgment of saved souls, each is now judged according to his works. The works, the daily life written in the book, is the test of what each man is (see notes to v. 12 above).

14. And death and hell (i.e. Hades) were cast into the lake of fire] Death and Hades have now passed away, see 1 Cor. xv. 26.

This is the second death] The amended text adds [γὰρ λίμνη τοῦ πυρός] the lake of fire, [and this explains the saying of our Lord, see ch. ii. 11, as well as that of John himself in v. 6]. In that dread day each soul will go to its own place: it will be so both by the judgment of God and in the nature of things.

15. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life] See notes on ch. xx. 12 above. From the words in chaps. iii. 5, "I will not blot out his name out of the book of life," and xxii. 19, it might appear that in the dispensation of the Parousia by virtue of the exceeding power and grace of Christ as though all men's names were once included in the Book of Life, but that some are blotted out because men will not remain therein; they deny their part therein, they sin themselves out of the book (see notes to ch. iii. 5), but the words in ch. xvii. 8
are not altogether consistent with this supposition (whose names "are" [not "were" as in A. V.] not written, &c., though read as they stand in the present tense they do not affirm that the names never were in the Book); the mystery may remain unsolved. We find references to the Book of Life, chaps. iii. 5; xiii. 8; xx. 12—15; xxi. 27; xxii. 19; Phil. iv. 3. It is evident from our text that of these countless millions who shall be judged at this great assize there shall be many whose names are in the Book of Life, and we may trust from Rom. xi. 32, 33 (also Rev. vii. 9, n.) that these shall constitute a multitude of saved that no man can number, see ch. xxi. 24—27, n.

1. And I saw a new heaven and a new earth, &c.] This scene in the vision brings in the consummation to which all had been tending. Ever since Pentecost the formation of the new heavens and the new earth has been progressing; may we not say ever since "the beginning," for the end was ever present with the divine artificer, and the dispensations of the Patriarchs, the Law, the Prophets, and the Apostles, were all leading up to the final dispensation, the Bride, the Church, the Body of Christ as their consummation, each was a step onward towards the final glory, the Parousia being the greatest of all, in which the Lord is gathering His Body, His Bride, His Church, which joined to Himself is to constitute the dwelling-place of God, through which He will manifest His glory to the universe, Eph. iii. 10. This day of the new heavens and the new earth is also the day of the manifestation of the sons of God, Rom. viii. 19, in which elect souls gathered into Christ shall be manifested not only in their individual glory of redemption and sanctification, but in the aggregate and federal glory of the Body of Christ. This ingathering of souls, this creation of the new heavens and the new earth, has been ever going forward and is going forward behind this painted scene which we call life, behind all the din and the clatter of Babylon, see indications of this, Rev. viii. 1; xi. 19; xii. 5; xiv. 1—5; xv. 1; xix. 7, 8, until we come to Rev. xxi. 1—3. This had been the expectation from of old, see Isaiah lxv. 17, "For, behold, I create new heavens and a new earth: and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind," also Isai. lxvi. 22. This dissolution of the first heaven and the first earth had been progressing from Pentecost onward. It was at Pentecost that the new kingdom, the kingdom that was to swallow up all other kingdoms came in its initial form, "This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel," &c., Acts ii. 16, et seq. It
first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea.

was then that the Bride, the Church, the Body of Christ was initiated. During the Apostolic period this kingdom of Christ, and this Church the Body of Christ the Bride, were passing through the period of gestation, gradually forming in comparative darkness, Rom. xiii. 12, gradually progressing towards the future glory and triumph. Paul, in his Epistles, alludes to this [embryonic] period in darkness, Rom. xiii. 12; 1 Cor. viii. 29; he looked to the advent of the Lord in the glory of His Parousia as the day when the Church, the Bride, should assume her true glory. John, in his first Epistle, speaks of the advent of that day (see 1 John ii. 8, 18 and v. 20), and in the Apocalypse from ch. viii. 3—5 (see note there) onward, he speaks in prophetic figures of the gradual gathering of the Church, the Bride. With this vision (Rev. viii. 3, 5) we reach the opened heavens and the Melchisedek priesthood of our Lord (the way into the holiest had not yet been made manifest whilst the old tabernacle was still standing, Heb. ix. 8, n.). The gradual increase and growth of the Church is recorded through Rev. viii. 1—4; Rev. xi. 1, 2, 19 (see notes there), and ch. xii. 5, &c., until in ch. xiv. 1—5, the Church on the Mount Zion with Christ the Lord reigning in the glory of His Parousia becomes a distinct fact in the vision. Thence onward through ch. xv. 1—5, n.; ch. xix. 7, 8 to the millennial period, ch. xx. 3—6 (see the notes), when the Church passes through her final probation, no longer of suffering, but a probation of glory, does the Body of Christ the Church grow in wisdom and in stature; all these stages of progress are set forth in the vision until in ch. xxi. 1—3, we reach the final day of triumph, the new heaven and the new earth, and the marriage supper of the Lamb. Here the Church is perfected, and comes forth "prepared as a bride adorned for her husband," v. 2. Thus the Church herself is a living thing. As relates to Christ the Lord she represents, and is, the spiritual organism of His glorified flesh and blood, Eph. v. 30—32. As relates to the saints, she is the divine living ideal, the law, the organization, the consummated perfection, under which glorified souls are ranged, "each in their order due and fit degree," 1 Cor. xv. 23, as members of the Body of Christ, the Church. Whether we speak of the Church as the Holy City, the new Jerusalem, the Mount Zion of God, the Camp of the Saints, the Body of Christ, the Bride of Christ, the Temple of God, or by whatever other term, each and all represent a living divine organism of the Lord Christ, His Body, see v. 10 below, note. His is the only flesh and blood that ever has or ever could pass
through death into the glory, His sinless flesh and blood. This is the
dwelling-place and the meat and the drink and the clothing of the saints of
the first resurrection; their own flesh and blood passed into dust at their
dying day on earth, but their glorified bodies, body, soul, and spirit,
passed at death to (or rather remained on, for it was there before death)
the Mount Sion of God, there to be with Christ in glory, awaiting the
completion of the elect number who make up the perfected body, and
awaiting also the millennial glory and the day of their manifestation as
described in this 21st chapter of the Apocalypse, when as the Holy
City, the new Jerusalem, they shall come down out of heaven from God
prepared as a Bride adorned for her husband. This is the first resurrec-
tion: there is a resurrection of body, soul and spirit of the saints, but no
resurrection of flesh and blood (2 Cor. xv. 50). So it was also with
the judgment-day of the old world period, the dead appeared in the
judgment (ch. xi. 18), but their flesh and blood were mouldering on
earth, some in graves, some in caverns, some in the sea, some in their
embalmed cerements in catacombs and pyramids; their flesh and blood
thousands of years old are with us to day [in transmuted forms], but
they themselves are in eternity, their flesh and blood never rose again at
the day of judgment of the old world period (Rev. xi. 18), neither have
we any reason to believe that ours will; there is no going backward in
the divine economies. The saints part with their flesh and blood at
their dying day that they may more absolutely than they ever before
have done enter into perfect communion in oneness with the Lord
Jesus on the Mount Zion, where His flesh and blood is their clothing,
their meat and their drink. In this glorious clothing they live the
divine life with Him, they have put on Christ in deed, they reign with
Him during the millennial period, and when that period is consummated,
and the elect number constituting the body of Christ, the Church, is
completed, in this clothing they come forth prepared as a bride adorned
for her husband. Thus the Church herself is a living thing (Eph. v.
30—32). In regard to Christ she is His organized flesh and blood,
His Bride. In regard to the saints themselves she is the divine living
spiritual organism under which they are ranged in His body, by which
they live in the true communion.

for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away,
&c.] Seeing how ultimate ruin and desolation await not only our tiny
schemes of life and of living, but also this phenomenal world itself, and
seeing how they only come into the new heaven and the new earth who
live for it, and live to Him who is the Lord of the new creation, seeing
how inevitably all who are living to this world and to the things thereof,
are living to a certain loss and risk (the loss of all things), it is evident
2 And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.

that to side with the world against Christ is to side with ruin against riches, with death against life, with perdition against salvation, the day will declare it.

2. And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down...out of heaven, &c.] ["I John," is omitted from the critically emended texts.] This Hebrew form of the name Ἰεροσολύμα, Rev. iii. 12; xxi. 2—10, is always used by John in the Apocalypse, whilst in the Gospel he always uses the Greek form Ἰεροσόλυμα. In ch. xiv. 1—5 the Church of the firstborn is described as gathered on the Mount Sion. In ch. xx. 9 (see notes there) it is called "the camp of the saints, the beloved city." Here in our text the saints and the city are one. The Holy City the new Jerusalem¹ is the Bride. The City is a living thing (see v. 1, n.). This is the Body and Bride of Christ. This living Temple, the Church, is that spiritual reality of which the Temple at Jerusalem was the figure. Even during His ministry in the flesh our Lord identified Himself with the outward Temple as antitype and type when He spoke of the Temple of His Body (see John ii. 21, notes and references). "The Church" is identified also with Christ as His flesh and blood (see notes to v. 1 above). It is to the new Jerusalem, the Heavenly City, that the Israel of God are to be gathered, not to any mundane city. It is in the light of the glory of this Heavenly City that the nations of them that are saved are to walk (v. 24 below). The way into the holy city was not manifested so long as the Old Tabernacle was yet standing, Heb. ix. 8, but when Jerusalem and the Temple had been destroyed and the Lord Jesus had come in the terrors and glory of His Parousia (see Rev. vi. 1, 2, n.), the glories of the Church, the bride, began to shine forth, and from Rev. viii. 3—5 (see notes there) onward the gradual procession of the Church is noted in the Apocalypse, until in this 21st Chapter she comes forth in glory.

This is the Jerusalem in which "the promises" shall be fulfilled, old Jerusalem condemned and forsaken (see Gal. iv. 25, 26), "the Jerusalem which is above," the Mount Sion of Rev. xiv. is now the city of God to which we are to look as our home and our mother.

¹ [For a closely-related Jewish conception see the Zohar Midrash ham-Neelam (or the concealed treatise):—"Rabbi Jeremiah said, the Holy One Blessed be He, will renovate the world, and build Jerusalem. He will cause it to come down from heaven, and therefore never to be destroyed." Ed.]
3 And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God.

4 And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor
crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

5 And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, Write: for these words are true and faithful.

6 And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto

more, neither sorrow, nor crying, nor pain, for the former things are passed away."

5. And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new, &c.] This glorious consummation is already in progress even in this life in those who are in Christ, they are already in the new creation. This is the consummation of that new creation of which Paul speaks (2 Cor. v. 17; Gal. vi. 15). To be in Christ is to be in the new creation. This new creation begun in time is to be completed in eternity with the new heavens and the new earth in the new Jerusalem, the Bride of Christ. All the true hopes and aspirations of the previous periods find their fulfilment in the new creation, the new heavens and the new earth.

And he said unto me, Write] See ch. xiv. 13, n.; xix. 9, n. We are not told whence the voice comes, but it implies an emphatic testimony to the things to which it refers.

for these words are true and faithful] See ch. xix. 9; xxii. 6. If it is the voice of Him who speaks in v. 6, it appears to be our Lord who speaks here (but see ch. xxii. 9, n.). Both God and our Lord speak through angels.

6. I am Alpha and Omega, &c.] Better, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last." Comparing these words with chaps. i. 8, 11, 17; xxii. 13, it would appear that it is our Lord who here speaks to John and that it was He also who spoke in v. 5, see note to ch. xxii. 9. (Alford mentions a singular emendation of the text here, for "It is done &c.", read "I am become the Alpha and the Omega," &c." as though our Lord had now attained this glory, see ch. xxii. 1, n.)

1 [So in the Sinaitic Codex and two others, (γένος ετέω το Α και το Ω), "I am become the Alpha and the Omega," but our Lord could not become what He had always been—"the Alpha," "the beginning," "the first" (cf. chaps. i. 8, 17; ii. 8; iii. 14; xxii. 13) of all things. Ed.]
him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.

7 He that overcometh shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be my son.

8 But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.

I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely] Thus from the throne of His glory does our Lord renew that promise which He made to the woman of Samaria, John iv. 10—14, n. It is our Lord who sheds the Holy Spirit on believing souls, see Acts ii. 33; Isaiah lv. 1; see Rev. i. 8 on the meaning of the sacred name.

7. He that overcometh shall inherit all things, &c.] For "all things," read "these things," and I will be to him a God, and he shall be to me a Son. If it is our Lord who speaks here, as it appears to be, not only does He sum up all these blessings in one, and promises them to him that overcomes (see the promises, chaps. ii. 7, 11, 18, 26; iii. 5, 12, 21), but He introduces also a new term of relationship between Himself and His followers, the relation of sonship (see Heb. ii. 13). Not only is the Lord Jesus our Friend, our Brother, our Saviour God, but He is also our Father (cf. Matt. xii. 50; Mark iii. 35). These continued promises from the first chapters to the last imply that there is a continual door open not only for repentance and escape from the judgments that come upon the world, but that there is a reward beyond all imagination for those that overcome, see ch. xxii. 17.

8. But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable ...shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone: which is the second death] "The fearful" (they who shrink in terror from the Lord's Parousia, self convicted), 1 John ii. 28, n., see ch. xiv. 10, note. These most miserable souls, who having had all possible opportunities to lay hold of the grace that would have saved them, and yet refuse, these the dregs (as it were) of "the rest who lived not again until after the thousand years were finished" (see ch. xx. 5, note), seem to tell us in unmistakable terms that there will be some obdurate impenitent souls at last who cannot and will not
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9 And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.

10 And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,

be saved, see also chaps. xxii. 11, 15, n. Note how "the fearful and the unbelieving" stand in the forefront of those who are condemned by the light of the Parousia, the great white throne, ch. xx. 11—15, n., and see i John ii. 28, n., p. 351.

9. And there came...one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, &c.] Probably the same as in ch. xvii. 1, and note the manner of invitation there to witness the judgment on Babylon the harlot; here to see the Bride of Christ. Both are called cities, both are called women, the one is the contrast to the other. On the Mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1—5, they are pure and undefiled, whilst Babylon is the great harlot, and the mother of the harlots, Rev. xvii. 1—5, n.; see also next verse, note. The seven vial angels are probably identical with the seven trumpet angels of ch. viii. 3 who are the seven presence angels (see notes ad loc. cit.).

10. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, &c.] (see v. 2, Ἱερουσαλήμ). The words "that great city," are struck out of the amended text. John had already spoken of Babylon as "the great city" Rev. xi. 8; xiv. 8; xvii. 18; xviii. 10, 16, 18, 19, 21, and he does not apply the term to the "Holy Jerusalem," the Bride; see the contrast between the two cities Babylon and the Mount Zion, Rev. xvii. 1, n. and xxi. 9, n.; xiv. 1—5, n. and xiv. 8, n. Here (v. 10) as also in v. 2, the Bride, the Lamb's wife, is described as a city, see notes to v. 1, p. 664, also v. 2 above. This city, this Holy Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God is a living thing, the Body of Christ, His divine flesh and blood sublimated and glorified, and edificed with living souls and spirits of the saints. "We the many are one Body," i Cor. x. 17. We may say, how could our Lord's material body of flesh and blood become spiritualized? how matter can become spirit, we know not, we know neither what matter is, nor what spirit is, but we read i Cor. xv. 45, that our Lord in His resurrection became a quickening spirit.
11 Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal;

12 And had a wall great and high, and had twelve gates, and at the gates twelve angels, and names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel:

II. Having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, &c.] This is one of the allusions to precious stones which shows how little our modern names of stones express the idea of the ancients. With us the jasper stone is an opaque many-coloured stone, in our text it appears to be identical with what we call the diamond. These attributes of the Church, the Bride, are the attributes of our Lord Himself. The Body is like the Head, the Bride is like the Bridegroom, "having the glory of God," see notes to vv. 1, 2 and v. 10; see Eph. v. 27 [that He might present to Himself the Church in glorious beauty], see also John xiv. 2, n., the many mansions. The perfected Body of Christ now comes forth, but John can scarcely find terms in which fitly to express her building and her beauty. This is the perfected Body of Christ, the great consummation, to which creation and redemption, and all their mysteries of joy and sorrow, light and darkness, life and death, love and hatred, righteousness and sin have been leading up throughout the ages. Thus at last is the human race brought back into the family of God. "This is the harvest which in the glory of its reaping eclipses the tears and sorrow in which it has been sown."

12. the twelve tribes of the children of Israel] These represent the Israel of God, whether Jew or Gentile. The whole economy of the Holy City is according to measure and spiritual proportion, the law of perfect beauty and order. Israel is the ground-plan according to which the Divine economy of the world is ordered (see Deut. xxxii. 2). There is a correlation running through the whole. Christ is the archetypal pattern on which all are formed. But Israel after the flesh was a type of Christ. Israel was God's firstborn (Exod. iv. 22) on earth, as Christ our Lord was in the original the firstborn of creation, Col. i. 15. The Church [in a sense] is the body of Christ, and therefore the Church, the Holy City, the Bride, the New Jerusalem, is also after the same pattern as Israel, she is the Israel of God, whether in totality or in the individual souls who constitute her personality. The Holy City, the new Jerusalem,
13 On the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates.

14 And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.

appears in the vision as edificed according to the pattern of the house of Israel. The position of the twelve entrances to the city, three on each of the four sides, suggests that on every side of the city there is access, that saved souls may enter the city from sides that are apparently opposed the one to the other: that I may differ from another man diametrically in my notions about the city and its laws, yet we may both be entering the same city though from opposite sides, both "in Christ," though our notion about Christ and Christianity may vary.

12. twelve gates...and names written thereon, &c.] Ezekiel in the vision of the Holy City gives the names of the tribes attached to each gate (ch. xlviii. 30—34). In Ezekiel's vision the standard of measures appears to be "a reed," see Ezek. xl. 3: xliii. 16; xlv. 1, whilst in the Apocalypse, see v. 16 below, our A.V. has stretched the measure to furlongs. He measured the city with the reed 12,000 furlongs (στάδια); probably our translators are wrong in translating στάδιον here, a furlong, the word might just as correctly have been translated "measure," στάδιον being "a standard of measure," not necessarily "a furlong." The "reed" is probably really "the standard," as in Ezekiel and when the writer here says, v. 16, he measured the city with the reed 12,000 furlongs, he means "measures," i.e. measures of the reed, see v. 15. The order in which the tribes stand in Ezekiel's vision is different from the order of the birth of the Patriarchs. In fact the natural order of birth is not (I think) observed in enumerating the tribes after the one instance of Gen. xlix. 3—27, where Jacob calls the Patriarchs together before his death. But we gather from Exod. xxviii. 10—12 that the natural order of birth was also probably observed in the stones on the breastplate of Aaron, though the names of the Patriarchs are not there mentioned; but

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1 "The golden reed to measure," see ch. xi. 1, n.; Ezek. xl. 3; Zech. ii. 1, 2.
2 [The Greek στάδιον (Lat. stadium) literally signifies "that which stands," i.e. "a standard"—it is cognate with the Skt. stha "to stand." As a standard of lineal measurement it = 600 Greek (or 625 Roman) feet; its name and length were borrowed from the original foot-race course at Olympia. It may be mentioned here, that it falls short of our "furlong" by 53 feet 3 inches. Ed.]
15 And he that talked with me had a golden reed to measure the city, and the gates thereof, and the wall thereof.

16 And the city lieth foursquare, and the length is as large as the breadth: and he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length and the breadth and the height of it are equal.

having the names and order of the stones given us in Exod. xxviii. 17—20, we may probably identify with some degree of certainty the name of each Patriarch, with the name of the stone in the breastplate, as there given. There are twelve Patriarchs and twelve sorts of stones in the breastplate. So in the foundation of the Holy City, the New Jerusalem, vv. 19—21, we find the twelve foundations of the wall of the city adorned with twelve sorts of precious stones the names of which are given, some of them only being identical with the names of the stones on the breastplate.

Doubtless each stone had its mystical meaning of which we have not the key, and probably the order of the stones in the foundation of the Holy City had also a mystical meaning. [Possibly] the stones in the breastplate of Aaron had each a mystical meaning associated with the character of the Patriarch it represented, and it is likely that the stones with which the foundations of the walls of the city are garnished (vv. 19, 20) represent living stones, living saved souls in the Body of Christ, of twelve different sorts, according to the character of the twelve Apostles, and the character also of the saved souls whom they represent, jasper representing certain soul-characters, sapphire certain others &c., and all possibly having a relation to the breastplate of Aaron, and the relation of the stones in the breastplate to the character of each individual Patriarch, and of each of the twelve Apostles, v. 14. The numbers 12 and 7 seem to be the dominant numbers in the hierarchy of souls (see introductory notes on the 7 churches). We cannot doubt that such signatures and signs of things run through all creation. On the one hand there are these scientific relations, on the other there are dispensational and spiritual relations, the house of Israel being the leading idea in the dispensational and typical relations. "The twelve foundation stones have upon them the twelve names of the twelve Apostles," Eph. ii. 20.

16. And the city lieth foursquare, &c.] These measurements of the length and breadth and height of the city must be taken in a mystical rather than in a literal sense.
CHAPTER XXI.

17 And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits, according to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel.

18 And the building of the wall of it was of jasper: and the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass.

19 And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an emerald;

20 The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolyte; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the
tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst.

21 And the twelve gates were twelve pearls; every several gate was of one pearl: and the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass.

22 And I saw no temple therein: for the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple of it.

23 And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon, to shine in it: for the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof.

24 And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it: and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it.

25 And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there.

26 And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.

21. transparent glass] "Glass," σάλας, any kind of clear transparent stone from ὁ ὕδωρ to water, as we speak of the "water" of a precious stone.

23. And the Lamb is the light thereof] Our Lord is both the Temple and the light of the new Jerusalem. They who are in Christ, "see no Temple therein," they form part of the Temple "Christ," 2 Cor. vi. 16.

24. And the nations of them which are saved shall walk in the light of it] These nations (Gentiles) who shall walk in the light of the Holy City are gathered from the "rest of the dead," ch. xx. 5 (see notes there). They form no part of the body of Christ, the Church of the firstborn (the Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5), but they are probably saved souls who come through the judgment of ch. xx. 11—15 into a participation in the glories of the redeemed, and inhabit the renewed earth, Heaven and earth being one. This mention of "the nations of them that are saved" indicates that many in the great assize of ch. xx. 11—15 shall find mercy, beyond the number who constitute the Church of the firstborn.

25. For there shall be no night there] Ch. xxii. 5.

26. And they shall bring the glory and honour of the
27 And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie: but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

CHAPTER XXII.

1 And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

nations into it] This is to come to pass in the renewed earth after the millennium, after the judgment day.

27. And there shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, &c.] See ch. xxii. 11, n.

but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life] See ch. xx. 15, also ch. xx. 12, n.; see ch. xxii. 2, n., "healing of the nations."

1. And he shewed] [The personage here spoken of is] the angel of ch. xxi. 8, 10, 17.

a...river of water of life] See ch. xxi. 6. This river of living water is the Holy Spirit of God flowing from the throne, the source of the living waters which our Lord gives (John iv. 10, n.; Acts ii. 33; Rev. vii. 17; xxi. 6, &c.). This Holy Spirit is described as sevenfold in its operation, Rev. iv. 5, n.; v. 6, n. The Holy Spirit is described in the Scriptures under many similitudes, as water, as dew, as wine, as oil, as fire, as life [etc.].

clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb] Here alone and in v. 3 is the throne spoken of—the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In ch. v. 6 our Lord is spoken of as standing in the midst of the throne, and in ch. ii. 21 he speaks of His throne as prepared also for those who overcome—the Church, Eph. v. 27. It may be that in the vision here presented to John the mediatorial kingdom of our Lord has passed away, or rather is gathered up into the kingdom of the Father, and that the Almighty and our Lord thenceforth share the same throne in a new manner, see v. 6, n. This river of the water of life is the stream that makes glad the city of God, Psalm xlvi. 4. We are not to suppose that these things then only began to be, but that they were then revealed to John.
2. In the midst of the street of it] That is, of the city παρεῖας
αὐρώπης [denotes] the street of the city πόλις (fem.) not of the river ποταμοῦς
(mas.).

tree of life] See ch. ii. 7, note; the tree of life which is in the midst
of the Paradise of God, Gen. ii. 9. The Holy City is Paradise restored
and glorified. The last Adam is now the glory of it, not the Adam of
Genesis.

bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every
month] See Ezek. xlvii. 12. Note the sacred numbers running
through the whole vision, specially 7 and 12.

and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the
nations] The tree of life which was the central part of Paradise, and
[here in a moral sense] the river that went out of Paradise, Gen. ii. 9,
10, are restored never to be again lost. The story of Paradise broken off
by sin is here again taken up, and the ideal of the Paradise of Genesis
is restored. There will still be nations in the renewed earth, sons of
God, whose names are in the book of life, ch. xxi. 24—27, who will have
to grow up into the glories of Paradise, to feed on the tree of life,
and to develop the hidden glories of the renewed earth, under the
Headship of the last Adam, our Lord.

3. And there shall be no more curse] See Zech. xiv. 11,
LXX. καὶ ἀνάθεμα οὐκ ἐσται δή. This quotation from the prophet links
together the final consummation of our aeon with the words of Zech. xiv.
4, and his feet shall stand in that day upon the Mount of Olives. The
story of Genesis is continued in reverse. The first Adam, by sin, lost
Paradise and the tree of life, and inherited a curse, Gen. iii. 17; cursed
is the earth in these works of thine (LXX.). The last Adam by His
work undoes the curse and brings back man to the Tree of Life and the
river, and the New Heaven and the New Earth (see Rom. v. 16—21).

and his servants shall serve him] "Shall serve," λατρεύοντων.
There will still be λατρεία, worship, religious service and communion.
4 And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads.

5 And there shall be no night there; and they need no candle, neither light of the sun; for the Lord God giveth them light: and they shall reign for ever and ever.

6 And he said unto me, These sayings are faithful and true: and the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his

4. And they shall see his face] This implies a communion without any intervening vail, the beatific vision, such as is impossible whilst man is in the flesh, and has the vail of flesh between his soul and the glory.

and his name shall be in their foreheads] The human lineaments are retained even in eternity, the forehead is the part from which the glory shines, on which the Divine name and likeness are engraven, see chaps. vii. 3; ix. 4; xiv. 1; xxii. 4; so also with the beast and with Babylon, the mark is in the forehead, xiii. 16; xiv. 9; xvii. 5; xx. 4, or on the hand.

5. And there shall be no night there;...and they shall reign for ever and ever] This relates to the Holy City and to those who are the blessed inhabitants thereof. It is they who shall reign with Christ, they who have already shared in the preparatory millennial reign of ch. xx. 4 (see notes there). This kingly glory will not belong to "the rest of the dead," ch. xx. 5. "The nations of them that are saved," ch. xx. 24. It is over these and over angels (1 Cor. vi. 3) that the saints will reign in the exercise of Divine love, a rule of mutual benevolence (see ch. i. 6, n.; see Rev. v. 10, n.).

6. And he said unto me] He, i.e. the angel, of chaps. xxii. 1 and xxi. 9, 10, 17.

These sayings are faithful and true] See chaps. iii. 14, n.; xix. 9, 11; xxi. 5, n. This confirmation, this assurance of the angel, recorded by John, is intended to apply to the whole book (see next verse). In recording it, John says in effect, these things are no idle dreams, they are essential realities, which must shortly come to pass, ch. i. 1, n. Here the angel reverts to the opening scene of the Apocalypse, ch. i. 1, n., and uses at the close of the vision the words with which the vision opens. The vision itself is the vision of the day of Christ, a day that was just about to open when John wrote, but a day, the events of which were to extend into the remote future, a day which in regard
angel to shew unto his servants the things which must shortly be done.

7 Behold, I come quickly: blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book.

to us may be only as yet in its dawn, a day in which a thousand years' period is only a detail. The closing scenes of the vision relate to a period separated from the opening scenes by centuries on centuries. In the course of a few hours or days John has witnessed a vision of ages, but in his concluding words he reverts to the opening words of the vision. The book is an unveiling of the hidden things of Christ, "the Revelation of Jesus Christ" (ch. i. 1). The unveiling of things which were shortly to begin to be when John wrote, but which were to occupy ages. When in our text (v. 6) John speaks of the things as "shortly to come to pass," &c. see ch. i. 1, he does not mean that the millennial reign and the day of judgment, and the new heavens and the new earth, are all then about to come to pass immediately, but that the day of Christ, in which these things were to happen, was, when he wrote, shortly about to be, and to become; see note to ver. 7.

7. Behold, I come quickly, &c.] Here the voice of our Lord Himself breaks in again upon the scene, see chaps. iii. 11—20; xvi. 15. Note the imminence of the coming of our Lord to bring in the day in which these things are to come to pass, the day of Christ, the day of His Parousia (Matt. xxiv. 3) which was to come within the lifetime of that generation, Matt. xxiv. 34; Mark xiii. 20; Luke xxi. 32; within John's own lifetime, John xxi. 22, 23, n.; see Rev. i. 1, "things which must shortly come to pass," chaps. i. 19; xxii. 6; ch. i. 3, "the time is at hand;" ch. i. 7, "Behold he cometh;" ch. ii. 5, "I will come unto thee quickly;" ch. ii. 16, "I will come unto thee quickly;" ch. ii. 25, "Hold fast till I come;" ch. iii. 11, "Behold I come quickly;" ch. iii. 15, "Behold I stand at the door and knock;" ch. xvi. 15, "Behold I come as a thief;" ch. xxii. 6, "the things which must shortly be done," ch. i. 1; ch. xxii. 7, "Behold I come quickly;" ch. xxii. 10, "the time is at hand;" ch. xxii. 12, "Behold I come quickly;" ch. xxii. 20, "Surely I come quickly." See also the following passages bearing on the immediate advent of the Lord, during the then generation when the books of the New Testament were written, Matt. x. 23; xvi. 28; xxiv. 3, 34; Mark ix. 1; xiii. 30; Luke ix. 27; xxi. 32; xxii. 69; Acts i. 11; ix. 2; xvii. 31; Rom. xiii. 12; 1 Cor. i. 7; 8; iii. 15; vii. 29; xv. 23; 1 Thess. ii. 19; iii. 13; iv. 15—17;

1 See my pamphlet on the Parousia.
CHAPTER XXII.

8 And I John saw these things, and heard them. And when I had heard and seen, I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which shewed me these things.

v. 23; 2 Thess. ii. 1—9; James v. 7, 8; v. 9; Rev. vi. 1—16, notes, and the instances quoted above under ch. xxii. 7; John xxi. 22, 23; 1 Pet. i. 5; iv. 5—7; Heb. ix. 28; x. 37; 1 John ii. 8, 28; v. 20; Rev. i. 7; Phil. iv. 5. It is incredible, seeing what is written, and what the Scripture saith, that our Lord’s advent could be postponed beyond the time of these sayings (above quoted) for hundreds, or thousands of years. “The Lord has come,” and we know it, 1 John v. 20. It is strange that people who read the Scriptures do not see it.

blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book] It is evident that the Apocalypse was intended to be read and understood.

The vision may be said to end with v. 6 above; v. 7 and what follows is exhortation, blessing, and warning in regard to the things already written, and invitation certainly to people beyond the day of judgment period, and the new heaven and new earth period; but to people of the time when John wrote to the seven Churches, and to us, and to all up to the time of Rev. xx. 15, each according to his place in the dispensation.

The benediction is for all. It is a word of invitation for all just as v. 17 below is, just as the promises to those who overcome in the early chapters are. The fate of the world and of Babylon and those who worship the beast and his image is dismal indeed, as described in the Apocalypse, but the very terrors and judgments are intended to drive men to repentance, to compel them to come in. The vision of the Mount Zion, the blessedness of the saints, is placed in contrast to the terrors and judgments, that these may accept the good and escape from the evil.

8. And I John saw these things, and heard them] [Better, from the critically amended text, And (it was) I John who heard and saw these things.]

I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel, &c.] The powers of nature are angels, not men, Heb. i. 7—14, ἀρχαὶ καὶ διαθήκαι. The O. T. Angels (messengers) were mostly men, the angels at the sepulchre were in human form, Mark xvi. 5; Luke xxiv. 4. The angels in the Apocalypse are some of them at any rate, as here, members of the human family. When Paul says we shall judge angels, 1 Cor. vi. 3, he alludes probably to such as have
9 Then saith he unto me, See thou do it not: for I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren the prophets, and of them which keep the sayings of this book: worship God.

sinned and fallen from their first estate, 2 Pet. ii. 4; Jude 6. The dispensation of the Parousia is not under the dominion of angels (Heb. ii. 5), though angels minister to souls who are in that dispensation, to such the angels are as servants.

9. See thou do it not] The angel who forbids John to worship him is no doubt the angel of chaps. xxi. 9, 10, 17 and xxii. 1—6, and yet he is also the angel of ch. xxii. 10, 12, 13 which verses (i.e. vv. 12 and 13) evidently identify the speaker in some sort with our Lord Himself, and on v. 16 it is our Lord who speaks in His own person, "I Jesus," but here (v. 16) our Lord who carries on the word of the angel (His angel) distinguishes Himself from His angel, "I have sent mine angel," —mine angel, v. 16, and from this point (v. 16) it is our Lord who speaks as far as v. 20, "Surely I come quickly;" then John adds his own Amen and the salutation, v. 21. The identity and yet the distinction between the Lord Jesus and His angel reveals something of the identity yet distinction between our Lord the Head and the members of the Church of the firstborn, His Body and His Bride. They are one in union and identity, yet there is ever the distinction such as exists in each one of us. My head is identified in oneness with my body, yet the head is to the body as a king or ruler to his subjects. My head is greater in honour and power than my body, so with Christ and His Body, the Lord may speak through a member of His Body as His angel, and the angel may speak even as in ch. xxii. 12, 13 as though he were the Lord Himself, yet He is not the Lord, and in xxii. 9 he forbids John to worship him, and in v. 16 our Lord, "I Jesus," plainly distinguishes Himself who is the object of worship (Heb. i. 6) from His angel. Our Lord speaks to the world manifoldly through angels, in nature, through human beings (see on the angelic hierarchy, 1 Cor. iv. 9), but in worship we must never confound our Lord, the Head of all principality and power with His instruments or angels, be they what they may.

Here the angel speaks in his own person, and as in ch. xix. 10 declares himself to be one of the human family. The angel who here speaks to John is the angel of ch. xxi. (see on v. 9 of that chapter); he it is who speaks in ch. xxii. 1, one of the seven angels of ch. xv. 1, 6, 7, 8; and if as seems probable the seven vial angels of ch. xv. (loc. cit.) are identical with the seven trumpet angels of ch. viii. 2, then the angel who
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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.

speaks to John here is one of the seven presence angels of ch. viii. 2, and as he here declares himself to be one of the human family it follows that the presence angels who stand before God (ch. viii. 2) have once been men (see also chaps. xix. 10; xxii. 17). In 1 Cor. iv. 9 Paul marks off the world of angels from the world of men, (see also Heb. i. 7; Ps. civ. 4). But when we consider that the word ἀγγελός really means "messenger" we may understand how, whilst the powers of nature are angels, yet glorified men may be angels also as they appear to be in the Apocalypse.

The angel who speaks here is the angel of Jesus (see v. 16), standing in such nearness to the Godhead he is as it were the mouth of God, and of our Lord, through whom the Lord Jesus here speaks, vv. 7—12, 13, &c.

10. And he saith unto me, Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book, &c.] I.e. do not keep them secret. The Apocalypse was evidently intended to be read and understood, see v. 7, n. above, see also ch. i. 3, n.

the time is at hand] See v. 7, n. above and references there. Shewing how imminent was the advent of the Lord at the time the Apocalypse was written, about A.D. 70.

11. He that is unjust, let him be unjust still, &c.] These words of warning are addressed to the seven Churches in the first place, but they have a universal application. The angel says, in effect, The vision is ended, understand what it means, the time is instant when all these things shall begin to come to pass. If, after all that is written in this book, you still elect to abide in sin rather than seek the Mount Zion of God, so it must be. The unrighteous let him be unrighteous still, the filthy let him be filthy still. But mind, I come quickly (v. 12) and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works.

12. And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with
13 I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last.
14 Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.
15 For without are dogs, and sorcerers, and whore-mongers, and murderers, and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie.
16 I Jesus have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star.

17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst...
come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.

18 For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book:

19 And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

places together with God Almighty and the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit, a personality which was ultimately to become "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God," see Rev. xxi. 2; a Bride adorned for her husband. The Bride, the Church, joins in the invitation, the aggregate of saved souls that form the Body of Christ.

water of life] [A phrase] peculiar to John, see chaps. ii. 17; xxi. 6; xxii. 1—17; and in his Gospel, chaps. iv. 10, 11; vii. 38; it may be said to connect the Apocalypse and the Gospel.

Having opened out the mysteries of the day of Christ, the solemn warnings, the visions of judgment and woe that must in the nature of things come on Babylon, and on the world of the ungodly, John is commissioned to utter this universal word of invitation to all, that they may escape the judgments that are written in this book.

18. For I testify unto every one that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, &c.] This appears to be John's own testimony, but spoken under the sanction of the Lord Jesus, see v. 20 below, n. These words shew that the book was to be read and understood. The prophecy opens with this ch. i. 3, note, and ends with it, and yet the book is not read nor understood, see also vv. 4—10, above.

19. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, &c.] It is a mortal sin, a sin unto death, to take away from the things that are here written. It is an awful thing either to add or to take away, (Lord Jesus grant that I may not be guilty).

his part out of the book of life] It is then one of the glories of the Parousia that every man has by virtue of our Lord's work a part in the Book of Life. It is in accordance with what Paul says, 1 Tim. ii. 4 "that God would have all men to be saved," see also Rev. iii. 5, n. and references there. That all men through the exceed-
CHAPTER XXII.

20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.

21 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

...ing grace of God in Christ, are written in His book, but that men sin themselves out of it, is hinted in our text.

20. He which testifieth these things saith] i.e. the Lord Jesus. Mark how John mixes together the testimony of angels and of the Lord Jesus (see vv. 9—13 above, and references there) and his own testimony here (vv. 18—20), a peculiarity found also in the Gospel, which see, i. 16, 17, &c.; also iii. 16—21, &c.; iii. 31—36, &c., a slight argument for identity of authorship.

Surely I come quickly] This promise clenches all the others (see vv. 7—12, above notes, also ch. iii. 11, n.). It is the yea and amen of the other declarations of the immediate advent of the Lord, see summary of quotations, Rev. xxii. 7.

The words, "Yea, I come quickly," are our Lord's words of prophecy; the words "Even so, come, Lord Jesus!" are the response of John in prayer.

Prayer, true prayer, is prophecy reversed. In prophecy God shews Himself in Christ to the soul, and brings forth in Christ things that are shortly to come to pass, and the Prophet speaks the word to the world. In prayer the soul offers itself and its will in Christ to God. The Father infused His will through the will of Christ into the soul, the soul offereth up her will through the will of Christ unto the will of the Father. Thus the voice of the soul in prayer is an echo to the voice of God in prophecy. Our Lord says "I come quickly," this is prophecy; the soul answers "Even so, come, Lord Jesus," the echo to the prophecy.

21. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all] Thus ends the prophetic history (in figure) of the day of Christ. It opens with the words "the Revelation of Jesus Christ." It tells us that "the witness of Jesus is the spirit of the prophecy." It closes with the assurance "Yea, I come quickly." From first to last it is the Revelation of the Power and Parousia of the Lord Jesus.
APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A. H ΣΥΝΤΕΛΕΙΑ ΤΟΥ ΑΙΩΝΟΣ.

The great tribulation of Matthew, xxiv. 21, was already on Israel (see Rev. vii. 14, notes) and the sign of the Son of Man in heaven was dawning on the nation. It was in Israel only that the outward portents were displayed, in the world at large the transition from one period to another in the dispensations was not marked by any such portents.

The birth of our Lord was heralded in Israel by wonders in heaven and on earth, His baptism was marked by supernatural signs, His death and resurrection and the coming of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, all these changes in the dispensations were accentuated in Israel by outward signs of which the world at large knew nothing. So especially was it with the advent of the Lord in the glory of His Parousia, to which all the previous dispensations led up. This was the last and the greatest of all, and in Israel it was marked by events never to be forgotten. This advent of the Lord heralded the last and crowning event in the course of the dispensations, it brought with it the new age to which Patriarchs, Prophets and Apostles and righteous men had looked forward as the hope of their lives. It brought with it a change not only for Israel, but for the whole world, in the spiritual relation of man to God. It was the winding up of the old world period (ἡ συντελεία τοῦ αἰώνος), the consummation of the age (see Matt. xxiv. 3; also Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49), and the bringing in of the everlasting righteousness foretold by Daniel, which was to come in with the destruction of Jerusalem and the Temple (see Dan. ix. 26 LXX.) and the end of the age. It was the day of the consummation of all the previous dispensations. The kingdom preached by our Lord during His human ministry came on earth at Pentecost. Pentecost was the beginning of the new day, but not until the advent of the Lord in the glory of His Parousia, at and after the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dissolution of the Jewish theocracy as foretold by our Lord Himself in the 24th Chapter of Matthew, did the King come to establish His Kingdom on earth, the Mount Zion of God (Rev. xiv. 1—5) in the midst of His enemies, Psa. cx. 2. This event, the advent in glory of the Lord Jesus, was at once the coming in of the new age, and the winding up of the past age of the world. It had in it, and has in it, contents affecting the whole human race, contents of glory and blessing, yet to be realized. To the elect in Israel it was a day of rejoicing and blessing, Luke xxii. 21, but to the nation at large, to the men who had crucified their King and Saviour, the day of the Lord’s advent was the day of doom. It was [the Dies Irae for Israel] the day in which the theocracy was extinguished in “blood and fire and vapour of smoke,” Joel ii. 30; these things were already beginning at Pentecost (Acts ii. 19 seq.), they came to a climax at the destruction of Jerusalem (Matt. xxiv. 15—34). The prophet Daniel had foretold (ch. ix. 26, LXX.) that the anointed One (the Christ) should destroy the city and the sanctuary, and then should be the
consummation, then also should come in the everlasting righteousness of the new age (see Dan. ix. 24). Our Lord also in His great discourse on the signs of the last times speaks of the consummation of the age, ἡ σωματεία τοῦ αἰῶνος, and of His advent in glory, of which the destruction of Jerusalem was to be the outward sign. Stephen had foretold (Acts vi. 14) that this Jesus of Nazareth should destroy the Holy Place and change the customs which Moses delivered. This day thus foretold was now instant when John wrote "the Revelation of Jesus Christ," when he wrote, as he tells us, ch. i. 19, of the things which He said, "both those things which are, and those things which shall be hereafter." The words of our text identify the event of which John speaks with the events of which our Lord speaks in Matt. xxiv. 30.

The words in both cases are taken from the prophecy of Zechariah xii. 10—12, "They shall look upon me whom they have pierced ("because they have mocked me," LXX.), and they shall mourn every family apart.

The words in Zechariah apply to Israel, as do also the words of our Lord in Matt. xxiv. 30, and the words of John, Rev. i. 7; see the text of Zechariah ch. xii. 12, LXX. καὶ κόψωται ἡ γῆ κατὰ φυλὰς φυλὰς; in Matt. xxiv. 30 the words are καὶ κόψωται πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς; and in Rev. i. 7, καὶ κόψωται αὐτῶν πᾶσαι αἱ φυλαὶ τῆς γῆς.

Each and all speak of the same event, the mourning in Israel that should attend the coming of the Son of man in the glory and terror of His Parousia. It is not of the world at large, but of Israel that these things were spoken, and these things were literally fulfilled when the Lord came in judgment on Israel as the consummation of the Jewish age; when it is said that these works have relation to Israel and to Israel only, it must be understood that it was as outward portents that these things belonged to Israel only, these things were dispensationally signalized in Israel with outward signs and wonders, but the coming of the Lord in the glory of His Parousia has a spiritual meaning also for the whole world, see notes to 1 John ii. 27, 28; v. 20.

When in this dispensation of the "Parousia" in which we now are, the Lord reveals Himself to the soul, He comes with spiritual signs similar to those which came both outwardly and inwardly on Israel; Israel is the type of what is to come on all. But the dispensation of the Parousia is for those only who can realize it, 144,000 as against millions and millions. When the Lord comes again to the soul without sin[-offering] unto salvation (see Heb. ix. 28), when He appears in His Parousia (see 1 John ii. 27, 28, notes) to individual souls, then is fulfilled in these souls in a spiritual sense the outward signs that came on Israel when He, the Lord, came to wind up the old world period, the Jewish age, to destroy the Old Tabernacle (Heb. ix. 8), and to bring in the Everlasting righteousness of Dan. ix. 24; these old things are done away and all is made new. To interpret these words as though their outward fulfilment belonged to the world at large is to misinterpret Scripture and to mislead ourselves.

1 Zech. xii. 10, Pierced. These words of the prophet receive thus a double fulfilment—first as John xix. 37 "in the day of humiliation, and again in the glory of the Parousia." There are double fulfi-
APPENDICES TO THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

and others about the coming of the Son of man. These signs which were to accompany and signalize the coming of the Son of man in His glory have already been fulfilled in the sense in which they were predicted, i.e. in the history of Israel. To suppose that they have yet to be outwardly fulfilled in a world-wide sense is to suppose that the Lord has not yet come again. *The Lord has come,* and these outward signs were fulfilled at His coming. Then it was that all the families of the land of Israel mourned; then it was [metaphorically speaking] that the stars fell from heaven; then it was that the Gospel of the Kingdom had been proclaimed throughout the whole Jewish economy (see Matt. xxiv. 14).

APPENDIX B. THE TRANSITION PERIOD.

Rev. xi.

The close of the xith chapter of the Apocalypse brings to a close in one point of time, the seventh seal period which began at ch. viii. 1 and the seventh trumpet period (a part of the seventh seal period) which began at ch. xi. 15. With the close of these periods comes also the close of the old world and Jewish period and the Judæo-Christian period. The judgment-day of which is recorded in ch. xi. 18 (see notes there). This judgment-day of the old world period is described by our Lord, Matt. xxv. 31—46. He also alludes to it in Matt. xiii. 39—49; also John v. 25. It is often alluded to by the Apostles, see Acts xvii. 31; 1 Cor. xv. 52. This great assize of the old world period took place in the heavenly places as described in the Apocalypse. It was accented historically on earth by the destruction of Jerusalem, which was the outward sign of the coming of the Lord in judgment in the glories and terrors of His Parousia, see Matt. xxiv. 3. The whole period of about 42 years from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the old world period was a time of transition, it was marked on earth by troubles and tumults, wars and distress of nations with perplexities (see Matt. xxiv. 4 and cf. the testimony of Josephus, Tacitus, &c., see also Paul’s account of the state of society in early chapters of Romans). This period of about 42 years from the destruction of Jerusalem to the end of the old world period occupies the vision in the Apocalypse from ch. vi. 1 to ch. xi. 18, 19, and is described in mystical numbers as a period of 1260 days, Rev. xi. 3; xii. 6; 42 months, Rev. xi. 2; xiii. 5; a time, and times, and half a time, Rev. xii. 14 (see notes to Rev. xi. 9). The judgments that came on the earth, and especially on Israel during this period, are set forth in figure in the Apocalypse, and are interpreted so far as the writer had the gift of interpretation in the notes to the text (which see above). During all this period the saints of God and His elect from Pentecost onward held on their course and were gradually being gathered. The elect number included both Jews and Gentiles. The vision in the Apocalypse is in the main a vision of judgment, but the references to the saints are explicit, though infrequent (see chaps. vii. 3—14, n.; viii. 3, 4, n.; ix. 4, n.; xi. 2, 18, n). There were also among the

1 On the imminence of our Lord’s advent to that generation see on Rev. xxii. 7.
multitudes (ῥὰ ἐθνῶν), men who might have repented, ch. ix. 20, 21, n., and some who did repent, ch. xi. 13, n. As a nation the Jews were still impenitent, but we may believe that individuals among them were gathered, and that many were brought in from among the Gentiles during this transition period. The judgments described in this part of the Apocalypse were not punitive only, they were remedial also, and in mercy to “compel them to come in” (see Luke xiv. 23). Our Lord’s own words in Matthew, chaps. xxiv. and xxv., teach us that throughout this period there should be souls from among the Jews brought into communion though the nation of the Jews remain impenitent up to the judgment-day. John however, writing his first Epistle during these last times of the old world period (“the last hour” 1 John ii. 18), and yet “in the light, the very light” (1 John ii. 8) of the Parousia, speaks of the few comparatively who were gathered into communion at that time (1 John v. 19) compared with the mass who rejected Christ for Antichrist, “We are of God, and the whole world lieth in the wicked one.” Our Lord also had said prophetically (Luke xviii. 8), “When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?” Still we have evidence from Scripture that there was even from Pentecost onward, throughout the Apostolic period, and throughout the period that constituted the times of the end of the Jewish and old world period, an elect seed, the Body and Bride of Christ, called and chosen, and faithful, who formed the nucleus on earth of the Church of God. These elect souls constituted the inception of 144,000 on the Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1—5), who again constitute the body from whom is ever being gathered the new Jerusalem, the Mount Zion of God, the Bride of Christ, of Rev. xxi. and xxii., in the great consummation. This elect body on the Mount Zion (Rev. xiv. 1—5) is the scene and place of the reign of Christ on earth in the glory of the Parousia. It is to this enclosed garden, this Mount of vision, that the glories of His reign are confined; all who seek to partake of the glory must seek it where it is to be found, in this mount of God, apart from the Babel of the world (see Rev. xiv. 1—5, notes). Here Christ the Lord is manifested in the glories of His Parousia. Here is gathered, as to the gate of Heaven, the elect of all the generations from Pentecost onward to the day when the elect number, the Body of Christ, shall be complete, “Christ the first-fruits, afterward they that are His in His Parousia,” 1 Cor. xv. 23. But this elect number on the Mount Zion (represented by the 144,000 as compared with the multitudes outside that number), must not be supposed to represent the whole number of the redeemed from among men.

Besides the Church of the firstborn on the Mount Zion, there are the spirits of just men made perfect (Heb. xii. 23). There are also the multitude who constitute the kingdom of Christ, as distinct from the Church, and beside even this extended number, we may hope that there shall ultimately be an innumerable company around the throne, of redeemed souls out of all nations and kindreds and tongues and people, many of whom may never have heard the name of Christ; for we cannot suppose that the glory and

1 See notes to Rev. viii. 2, 4; xi. 1, 2; for the Parousia and the old world period overlapped.
extent and efficacy of the New Covenant in Christ shall come short of the Old Covenant; and when we read in Rev. vii. which relates to Jewish and Old Covenant times that there were not only the elect number, 144,000, but, "a great multitude which no man could number," Rev. vii. 9, gathered before the throne, as the fruit of that dispensation, we must conclude that the fruit of the far more glorious covenant in Christ shall ultimately (we know not through what ages of probation) yield a yet more glorious harvest.

Thus far from Rev. vi. 1 to Rev. xi. 18, 19, the vision has been the history in figure of the events leading up to the times of the fuller manifestation of the Parousia of our Lord, the period in the dispensations from the destruction of Jerusalem up to the day of judgment of the old world period. During this period the two dispensations overlapped one another. Even from the day of Pentecost when the New Covenant opened with the descent of the Holy Ghost, on earth, the glories of the New Covenant had been vailed by the shadow of the old economy, which though a dead thing, still mixed the ritual and ceremonial elements with the new faith.

The Parousia of the Lord was and is to sweep away all these things of the Old Covenant, everything that may be shaken; but the elements of the Old Covenant long endured, they endure still, to dim the brightness of the new day, our Christianity now is but an Old Covenant Christianity. They remained at first throughout the Judeo-Christian period by Divine permission, an element that will be ultimately swept away, and the day of judgment of Rev. xi. 18 was the period up to which the Divine permission extended. Human perversity and human weakness has re-created and sustained in a false existence the things of the old creation which in God's sight and purpose ended with that day of judgment of the old world.

The period of transition from the Old Covenant to the New occupied the space of time between the beginning of our Lord's human ministry up to the judgment-day of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18. Ecclesiastical history gives us no record of this period. It is from the New Testament record only that we learn the gradual process of this transition, first in the Gospels, then in the Acts and Epistles, and finally in the Apocalypse from ch. vi. 1, 2, to ch. xi. 18, which contains the history in figure of the transition period from between the close of the Apostolic period to the close of the Jewish and old world period in the great assize of the old world, spoken of, Rev. xi. 18; Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49, and frequently elsewhere in the N. T. The transition from the Old Covenant period to the New was a gradual process, only gradually were the Old Covenant elements and representations of truth superseded by the New. Throughout the whole of the Apostolic period this process was going on, and, see Matt. x. 22, "the Twelve" were specially appointed to guide "the remnant" and the "elect remnant" (Rom. xi. 7) in Israel through this period, and Paul and others were raised up to gather in the election from among the Gentiles.

This elect number was to constitute the germ of the New Covenant Church in the heavenly place, the Church of the firstborn, the 144,000 on the Mount Zion where the Lord Jesus reigns in the glory of His Parousia (see Rev. xiv. 1—5).
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The prophets in Israel had from of old declared that the Old Covenant, the Mosaic Covenant, was only temporary, it was a parenthesis in the economy of the Divine government of the world. It was to be superseded by another and a better covenant, the New Covenant in Christ. The Epistle to the Hebrews contains the evidence and argument concerning this transaction. The New Covenant in Christ was to be not according to the Covenant made through Moses. Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers...For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: and they shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me from the least to the greatest. See Heb. viii. 8, 9, 10, 11, and x. 16, 17; Jer. xxxi. 31, 34.

The history of this period, as already said, is contained in the N.T. records, but the latter part of this N.T. history as contained in the Apocalypse is shrouded in mystery, and in figures which need interpretation. The preceding notes are an attempt to give some rough interpretation of the hieroglyphic signs in which this part of the history of the transition period is hidden. It describes in figure at ch. vi. 1, 2 the coming forth of our Lord with His angels of judgment on Israel conquering and to conquer. It describes in figure the awful retribution that came on that people as our Lord Himself had foretold (see Matt. xxiv. 3). It describes the course of these judgments, until they culminate in the day of judgment of the old world period, Rev. xi. 18; Matt. xiii. 39, 40, 49; xxv. 31, 46; Acts xvii. 31. It describes also the gradual dawning and shining forth throughout these judgments of the day of the Lord's Parousia, for it was in these terrors that the Lord came in His Parousia, and from out of these clouds and tempests on the rebellious that the glory of the Parousia shone forth on His elect, from Rev. vii. 4 onward, through viii. 3—4; xi. 1—2 up to xi. 19 (see notes in each instance).

The Church, the body of Christ, the New Covenant Church, was forming throughout these labour pangs of the transition period, and at last, after the day of judgment of the old world period, the Church of the New Covenant on earth (yet also in the heavenly places), Rev. xiv. 1—5 emerges, not as an ecclesiastical system but as the scene of the reign of Christ with His saints on earth in the glory of His Parousia. This Mount Zion is the union of earth and heaven. Souls on earth who stand thereon, are already in heaven. During this period also it was that Antichrist emerged, the beast of Rev. xi. 7 (see notes there, see also 1 John ii. 18, n.) who made war against the two witnesses and overcame them and slew them, and who would, if he could, make war against the Mount Zion where the true Church of Christ is gathered.

This beast from the abyss, this Antichrist, in one of his manifestations, either in himself or his image is, I doubt not, Ecclesiasticism, that ecclesiastical spirit and system which makes Divine truth and the ancient Scriptures,
and all Scripture, a dead thing, see Rev. xiii. 14, n.; professing to reduce the
truth into systematic order, formulas and signs, it gives an abstraction of
the truth in Christ only, not the truth itself. It gives the form without the
life, the letter without the spirit. Christ reigns on the Mount Zion; the
beast and his image dwell among the surging tumults and tempests of the
world, and of Babylon as set forth in the subsequent chapters of the
Apocalypse. We have to come out of Babylon, away from the beast and
his image if we are to abide with Christ in the Mount Zion of the Spirit.
It is on the Mount Zion, and there only, that our Lord is manifested to
the elect in the glories of His Parousia. It is on the Mount Zion, and there
only, that we can realize the blessings, the peace and rest and joy of the
New Covenant, where all are taught of Christ.

APPENDIX C. THE TWO WITNESSES.

Rev. xi. 3.

THOUGH the two witnesses are mentioned here for the first time under the
sixth trumpet period of the seven-sealed scroll, yet the mention of the 1260
days’ period as the time of their witness suggests that we are not to limit
their ministry to the sixth trumpet period (in which they are first mentioned),
but that they had been witnessing more or less actively during the whole of
the 1260 days’ period antecedent to their martyrdom, for the whole period,
that is, between the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming in of ecclesiasticism.
There is a singular expression in v. 7 below, perhaps relating to
John’s own part in this ministry. The two witnesses here who ministered in
the power and spirit of Moses and Elias, and heralded the advent of our Lord
in the glory of His Parousia, were probably not Moses and Elias, just as
John the Baptist who heralded His coming in the flesh was not Elias.
Moses and Elias witnessed in person to our Lord at the Transfiguration.
Moses and Elias were also probably the two men in white apparel [who are
mentioned, Acts i. 10], but the two witnesses [here spoken of], like John the
Baptist, need not necessarily be personally identified with Moses and
Elias, but they witness in the power and spirit of Moses and Elias. They
are the two anointed ones, cf. Zech. iv. 3, 11, 14. The two witnesses
were now to go forth in the power of Moses and Elias (see v. 6 n. below) to
witness to the advent of the Lord in His Parousia (ch. xiv. 1—5, n.) now close
at hand. The Law and the Prophets witness to Christ, whether in His
humiliation or in His Glory, and this was to be the ministry of the two
witnesses here of whom I suppose John may have been one. The Elias
mission of the witnesses would include the unfinished mission of John the
Baptist of whom our Lord says, Matt. xi. 14, “This is Elias which is about
to come” (see Matt. xi. 14). See also Matt. xvii. 11, 12, where our Lord,
speaking of John the Baptist, says, that Elias is come already, and yet that
Elias had yet to come (see also Malachi iv. 5¹). John the Baptist was, and

¹ In Malachi [ch. iv. 4—6] Moses is associated with Elias (Ἑλαὶ τῶν Θεοφιλων) LXX., and in Rabbinical literature their mysterious relationship is again and again referred to. Their mutual correspondence is therein worked out with
yet was not, Elias (comp. John i. 21, with Matt. xvii. 12, 13). He had fulfilled a part, but not the whole, of the Elias' ministry which was to herald the coming of the Son of Man; He had fulfilled that part which heralded the coming of our Lord in His humiliation, but not that part which heralded His advent in glory. This unfulfilled part was to be completed by one or both of "the two witnesses" of our text. By them it was accomplished as we read in this eleventh chapter of the Apocalypse, but both they and their witness were rejected by the world. Of this 1260 days' period between the destruction of Jerusalem and the coming in of the beast of ch. xiii. 11 (the Antichrist) no doubt it is that John speaks when he says (1 John v. 19), "We are of God and the whole world lieth in the wicked one." There were many Antichrists (1 John ii. 18), men who denied the Father and the Son (1 John ii. 22). Whether John the Apostle was, or was not, one of the two witnesses of our text, anyhow, the testimony of the witnesses was rejected, and they themselves were killed, "and their dead bodies lay in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified."

Whether in His humiliation or in His Parousia, our Lord was and ever has been, and still is, rejected by the world. It is as He Himself in the days of His flesh said it would be, "When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" The two witnesses, the Law and the Prophets (see v. 6 below, n.), carry us back in thought to the Transfiguration, Matt. xvii. 3; Mark ix. 4; Luke ix. 30 (see notes there). The Law and the Prophets ever witness to Christ the Lord, see Matt. ix. 4; Luke ix. 30; John v. 46; Acts xxvi. 22; Rom. iii. 21 (notes). There is also probably an occult relation between the two witnesses of our text and the two men in white apparel of Acts i. 10. All these references serve to explain the words of our text (Rev. xi. 3), and the character of the ministry of the two witnesses.

"And they shall prophesy one thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth."

This period, during which the ministry of the two witnesses was to last, is the ordained period during which the Church was in the wilderness, see ch. xii. 6 (see notes there, also notes to the mystical period 1260 days). This was a time of great tribulation for the Church mystical on earth, the Body and Bride of Christ; the Church was as it were a wanderer, homeless and houseless. The Mount Zion of ch. xiv. 1—5, was not as yet fully prepared as the home and shelter of the Saints. The two witnesses prophesied "clothed in sackcloth." All these references imply that during this 1260 days' period when the true and invisible Church was in the wilderness and the two witnesses prophesied, and prophesied in vain, the world was in a state of active hostility to the truth of God, and that there was an almost
total apostasy, a falling away of professing Christians from the faith in Christ. These things are probably alluded to by John in his first Epistle, "There are many Antichrists." "This is that spirit of Antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come, and even now already is it in the world," "and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (1 John ii. 18, 19; iv. 1—3; v. 19). The First Epistle of John was probably written about the time here indicated in the vision, and the Gospel of John some little time after (see introductory notes to each). The Epistle and Gospel of John contain as I suppose an epitome of John's testimony to the truth in Christ during this period. They were written towards the close of the Jewish period (1 John ii. 18, n.), and in the dawning light of the Parousia (1 John ii. 8, n.). This was the time of the great apostasy spoken of by Paul (2 Thes. ii. 3), which was to precede the advent of our Lord in His Parousia (it was already in process of gestation when Paul wrote, 2 Thess. ii. 7). During this period it was that the Christianity of the Apostolic period was exchanged for an ecclesiastical and sacerdotal system, of which Antichrist (the beast of Rev. xiii. 11) was the head (see notes there). This period of the apostasy comes between the Apostolic period and the Ecclesiastical and Sacerdotal systems that lay claim to the Apostolic succession; any such succession is barred by the Apostasy. The founder of our modern Christianity, in so far as it is made up of ecclesiastical and sacerdotal systems, is the beast of Rev. xiii. 11. The only Church which can claim succession to Apostolic Christianity is the Church of the firstborn, the invisible Church, gathered on the Mount Zion, of which Christ Himself is the head and the first-fruits (1 Cor. xv. 23). During the 1260 days' period of the apostasy the Church was in the wilderness, ch. xii. 6, n., the man-child was caught from earth up to God and to His throne. The two witnesses to Christ were rejected and put to death.

This period is identical with that period of mystery about which ecclesiastical history is almost totally silent, the period from A.D. 70 to about A.D. 112, when we find, we know not how, ecclesiasticism and sacerdotalism in full action. During this period of about 42 years, pseudo-Christianity with its system of religion obtained the mastery, so far as this world is concerned, and has maintained it ever since.

It is from the Apocalypse only that we get light on the events of this period, and find the origin of our modern Christianity in the events of Rev. xi. and xiii., the apostasy, the coming of the beast and the false prophet, and notwithstanding the darkness of the picture set forth in these notes as to the 1260 days' period, it must be borne in mind that the Scriptures of the Apostles were preserved and the Elect seed of the Church of the firstborn was also preserved, and that the fact of their preservation connects by an unbroken nexus the present Church of the firstborn, the invisible Church of Christ with Apostolic times and Apostolic truth and teaching, just as there is a nexus connecting the apostasy of the then period with modern pseudo-Christianity. Throughout the ministry of the two witnesses there appears to have been an outward regard for the letter of Scripture, the law and the prophets, their dead bodies lay in the streets of Sodom and Egypt, just as

1 See Lightfoot, Philippians, p. 199.
they do now, and the authorities would not let them be buried. The writings of John however were probably rejected as the message, a new message, of one of the two witnesses (supposing John to be one), and this well agrees with the historic fact that not until about the middle of the 2nd century do we find any mention of John's Gospel.

APPENDICE D. CHURCH OF THE FIRSTBORN.

If I have interpreted aright the mysteries of this Book, it is evident that the Church of the firstborn, the Body and Bride of Christ, from her inception onward to her final triumph in the new heavens and the new earth, is the dominant idea throughout the whole prophetic vision. Although Babylon (mystical) and her fate occupy the chief place in the Book, yet it is evident that in the mind of the writer the fate of Babylon is subordinated to the triumph of the Church. Her fate hangs on the fortunes of the Church. The triumph of the Church is the ruin of Babylon (see Rev. xiv. 8).

Contemplating it in this aspect,—and seeing how all the turmoil and confusion, the abominations, the unrest and misery of Babylon are ultimately to give place to the glory of the new heavens and the new earth,—the gloom that hangs over so large a part of the story is changed into sunshine, the final glory dissipates the gloom through which it has struggled into light.

As in the individual Christian pilgrimage, the true faith, which sees the end in the beginning, fights on through gloom and darkness and adversity, knowing that the bright land lies beyond; so in the Apocalypse, when we contemplate it in the light of its final glory, instead of appearing a revelation of wrath, the Book becomes a blessed promise of eternal life. Faith overlaps the interval that comes between the present and the future, and the conflict and suffering are seen as stepping-stones to the glory.

In the vision, and in the fact, the two cities,—the new Jerusalem, and Babylon,—are utterly antagonistic the one to the other, and yet their relation to each other is such that each is dependent upon each. Not only is the fate of Babylon dependent on the fate and fortunes of the Church, but the Church herself is dependent upon Babylon for her own growth and increase. It is from souls saved out of Babylon that the Mount Sion is built up.

The Church of the firstborn is made up of those elect souls who, having been born in Babylon, have heard the warning to depart out of her, and through the grace of our Lord have been translated out of the darkness into His marvellous light.

In number, a mere handful as compared with the whole world which lieth in the wicked one (1 Jno. v. 19). And yet, according to the Apocalypse, this despised, invisible Church—the Body and Bride of Christ—is the special object of His care and love. It is on her fate and fortunes that the fate and fortunes of Babylon depend. It is not in the rise or fall of nations or of individuals. It is not in mundane revolutions and reformations, nor is it in

1 Abridged from the Friends' Quarterly Examiner, 7mo., 1888.
the great deeds of the great men who govern the world, that the Divine purpose in the ages is manifested, but rather in the gradual perfecting of the Church of the firstborn.

Lifted above the turmoil and unrest of Babylon, above the chance and change of circumstances, the Church abides stedfast and immovable,—the one abiding reality throughout the ages. In spirit they who constitute the Church are on the mount Zion of God, with Christ the Lord. In body they may be still in this world, for the Church includes within its number both the dead and the living; but the world has become, to such, a strange country,—a land in which they have no abiding inheritance.

The Divine law by which the Church is governed, and according to which is ordained her final triumph, is the law also by which the limitations of Babylon are ordered. Either consciously or unconsciously, each fulfils this inevitable law; the one in joy and love and worship, the other in rebellion.

Ultimately the rule and reign of Christ the Lord, as it exists in the Mount Zion of God, and of which the Church on earth is the exponent, is to have the victory over all: "He must reign until He hath put all enemies under His feet" (1 Cor. xv. 25).

To be a member of this Church of the firstborn, the Body and Bride of Christ, is a grace and a glory and a blessing beyond all conception.

The marriage supper, of which the Bride is the subject, which is to celebrate the coming in of the new heavens and the new earth (Rev. xxi. 1, 2), is the culminating glory of the day of Christ. To be a redeemed spectator, even, of that event will be one of the glories of eternity. To be an invited guest at that supper will be a yet higher glory. But to be one of that elect number who shall then constitute the Body and Bride of Christ on the day when He the Lord shall set side by side with Himself the Church glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing (Eph. v. 27); to be a member of the Church of the firstborn at the marriage supper, what tongue can tell, what imagination picture the blessedness! Yet this is the glory prepared for elect human souls, who, through the grace of our Lord, have been gathered out of Babylon, and have been made members of the Body in this the dispensation of the Parousia (1 Cor. xv. 23).

We may believe that through the grace of our Lord an innumerable company, out of every nation and kindred and people and tongue, shall share in His salvation. But they who constitute His Body and Bride are an elect number, distinct from the innumerable company. They are distinguished from the rest of the redeemed, and from the angels (see Heb. xii. 22, 23). So that it may be said that there are, at any rate, two sorts of salvation, differing in glory the one from the other (see also Rev. xxi. 24); differing, as, at the marriage supper, the Bride differs from the spectators; differing, as the 144,000 of Rev. xiv. 1 (see notes there) differ from the rest of the redeemed. So also Rev. xx. 5, for distinction of glory among souls; some are to share the millennium, some are not. See also Rev. xxi. 24, "And the nations shall walk by (κατ' αὐτά) the light of it," i.e., the Holy City, the Bride.

It is a great thing that souls in Christ should know the glory to which they are called in Him. Even Elect Souls are too often unaware of all their
blessedness. They may know and rejoice in the knowledge that the Lord has redeemed them out of Babylon, but they are often ignorant of the glory that is prepared for them as members of the Church of the firstborn. Orbit in Him they are so occupied with the thought of their own salvation, and with the working-out of that salvation which is their everyday imperative duty, that they lose sight of that larger orbit around the Lord as their sun and centre, which they are called to realize as members of the Church of the firstborn, in which is to be found not only the consummated glory of individual salvation, but also a place among those through whom, according to the Divine purposes, the course of the aevum is ordered. To miss the mark in this respect is to miss the greatest of all blessings.

It is to help in postponing the day of the restitution of all things, the new heavens and the new earth, which are to come on with the completion of the Elect number who shall constitute the Bride of Christ, the Church (Rev. xxi. 1, 2). It is to help in postponing the day when Babylon shall be destroyed. For the fate of Babylon hangs on the progress of the Church of the firstborn (Rev. xiv. 8). It is for want of seeing these things as they are revealed to us in the Apocalypse, that our faith is so poor a thing as it is. We fail to realize "the faith of Jesus" (see Eph. iii. 12).

When we consider how great a place the Church,—as the Bride of Christ,—fills in the prophetic story of the day of Christ, and the restitution of all things as set forth in the Apocalypse, and that the marriage supper is the culminating event to which the whole prophecy leads up; and when we consider that when creation and redemption were planned the end was as certainly present to the mind of the Creator as the beginning was, we may be assured that from creation onward and throughout all "the weary centuries," this great event of this union in marriage of the Divine and human natures in Christ the Lord has been, and still is, the master-thought, the guiding purpose, by which all things have been ordained.

When we find Paul quoting the Adamic saying (Gen. ii. 24) as illustrating the mystery of the relation between Christ our Lord and His Church (see Eph. v. 31), we may infer that the ultimate relation of human souls to Him, as the Bride to the Bridegroom, was already contemplated in the genesis of creation.

We find the same idea of marriage between the Divine and the human nature more or less implicitly set forth in the Old Testament Scriptures not only as a hope, but as an expectation (see Isai. liv. 5, lxii. 5; Jer. iii. 14; Hos. ii. 19, 20). For ages this was only an occult hope, but the incarnation of our Lord, in which the two natures, Divine and human, were united in His Divine person, gave a new meaning and a new life to what had previously been only a vague hope and expectation.

John the Baptist, who had been designated from of old as the forerunner and herald of our Lord, introduces Him to Israel in His character of "the Bridegroom."

"He that hath the Bride is the Bridegroom" (John iii. 29). Our Lord Himself also adopts the same character in the parable of the Ten Virgins, "Behold the Bridegroom" (Matt. xxv. 6). In the 22nd chapter of Matthew's
Gospel He likens the Kingdom of Heaven to a marriage supper. In 2 Co xi. 2 Paul speaks of the espousals of the Church as of a chaste Virgin to Christ. And in Eph. v. 32 he speaks of the Church as the Bride of Christ. See also Eph. v. 23.

But the Church is not only represented as the Bride of Christ. She is spoken of also as His body.

"The Church, which is His Body" (Eph. i. 22, 23).
"His Body, which is the Church" (Col. i. 24). See also John ii. 21; 1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; 2 Cor. vi. 16.

And this relationship of Christ our Lord to the Church is not merely an ideal relationship, which we are called to believe in as a creed. It is a personal relationship which we are individually called to realize: we are called to realize as a fact that our Lord has in His incarnation joined human nature to Himself in an everlasting covenant.

The Church, which is His Body, is made up of individual human souls gathered into communion in spirit with the Lord Jesus. Paul says (1 Cor. xii. 27), "Now ye are the Body of Christ," and individually members thereof, and again (Eph. v. 30), "For we are members of His Body."

They who are called to this supreme glory, and through the grace of our Lord attain thereto, constitute the Church, the Bride of Christ, of whom John speaks in the Apocalypse as "The holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband" (Rev. xxi. 2). Of which Paul also speaks (Eph. v. 27), as the Church—glorious—not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, but holy and without blemish, which the Lord will set side by side with Himself. See also Col. i. 18.

This blessed number are spoken of previously in Rev. xiv. 1, as the perfect number (12 x 12 thousand), who are with the Lord on the Mount Sion, gathering slowly, slowly, into the glory of His Parousia (presence) behind all the turmoil and misery of the Babylonish period. They are spoken of as "the first-fruits" (Rev. xiv. 4).

This unimaginable glory of constituting the Bride of Christ, the Church of the firstborn, is reserved for those among the children of men who, having been called thereto, have realized their calling. No mind can think what that glory shall be, no imagination can picture it. Many are called to it, but few attain.

They are spoken of as having the name of God written in their foreheads; they sing, as it were, a new song before the throne, and no man can learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand which were redeemed from the earth. They follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth; they are redeemed from among men, being the first-fruits unto God and to the Lamb. In their mouth is found no guile, for they are without fault before the throne of God (Rev. xiv. 1—5).

Such is the Church of the firstborn. And the question naturally arises: Does this Church of the firstborn constitute the whole number of the saved? for with such a description and definition of their high standing on the Mount Zion we might well say, Who is sufficient for these things?

In reply: The New Testament distinctly teaches us that there are degrees
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of glory among the saved, that comparatively few only out of the many saved attain to this highest glory of constituting the Holy City—the Body and Bride of Christ—the Church of the firstborn.

Our Lord, in His parable of the marriage supper (Matt. xxii.), teaches that the marriage supper includes not only the Bride and Bridegroom, but also the invited guests. (See also Luke xiv. 16—23.) And this is borne out by the words in the Apocalypse, “Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb” (Rev. xix. 9), where the invited guests are again distinctly marked off from the Bride.

The writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews also, in speaking of the Mount Zion (Heb. xii. 23), distinguishes the Church of the firstborn from “the spirits of just men made perfect,” implying that, besides and beyond the Elect number constituting the Church of the firstborn, there is an unknown number of saved souls on the Mount Zion, and, judging by the analogy of souls saved under the old world period, as described in the Apocalypse (see Rev. vii. 9), this unknown company of the saved will include, “A multitude which no man can number, out of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues.”

It was to bring many, not few, sons unto glory (Heb. ii. 10) that our Lord became incarnate, and was made our perfect Captain of Salvation; so that, whilst we are assured that there is a supreme and unimaginable glory for the Church of the firstborn, there is, in the riches that are in Christ, salvation for an innumerable company beyond the Elect number (Eph. iii. 10).

The Church of the firstborn then, we may say, is made up of that comparatively small number—out of the innumerable company of saved souls—who are elected to constitute the Body and Bride of Christ. They constitute that perfect number represented as $12 \times 12$ thousand (Rev. xiv. 1). The completion of this perfect number, which constitutes the Body and Bride of Christ the Church, will in all probability mark the close and completion of this zeon of the day of Christ. This blessed number has been gathering (see 1 Cor. xv. 23) from Pentecost onwards, and still is gathering with Christ the Lord on the Mount Zion (see Rev. xiv. 1—5). “But the day of the Lord seems a long day, and the feet of the years are slow.”

How many years or centuries shall yet pass before the Bride—the Church—comes forth in her glory, we have no conception. No hint is given us in this regard in the Apocalypse. It is for us each to be very careful that we do not by our sin or unbelief, or ignorance or carelessness, fail to attain that place in Eternity which the Lord has prepared for us. It is for us to take care that no one take our crown (Rev. ii. 11).

This Church of the firstborn, gathered on the spiritual Mount Zion, with Christ the Lord (see Rev. xiv. 1—5), has no outward and visible form in this world. She is as invisible as Christ Himself, who, as her head, is invisible, or as the translation of a soul from death into life is invisible. It is by union with the unseen Christ in faith and love that the soul is through regeneration made a member of this invisible but glorious company. It is by abiding in this union of faith and love,—abiding in spiritual union with the unseen Christ,—that the membership of the soul, in this glorious Church, is established into this glorious Life: the Lord Jesus quickeneth whom He will.
APPENDICES TO THE REVELATION TO JOHN.

It is to be noted that the announcement of the marriage supper in the Apocalypse (chap. xix. 7), as a potential fact, long antecedes the actualization of it. The millennium has to intervene, before the Church, the Bride, is fully prepared for the great event (chap. xxi. 2). As in the doom on Babylon potentially pronounced (Rev. xiv.), the potential precedes the actual by an indefinite period.

Though the Church of the firstborn,—the Bride and Body of Christ,—is so seldom directly mentioned in the Apocalypse until her final triumph in the 21st and 22nd chapters, yet, from her final triumph, we know that the Elect number which constituted that Church was, and still is, gathering member by member in the Heavenly places for that great day.

Besides the special texts (Rev. xiv. 1—5 and xv. 2, 5), we find occult references, such as chap. viii. 1—3; xi. 1, 2, 19; xii. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 11, 12, 14, 16; xiii. 6—8, 15; xiv. 7, 12, 13; xviii. 4, 20; xix. 1—7.

And finally, in the last two chapters of the Book, when the elect number is complete, we find the Church of the firstborn coming forth in glory, victorious over all.

APPENDIX E. BABYLON.

We find the first mention of Babylon in the Apocalypse at the 8th verse of the 14th chapter.

"Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great."

Her doom is associated with the setting-up of the Church of the firstborn on the Mount Zion (see notes on Rev. xiv. 1—8), but no hint is there given as to the day of her doom, or the period of her previous existence. In the triumph of the Church of the firstborn is contained potentially the ruin of Babylon. In the Apocalypse Babylon is represented both as a woman and a city. Just as the Bride of Christ the Church is also represented both as a woman and a city. These two, the Bride, the Holy City, and Babylon the Harlot City, are ever antagonistic the one to the other. The success of one is the ruin of the other. Babylon (mystical), the Harlot City of the Apocalypse, owes her name doubtless to the Babylon of history, the Chaldean city on the Euphrates.

But her genesis is probably of much older date.

From the picture given us in the Apocalypse of her place and power, Babylon (mystical) may be classed among the Principalities and Powers of which Paul speaks, Rom. viii. 38; Eph. vi. 12; Col. ii. 15, which are ever at war with the saints, and with which the saints are ever at war. The Babylon of the Apocalypse is closely associated with the beast of Rev. xiii. 1—3 (see notes there), which represents the Roman Empire. This Empire is her home and dwelling-place. Here she sits as a Queen (Rev. xviii. 7 n.). The kings and peoples of the diffused Roman Empire are now the waters (Rev. xvii. 3—5 n.) on which she sits, as Babylon of old sat on the waters of Euphrates. It is to be by means of her waters, which are peoples (Rev. xvii. 15 n.), that
she is to be ultimately destroyed, as Babylon of old was destroyed by means of her waters, the waters of Euphrates. Meanwhile and until her destruction Babylon in spirit dominates the whole kingdom of the beast. It it with Babylon as she reigns in the diffused Roman Empire, the western nations, that the Apocalyptic story concerns itself. This is the stage on which the mystery is worked out.

There are nations and kingdoms and peoples and tongues, which are not in the Apocalyptic sense, under her dominion, yet shut in by the orbit line of the Church of the firstborn, even as in nature a stormy sea is shut in by the vast ellipse of the sky-line which with inevitable exactness defines the limit which it cannot overpass. Seeing how Babylon, as an evil principle and power, is allied with those other principles and powers of evil, the beast and the false Prophet, it follows that in her ruin their ruin also is involved, Rev. xix. 20. Christ the Lord will reign until all are subdued, 1 Cor. xv. 25. The final overthrow of Babylon, which had been already decreed ch. xiv. 8 (see note there), comes in with the 7th and last vial period of Rev. xvi. See vv. 17—21. Her fate, which is shortly epitomised on ch. xvi. 18—21, is described more at large in the 17th, 18th and 19th chapters which follow.

These chapters describe the troubles and conflicts that are to attend the fall of Babylon, but do not advance the history of the aeon beyond ch. xvi. 21. They shew, however, that in the fate of Babylon is involved also the fate of the beast and the false Prophet, see ch. xviii. 10. The 7th vial period of Rev. xvi. 17—21, in which Babylon and the beast and the false Prophet are overthrown, brings us in the vision to the millennial age and the day of judgment of ch. xx. 11, 15, i.e. the day of judgment of this present dispensation, just as the 7th trumpet period of Rev. xi. 15—16 brought in the day of judgment of the Jewish and old world period. The first signs of the actual dissolution of Babylon are given us in the 18th and 19th verses of ch. xvi. “There were voices and thunders and lightnings; and there was a great shaking,” “and the great city was divided into three parts.”

These words foreshadow in prophetic symbol a vast disturbance in our modern civilization, a great convulsion in our social order, and a division, a splitting up into three great sections of Babylon the great before her final overthrow. We may imagine that this disruption may be either political or social or ecclesiastical, and when we read that at the same time the cities of the nations shall fall, we may conclude that the trouble throughout the kingdom of the beast (the diffused Roman Empire, the western nations) shall be something terrible. It will be the concentrated and consummated misery of the seven golden vials of the wrath of God, which had just before been poured out on the nations. It will be a dissolution of human society and civilization. “The end of all the toil of centuries.” The overturning and the miseries that came on Israel during the seven trumpets’ period (see Rev. viii. 7 to Rev. xi. 15, see notes there) of the old world and Jewish age, foreshadow the woes that are to come on the Gentile period, with the pouring out of the seven last vials of the wrath of God on the kingdom of the beast, the diffused Roman Empire.

In each case, whether Jewish or Gentile, the miseries bring with them
the dissolution of the age, and a judgment-day. See Rev. xi. 18 and xx. 11, 15.

In the 17th chapter we have given us a clue to the manner in which the final judgment shall come on Babylon. It will come not from any visible putting forth of Divine power against her. Her destruction will come as the destruction of ancient Babylon came from her waters. But in the Apocalyptic vision we are told that the waters are peoples (see ch. xvii. 1—15).

The destruction of Babylon is to come upon her from her own peoples. Thus it is that our boasted civilization is ultimately to destroy itself. It is to come from the people who are the subjects of it. They will rise against Babylon and her abominations, not in any righteous indignation, but as a democratic power rising against the abuses of the spirit of the age. A war perhaps of numbers against wealth. The western nations, who now represent the diffused Roman Empire, the beast of Rev. xiii. 1, 2 "who was, and is not, and yet is" (ch. xvii. 8, see notes there), will have become withered up and enfeebled by the plagues of the seven last angels (Rev. xvi. 1—21). Paralysed by the visitations that have come upon them, and dreading the threatened incursion of the eastern nations (ch. xvi. 12), the western nations will ultimately resolve themselves into a confederacy of nations, and then shall arise again a semblance of the great Roman Empire, "the beast that was and is not" (ch. xvii. 11) under one head. The other kinglets for mutual protection shall give their power and strength to him. Under his power it is that Babylon shall be destroyed, not with any righteous intent, for this federation of kings and peoples shall be at war with Christ the Lord (ch. xvii. 14). It shall be by the waters on which the whore sitteth that she shall be destroyed (ch. xvii. 1, 15). By the "peoples and multitudes, and nations, and tongues," by the democracy, who, under one democratic head, a revival of the Roman Empire, "shall hate the whore, and shall make her desolate and naked, and shall eat her flesh and shall burn her with fire," ch. xvii. 16.

"For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil His will, and to agree and give their kingdom unto the beast until the words of God shall be fulfilled," ch. xvii. 17.

In other words, by God's decree (ch. xvii. 17), without miraculous interference, our present civilization with all its glory and all its wickedness shall be swept away at last before a democratic federation of states who have been the subjects of it.

The times of the Gentiles, so far as the kingdom of the beast is concerned, will end in mutual conflicts and slaughter. It is with the man of the world just as it is with the man of God. He occupies too small an arc in the vast ellipse of the Divine purpose to calculate the events which are yet in the future. It is only in the record of the Apocalypse that these things are written, and even then they are written in hieroglyphic characters which require deciphering. The soul that can decipher the hieroglyphics may see how exactly they correspond with the individual experience and conscience as to whither we are tending. Babylon and her people are hastening on to ruin, and not to victory. The ultimate victory lies with the Church of the
Firstborn on the mount Zion—the Body and Bride of Christ. She comes out victorious to the millennial reign and the marriage supper and the new Heaven and the new Earth when Babylon lies desolate and in ruins.

The ultimate ruin of Babylon is divinely ordained; "God hath put it in their hearts to fulfil His will," Rev. xvii. 17.

The manner of her destruction is also divinely ordained. It is to be brought about by her own people (the waters, which are peoples), a democracy which under the rule of a kingly head (Rev. xvii. 10—12) shall be at war both with Christ the Lord and with Babylon (Rev. xvii. 14—16 notes).

This eighth king of Rev. xvii. 11 is himself the representative head of the diffused Roman Empire, the beast of Rev. xiii. 1, 2 that was, and is not, and yet is, see ch. xvii. 11, "The beast—even he is the eighth," under him the ten under-kings of xvii. 12 shall rule. "These have one mind, and give their power and strength unto the beast," ch. xvii. 13.

From this it appears that the Babylon of the Apocalypse is to be ultimately destroyed by an uprising of her own people, a refusal any longer to submit to the powers that be—an uprising of democracy against the established order of things. Democracy instinctively submits itself to any one who can understand and enter into the spirit of the age and who can give the word of command with power. Such an one was Napoleon, such also probably was Muhammad. These things [have their prescription] in hieroglyphic characters in the Apocalypse, but what their full meaning shall be when translated into human history we know not, and the time we know not. The subversion of modern society and civilization as represented by Babylon is to be preceded by a series of judgments represented by the last seven plagues of Rev. xvi.

No interpretation is given us of the mystical terms under which these plagues are shadowed forth in the prophetic vision. We do not know whether we have yet entered upon these plagues or whether they still lie in the future, but we may be quite sure that such visitations cannot find their solution in human history without transforming the whole constitution of society.

These plagues will probably come to pass in what seems to man the natural course of events, without any of the supernatural portents with which they are associated in the Apocalyptic vision, and men will fight against them with all the forces of science and civilization. Men will do all that they can to escape the impending ruin.

Before the final dissolution of society we may be quite sure from the Apocalyptic description of the plagues that the European nations will be reduced to fearful straits under the visitations foretold,—that in their decrepitude they will be threatened by incursions from the Eastern nations (the kings of the East, Rev. xvi. 12), and that in their weakness and fear they will organize a confederacy for mutual protection under one sovereign head—the eighth king—of Rev. xvii. 11—13, under whose democratic rule open war will be declared against Christ the Lord and His kingdom (Rev. xvii. 14), and under whom also [that effeté civilization, spoken of as Babylon in the Apocalypse, will be destroyed (Rev. xvii. 16, 17).}

After these things, as recorded in Rev. xix., the Lord Jesus will come forth
in glory and power as King of Kings and Lord of Lords (Rev. xix. 16), in anticipation of the millennial reign; and then will come the Judgment-day of this present dispensation, Rev. xx. 1—15. It is, however, with Babylon and her fate, that we are now concerned, and with the events that are even now leading up to that consummation—the plagues that are to come upon the European nations; and the federation of nations under a democratic king under whose rule Babylon shall be destroyed. Although we cannot with certainty decipher the hieroglyphic characters in which the prophecy of the last seven plagues is occultly contained, nor the form which those plagues may take when translated into the facts of history, yet we can, to some extent, forecast the future by the present. The germs of the future are contained in the present, and if we observe the signs of the times, and compare them with the hieroglyphic figure of the Apocalypse, we may spell out, though dimly, something of the course which history is to take in bringing about the subversion of pseudo-civilization and the great events that are to attend it.

The discoveries of science, in regard to explosive forces, and the application of these discoveries to warlike purposes, and the destruction of human life, will probably prove one means by which our present social system will be brought to dissolution. With the improved methods of slaughter, the game of war between the European nations will be carried on until it is played out. Electricity and dynamic chemistry have probably only as yet given us a hint of the secret forces that may in the future be utilised. It is not improbable that at some not distant date a single individual may have it in his power to destroy a whole city, as it is already in the power of anyone to destroy a whole ship-load of lives. In these things man will reap the harvest of ruin he has himself sown, and the evil results will manifest themselves, not in the form of divine visitations, or in any such forms as they are set forth in the Apocalypse, but as consequences arising in the nature of things from men's own acts. The emulation among the nations to outdo one another in inventing diabolical instruments of destruction will itself produce greater and greater disasters and prepare the way for final ruin. Coincidentally with the decadence of the European nations, the Eastern nations (the kings of the East, Rev. xvi. 12) will threaten the Western nations in their weakness; and under pressure of some such danger as this it may be that the nations will be driven by fear of destruction to form a confederacy under one king for mutual protection, the eighth of Rev. xvii. 11—13. The eighth king of Rev. xvii. 11 is the representative of the diffused Roman Empire, i.e. the beast of Rev. xiii. 1—12, "that was, and is not, and yet is." It is in some sort again restored in the person of this eighth king—"The beast—he is the eighth," c. xvii. 11. This federation will be of a democratic character. The waters on which Babylon sits are peoples, and her waters will be her destruction, just as with the Chaldean city of old, her destruction came by means of her waters. We may here also find the germs of the future in the present, we may discern in the democratic spirit of the present age the promise of that future democracy under which Babylon is to be ultimately destroyed, Rev. xvii. 15, 16 notes.

The wretchedness of the very poor, especially in the large cities of Europe, and the increase of population which is ever serving to increase that wretch-
APPENDICES.

edness, is a serious danger to the state. The increase of wealth during the last twenty years has probably been relatively greater than the increase of population, but the increased wealth has not lightened the miseries of the very poor, whilst it has served to widen the distinction between the poor and the rich, and to aggravate the bitterness of the conflict between numbers and wealth which even now threatens the existence of society as it is. And there is not only a democracy of misery, there is also a "doctrinaire" democracy, a school whose theories are subversive of the existent laws of property. There is also the democracy of the savage and lawless life which would seize whatever it could lay hold of and destroy what it could not appropriate to itself. These are some of the dangers of democracy which we see threatening us in the present day; and when we see how the discoveries of science (alluded to above) place in the hands of lawless men instruments of destruction such as no previous age has known, and such as may be made indefinitely more destructive in the future, we can have no difficulty in imagining the great part that democracy shall ultimately play in bringing about the destruction of Babylon as foretold in the Apocalypse—in other words the destruction of [what is moribund in] our present civilization.

But there is also quite another aspect of the question which both the analogy of history and prophecy presents for consideration, whilst "the waters," which are peoples, are to play a great part in the final destruction of Babylon. The analogy of history suggests, from the destruction of the Chaldean city on Euphrates, that though the destruction of Babylon shall ultimately come by means of her waters, it may come not from any popular uprising, but from the drying up of her waters, which are peoples. And such an idea is quite consistent with the text of the Apocalypse. We may well imagine how the seven last plagues described in the xvith chapter of the vision as preceding the destruction of Babylon shall reduce the nations of Europe to a state of decrepitude, and how, instead of a vast increase of population in future, war, and pestilence, and famine, shall so destroy the people, that there shall not be sufficient labour to cultivate the earth or work her industries. Such an event has already at any rate once happened in the history of the European nations, when death has so reduced the numbers of the people that the workers have become for the time masters of the situation (witness the time of the Black Death).

So also it may be again, and so it may happen that in a manner quite other than that suggested above, the democracy may have power to work its will on Babylon not by their numbers, but by their fewness. In any case the final dissolution of Babylon, as prophetically described in the 15th and 16th verses of the xvith chapter of the Apocalypse, will be brought about in some way by means of her waters, which are peoples; and under the direction of the eighth king of ch. xvii. 11, who in his person will restore, in some sort, the ancient Roman Empire. Babylon is doubly doomed; not only is she doomed by the Divine fiat, but she is doomed also by the nature of her existence. Her existence is organized ruin, and as is her nature, such must be her doom. All things ultimately go to their own place, whether it be in the nature of things or by the Divine decree.

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<td>repealed</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>659</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>omit the word net</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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