

15 Reasons to Take Genesis as History



The book of Genesis is one of the most attacked books in the Bible. Is it important to accept it as true history? The book of Genesis is the first of 5 books written and compiled by Moses and Jesus said if we don't believe what Moses wrote, we cannot believe His words either.

John 5:46 For had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me: for he wrote of me.

47 But if ye believe not his writings, how shall ye believe my words?

Famous Preacher and American Politician, Chuck Baldwin, changes his position on the 70th Week of Daniel and the State of Israel



Charles Obadiah "Chuck" Baldwin (born May 3, 1952) is an American politician, radio host, and founder-former pastor of Crossroad Baptist Church in

Pensacola, Florida. As of July 2014 he was pastor of Liberty Fellowship in Kalispell, Montana. He was the presidential nominee of the Constitution Party for the 2008 U.S. presidential election and had previously been its nominee for U.S. vice president in 2004. He hosts a daily one-hour radio program, Chuck Baldwin Live, and writes a daily editorial column carried on its website, on News with Views, and on VDare. (Quoted from https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chuck_Baldwin)



Chuck Baldwin

This is very good news for those who know the true interpretation of Daniel 9:27! The Protestant Evangelical world totally missed it! The Jesuit based false doctrine of a time gap between the first 69 Weeks of Daniel and the final Week has led to a slew of false doctrines such as pre-tribulation rapture, a final 7 years of a reign of the Antichrist, and the acceptance of the founding of the State of Israel as fulfillment of Bible prophecy. The Protestant evangelical world has been misled on those points and more. Please join me in helping to educate them!

The following is from Chuck Baldwin's Facebook post of October 12, 2015:

A Facebook post is not the place to go into an in-depth theological discussion about prophecy. However, I have always been transparently honest with my viewers, listeners, readers, followers, and supporters, and so I need to let folks know how my position has changed—and continues to change—on the subject of Eschatology.

I am not a novice on the subject. I have been in the Gospel ministry for over 40 years. And, until recently, my interpretation of Bible prophecy had been exclusively along the lines of dispensationalism and pre-tribulation rapturism. Until recently, I held the same Zionist positions as men such as John Hagee, Pat Robertson, and most preachers commonly associated with the "Religious Right." But no longer.

It's not easy to admit that something I had believed for a lifetime is not Biblically correct. It would have been easy to turn a blind eye to the illuminations that were appearing before my heart and mind, and search no further. Doing so would have saved me much additional study—not to mention a healthy dose of humble pie.

But study, I did. And pray, I did. And swallow my traditional thinking and personal pride, I did. As a result:

1) I no longer believe that Daniel's Seventy Weeks prophecy had any gap of time. I believe Daniel's Seventy Weeks (or 490 years) ran concurrently and were completely fulfilled by the death and resurrection of Christ, by the conversions of Saul of Tarsus and the Gentile Cornelius, and ultimately by the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus in 70 AD.

I am convinced there is no “gap theory” in Daniel 9 anymore than there is a “gap theory” in Genesis 1.

2) I no longer believe Ezekiel’s prophecy of Gog and Magog has anything to do with modern Russia. I believe both Ezekiel and Daniel’s prophecies in this regard were fulfilled by the invasion of Jerusalem and Judea by Antiochus Epiphanes.

3) I no longer believe Matthew 24 deals primarily with Christ’s Second Coming but has more to do with the coming destruction of Jerusalem in 70 AD.

4) I no longer believe that the modern State of Israel has any connection to Biblical Israel—past or future. And, no, I do not believe in “Replacement Theology,” at least not as most people talk about it.

Accordingly, I do not believe the people of the United States have any Biblical reason to support the modern State of Israel militarily, economically, or in any other way. Our relationship with foreign nations (including Israel) should only be for the benefit of the liberty and safety of the United States. Which leads to:

The United States, Israel, and Saudi Arabia created ISIS and have used the Sunni Muslim terror group to fight a proxy war against Syria’s King Assad. This is a despicable and illegal war that can only be regarded as international criminality. Putin is wearing the white hat on this one. And the western globalists who are calling the shots in Washington, D.C. for these illegal wars should be identified, rounded up, and hung for crimes against humanity and for international crimes of aggression.

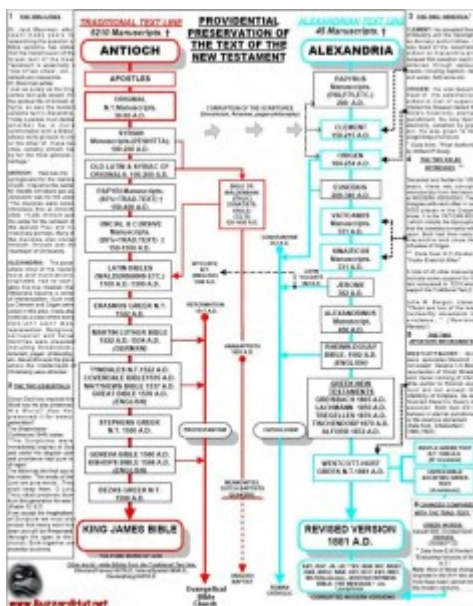
I know my positions stated above will not be popular with many of my Christian friends. But, at least, give me the benefit of the doubt that, being as seasoned and tenured as I am, I would not come to such diametrically opposite conclusions suddenly or without much heartfelt prayer and study.

[The first Hebrew word in Genesis 1:1 preaches the Gospel!](#)



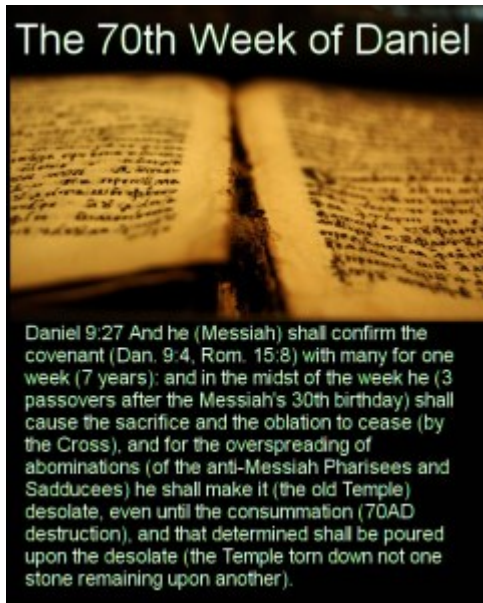
Please watch this highly interesting video clip from a Christian scholar of Hebrew. It gives all the more glory to God that the Holy Scriptures word for word in the Bible are indeed divinely inspired. No man could have made it up!

Traditional Text Line of the Bible Compared to the Alexandrian Text Line



Popular modern English Bible translations such as ASV, RSV, NIV, ESV are based on corrupt manuscripts from the Roman Catholic Church!

Summary of revised interpretations of some prophetic Scripture



In December 2014, I learned the interpretation of Daniel 9:27 which is held by mainstream Protestant seminaries today was cooked up in 1585 by a Jesuit priest named Francesco Ribera! He was commissioned by the Pope to invent theology that would get the Protestants to stop looking at the papacy, the Pope, as Antichrist. Today most Christians think of Antichrist only as the ruler of the world for 7 years just before the return of Jesus Christ. This is exactly *how* the Vatican wants Protestants to think! I myself held that interpretation for 40 years. Now I see it is based on a school of interpretation known as *futurism* which Jesuit Ribera fabricated in order to deceive Protestants as to who the Antichrist is.

Are you willing to follow wherever the evidence leads and change your views on certain beliefs when you find out the Bible teaches otherwise? I was and still am. I don't claim to be smarter than others. The interpretations of prophecies on this page are in agreement with how the Protestants and Bible scholars through the ages *used* to see them. It was only from sometime in the 19th century when false Jesuit doctrines took root in Protestant theological circles.

I like to do to others as I would want them to do unto me. I don't like long-winded complicated explanations of Holy Scripture. I believe God's Word explains itself. Therefore the most solid interpretation one can get is from Scripture interpreting Scripture! I am trying to be as concise as possible.

The Seventieth Week of Daniel

Daniel 9:27 And he shall confirm the covenant with many for one week: and in the midst of the week he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease, and for the overspreading of abominations he shall make it desolate, even until the consummation, and that determined shall be poured upon the

desolate.

- The “he” of Daniel 9:27 in all three times is the “Messiah the Prince” of verse 25 and the “Messiah” of verse 26. “He” is **Jesus** Christ, *not* the Antichrist.

“Daniel 9:25 Know therefore and understand, that from the going forth of the commandment to restore and to build Jerusalem unto the **Messiah the Prince**...

26 And after threescore and two weeks shall **Messiah** be cut off...

- The “covenant” is the same covenant of Daniel’s prayer in verse 4.

Daniel 9:4 ¶And I prayed unto the LORD my God, and made my confession, and said, O Lord, the great and dreadful God, keeping **the covenant** ...

It’s the covenant God made with Abraham:

Genesis 15:18 In the same day the LORD made a **covenant** with Abram,..

- Christ confirmed the covenant!

Galatians 3:17 And this I say, that **the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ,**

- “One week” was the 7 years of Christ and His Apostles’ ministry to the Jews. Jesus was crucified 3 and a half years after He began to preach the Kingdom of God, and the first martyr, Stephen, was killed 3 and a half years later.
- The “with many” is referring to the people of Israel, Jesus and His disciples ministry to the Jews.

Matthew 15:24 But he answered and said, I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel.

- The “in the midst of the week” is when Jesus was crucified approximately 3.5 years from the start of His ministry.
- The “he shall cause the sacrifice and the oblation to cease” means there is now no more need for daily animal sacrifices now that the Lamb of God was offered as the ultimate sacrifice for sins.

Hebrews 7:27 Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this **he did once**, when he offered up himself.

- The “overspreading of abominations” is the abomination of desolation Jesus talked about:

Matthew 24:15 When ye therefore shall see the abomination of desolation, spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place,

Which is further defined in Luke 21:20 as the Roman armies that desolated Jerusalem and the Temple of Solomon:

Luke 21:20 ¶And when ye shall see **Jerusalem compassed with armies**, then know that **the desolation thereof** is nigh.

I hope to add more to this post of other Scriptures later. If you disagree with any points on this article, I'm open to discuss it. And if you have any points to add or suggestions on to improve this article, they are most welcome.

[History Unveiling Prophecy by H. Grattan Guinness](#)



Henry Grattan Guinness D. D. (11 August 1835 – 21 June 1910) was an Irish Protestant Christian preacher, evangelist and author. He was the great evangelist of the Evangelical awakening and preached during the Ulster Revival of 1859 which drew thousands to hear him. He was responsible for training and sending hundreds of “faith missionaries” all over the world. (Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Henry_Grattan_Guinness)

The alternate title for this book is

Time as an Interpreter.

My good friend Dr. John Gideon Hartnett sent me the link to this book in PDF format on <http://historicism.com/> PDF files are not nearly as easy for me to read as HTML.

H. Grattan Guinness He is also the author of [Romanism and the Reformation](#) which is also posted on this site.

The text is slightly edited. I just couldn't take the time to make all the tables and add all the footnotes. I'm only interested in the message. Yes I know good documentation should have references. You can [download and read for yourself the PDF file](#) I got the text from.

This book is continued in [Section X The Present Stage](#)

PREFACE

THE lofty decree of Papal Infallibility issued by the Vatican Council of 1870, immediately followed by the sudden and final fall of the Papal Temporal Power, after a duration of more than a thousand years, was the primary occasion of my writing that series of works on the fulfilment of Scripture prophecy which has appeared during the last quarter of a century.

We are wearied with vain speculations as to the meaning of prophecy which have no other foundation than the assertions of men. We are wearied with speculations as to imaginary future fulfilments of prophecies which have been plainly accomplished before our eyes in the past; prophecies on whose accomplishment in the events of Christian history the structure of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century was built; on the fact of whose accomplishment in their days the confessors stood, and the martyrs suffered. Alas! the speculations of men have clouded these facts and brought into disrepute the Holy Word of God.

I left Paris, where I had been labouring in the Gospel, at the outbreak of the Franco-German war in July, 1870. It was in the light of the German bombardment of that city, of the ring of fire which surrounded it, and of the burning of the Tuileries, that I began to read with interest and understanding the prophecies of Daniel and the Apocalypse. Subsequent visits to Italy and Rome enlarged my view of the subject. A library of books bearing on it was accumulated, historical, astronomical, and prophetic, including 150 commentaries on the Apocalypse, ancient and modern, from the commentary of Victorinus in the third century., down to those of Elliott and others in the nineteenth. These studies laid the foundation of my works on prophecy.

The present work, which differs in important respects from my previous works, as being chiefly historical in character, may be fitly introduced by a brief explanation of the method of interpretation which it follows.

A great and incontrovertible principle underlies the method it pursues in the interpretation of the Apocalypse. Simply stated that principle is that :

GOD IS HIS OWN INTERPRETER

In two ways does the great Revealer of the prophecy explain its meaning – by words, and deeds ; by written word, and acted deeds. He has given us a verbal explanation of its most central and important vision, one which stands in close and commanding connection with all its other visions and in the long course of Christian history he has fulfilled its predictions.

Thus Scripture is the key to Scripture; and Providence to Prophecy.

The historic interpretation of the Apocalypse which rests on this twofold foundation has been slowly developed under the influence of the divine action in Providence; it has changed in details with the changing currents of Providence; it has grown with the growth of the knowledge of the plans of Providence; it has been confirmed and sealed by the whole course of Providence. It is no vain, or puerile, or presumptuous speculation. It is a

reverent submission to the very words of God, and a reverent recognition of His acts. God has spoken; He has given an explanation of the central and commanding vision of that prophecy; and God has acted; He has fulfilled its predictions. In pointing to the words and deeds of God we act as His witnesses. What hath God said? What hath He done? These are the questions. We are wearied with vain speculations as to the meaning of prophecy which have no other foundation than the assertions of men. We are wearied with speculations as to imaginary future fulfilments of prophecies which have been plainly accomplished before our eyes in the past; prophecies on whose accomplishment in the events of Christian history the structure of the great Reformation of the sixteenth century was built; on the fact of whose accomplishment in their days the confessors stood, and the martyrs suffered. Alas! the speculations of men have clouded these facts and brought into disrepute the Holy Word of God. Even good men have been led to neglect the voice of divine prophecy, and to refuse its lamp to light their steps, through the follies of its exponents. Is it not time that the last prophetic book in the Word of God, a book bearing the seal of the signature of the name of "JESUS" should be lifted up from dust of neglect, and set upon a candlestick in the midst of the house, to shed its clear light and cheering beams on all around? Let the reverent believer who "trembles" at God's word, the patient student who has searched the records of the past, the uncompromising witness who fears not the faces of men, lift up that fallen lamp from the soil on which men have cast it, and place it where Copernicus placed the sun, as a kingly light enthroned in the centre of its system.

In agreement with the foregoing principle I have written, among others, two works, on the interpretation of the symbolical prophecies in Daniel and the Apocalypse by means (1) of divinely given explanations of their meaning contained in the books themselves, and (2) by the events of history. The first of these works, published in 1899, is entitled "A Key to the Apocalypse, or the seven divinely given Interpretations of symbolic prophecy." The second is the present work.

In the first of these I have shown that as God has graciously given us His own all-wise and infallible explanations of the meaning of certain leading and determinative portions of the symbolical prophecies in the book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, no interpretation of these prophecies can be secure and trustworthy which does not rest on these divine explanations, and employ them as keys to unlock the meaning of the prophecies as a whole.

The seven divinely given interpretations of Daniel and the Apocalypse are the following :

- I. The interpretation of the vision of the great image in Daniel 2.
- II. The interpretation of the vision of the great tree in Daniel 4.
- III. The interpretation of the handwriting on the wall of Belshazzar's Palace in Daniel 5.
- IV. The interpretation of the ram and he-goat in Daniel 8. V. The interpretation of the four wild beast kingdoms, and of the kingdom of the Son

of Man, in Daniel 7.

VI. The interpretation of the seven stars, and seven candlesticks in Revelation 1.

VII. The interpretation of the woman " Babylon the great," and of the seven-headed, ten-horned beast that carries her, in Revelation 17.

Concerning the last of these interpretations I have shown that "of all the visions in the prophetic part of the Apocalypse (chaps. vi-xxii), that of Babylon and the beast in chap. xvii, is the only one divinely interpreted;" and that through the interpretation of this vision a door is opened to the understanding of the rest of the prophecy.

(1) The woman is interpreted as signifying the city of Rome.

(2) The city is represented as sitting on "seven hills," the well known seven hills of Rome.

(3) The "many waters" over which she rules are interpreted as "peoples, and multitudes, and nations and tongues."

(4) The wild beast which sustains and carries her the ten horned wild beast of Daniel's prophecies, the fourth of his four Gentile kingdoms, the kingdom of Rome-is interpreted in detail.

(a) Its seven heads are interpreted to represent ruling powers. Of these it is expressly stated "five are fallen, and one is, and the other is not yet come.- Thus the sixth head of the wild beast power which carried the harlot is stated to have been in existence when the Apocalypse was written ; and must necessarily therefore refer to the government of the Cesars, as then represented by the Emperor Domitian. This locates the visions of the Apocalypse as relating to Roman and Christian history.

(b) The ten horns are interpreted as ten kingdoms, then future, into which the empire should be divided. These horns, or kingdoms first submit to the harlot city, and then rise against her and " make her desolate and naked, and eat her flesh, and burn her with fire."

As to the use of this central interpreted vision to explain the other visions of the Apocalypse I have pointed out that there are three visions in the Apocalypse of the ten horned wild beast power.

The first in chapter 12.

The second in chapter 13.

The third in chapter 17.

(1) That the interpretation of one of these in chapter 17, determines the meaning of all three.

(2) That these three visions of the wild beast power represent successive stages in the history of the Roman Empire, as first under the government of its seven heads; secondly under the government of its ten horns, for in the

prophecy the crowns are transferred from the heads to the horns; and thirdly as carrying, and then casting off and destroying, the harlot Babylon.

(3) That the story of Babylon and the Beast occupies the largest and most central part of the Apocalyptic prophecy, being referred to in no less than ten successive chapters: Chapters 11. 12 13 14 15) 16, 17j 18, 19) 20.

(4) That to the visions relating to the Roman Empire under its revived eighth head prophetic times are attached representing

1. The period of the sun-clothed woman in the wilderness (chap. xii).
2. The period of the rule of the eighth head of the wild beast (chap. xiii).
3. The period during which the outer temple court is trodden under foot by the Gentiles (chap. xi).
4. The period during which the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth (chap. xi).

These four periods are manifestly the same period stated in three forms, as days, months, and "times," or years 1,260 days; forty-two months, and three and one-half "times," or years: and are to be interpreted on the year-day scale; a scale recognized in both the law and the prophets; the scale on which the "seventy weeks" to Messiah are universally interpreted; a scale justified by the course and chronology of Christian history, and confirmed by the discoveries of astronomy as to the cyclical character of the prophetic times.

The interpretation of the Apocalypse thus reached is in harmony with that of the book of Daniel, and links both prophecies with one and the same series of events—the course of five kingdoms, the temporal kingdoms of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome, and the eternal kingdom of God. The Apocalypse is simply the story told in advance of the two last kingdoms of Daniel's prophecy; the story of the decline and fall of the Roman Empire, and of the rise and establishment of the kingdom of God.

From the interpretation of the Apocalypse by means of the divinely given explanation of its most central and commanding vision, we now advance to the subject of the present volume, the interpretation of the prophecy by the events of history.

History has ever been the interpreter of prophecy. It was so notably in New Testament times, for the sufferings and glories of our Lord, foretold in the Old Testament, remained uncomprehended until their meaning was revealed by the events of history. Similarly the predictions concerning the great apostasy, or "falling away" from the faith and practice of Apostolic times which has taken place in the Christian Church, were not comprehended till explained by historical events. And thus has it been all along. From the beginning of the world to the present day Time has ever been the chief interpreter of prophecy. For prophecy is history written in advance. As the ages roll by history practically takes the place of prophecy, the foretold becoming the fulfilled.

A clear and comprehensive view of the leading events of Christian history up to the date of the Reformation is afforded by Gibbon's noble work on "The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire." This standard work embraces in a single view the history of the Roman Empire and Christian Church for fourteen centuries, from the time of the Antonines to the fall of the Eastern Roman Empire at the capture of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453. It is enhanced by its extensive learning, its philosophic spirit, the lucidity of its arrangement, and the majesty of its style. The value of Gibbon's work as an unintended key to the Apocalypse is exhibited by the well-known commentator Albert Barnes in the following interesting account of his own experience:

"Up to the time of commencing the exposition of this book (the Apocalypse) I had no theory in my mind as to its meaning. I may add, that I had a prevailing belief that it could not be explained, and that all attempts to explain it must be visionary and futile. With the exception of the work of the Rev. George Croly, which I read more than twenty years ago, and which I had never desired to read again, I had perused no commentary on this book until that of Professor Stuart was published, in 1845. In my regular reading of the Bible in family and in private, I had perused the book often. I read it, as I suppose most others do, from a sense of duty, yet admiring the beauty of its imagery, the sublimity of its descriptions, and its high poetic character; and though to me wholly unintelligible in the main, finding so many striking detached passages that were intelligible and practical in their nature, as to make it on the whole attractive and profitable, but with no definitely formed idea as to its meaning as a whole, and with a vague general feeling that all the interpretations which had been proposed were wild, fanciful and visionary.

"In this state of things, the utmost that I contemplated when I began to write on it was, to explain, as well as I could, the meaning of the language and the symbols, without 'attempting to apply the explanation to the events of past history, or to inquire what is to occur hereafter. I supposed that I might venture to do this without encountering the danger of adding another vain attempt to explain a book so full of mysteries, or of propounding a theory of interpretation to be set aside, perhaps, by the next person that should prepare a commentary on the book.

"Beginning with this aim, I found myself soon insensibly inquiring whether, in the events which succeeded the time when the 'book was written, there were not historical facts of which the emblems employed would be natural and proper symbols, on the supposition that it was the divine intention in disclosing these visions to refer to them, and whether, therefore, there might not be a natural and proper application of the symbols to these events. In this way I examined the language used in reference to the first, second, third, fourth, fifth and sixth seals, with no anticipation or plan in examining one as to what would be disclosed under the next seal; and in this way also I examined ultimately the whole book: proceeding step by step in ascertaining the meaning of each word and symbol as it occurred, but with no theoretic anticipation as to what was to follow.

To my own surprise, I found, chiefly in Gibbon's 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire,' a series of events recorded such as seemed to me to correspond

to a great extent with the series of symbols found in the Apocalypse. The symbols were such as it might be supposed would he used, on the supposition that they were intended to refer to these events; and the language of Mr. Gibbon was often such as he would have used, on the supposition that he had designed to prepare a commentary on the symbols employed by John. It was such, in fact, that if it had been found in a Christian writer, professedly writing a commentary on the book of Revelation, it would have been regarded by infidels as a designed attempt to force history to utter a language that should conform to a predetermined theory in expounding a book full of symbols. So remarkable have these coincidences appeared to me in the course of this exposition, that it has almost seemed as if he had designed to write a commentary on some portion of this book; and I found it difficult to doubt that that distinguished historian was raised up by an overruling Providence to make a record of those events which would ever afterwards be regarded as an impartial and unprejudiced statement or the evidences of the fulfilment of prophecy. The historian of the 'Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire' had no belief in the divine origin of Christianity, but he brought to the performance of his work learning and talent such as few Christian scholars have possessed. He is always patient in his investigations; learned and scholar-like in his references; comprehensive in his groupings, and sufficiently minute in his details; unbiased in his statement of facts, and usually cool and candid in his estimates of the causes of the events which he records; and, excepting his philosophical speculations, and his sneers at everything, he has probably written the most candid and impartial history of the times that succeeded the introduction of Christianity that the world possesses; and even after all that has been written since his time, his work contains the best ecclesiastical history that is to be found. Whatever use of it can be made in explaining and confirming the prophecies will be regarded by the world as impartial and fair; for it was a result which he least of all contemplated, that he would ever be regarded as an expounder of the prophecies in the Bible, or be referred to as vindicating their truth.

"It was in this manner that these Notes on the Book of Revelation assumed the form in which they are now given to the world; and it surprises me-and, under this view of the matter, may occasion some surprise to my readers-to find how nearly the views coincide with those taken by the great body of Protestant interpreters. And perhaps this fact may be regarded as furnishing some evidence that after all the obscurity attending it, there is a natural and obvious interpretation of which the book is susceptible " (Barnes on the Revelation, preface, pp. xi-xiii).

The present volume traces the history of that interpretation, describes its progressive development under the modifying influence of the events of the last nineteen centuries from stage to stage, from its germinant form in the pre-Constantine centuries, through Medieval and Reformation times, down to the present day.

As written later than Elliott's great work on the *Horae Apocalypticae*, whose five editions appeared in the years 1844-1862, the present work takes into account the long expected fall of the papal temporal power in 1870, immediately following the decree of papal infallibility; and the present

deeply interesting Zionist movement dating from 1897, for the national restoration of the Jews to the land of their fathers.

An important confirmation of the historical interpretation of the Apocalypse afforded by the discovery of the astronomical features of the prophetic times, is briefly set forth at the close of the volume. The extensive astronomical tables published by the author in 1896 are based on the remarkable fact that the prophetic times of Daniel and the Apocalypse are extremely perfect astronomical cycles harmonizing solar and lunar revolutions. The year-day theory resting on Scripture analogy and historic strongly confirmed by the discovery, and the fulfilment is 1,260, 1,290, 1,335, and 2,300 "days" of Daniel and the Apocalypse proved to represent the same number of years in Jewish and Christian history.

It is a deep satisfaction to the author to remember that whatever may be the views of a modern section of sceptical or speculative interpreters of the Apocalypse, who either see no reference to definite historical events in the prophecy, or relegate its fulfilment to future times, in accepting and advocating its historical interpretation, in regarding it as the story told in advance in symbolic language of the events of the Christian centuries, he is treading in the steps of the greater part of Apocalyptic interpreters from the earliest times, of Justin Martyr; Irenaeus ' Tertullian, Hippolytus, Victorinus, Methodius, Lactantius, Eusebius, Athanasius, Jerome, and Augustine among the Fathers; of Bede and Anspert, Andreas and Anselm, Joachim Abbas and Almeric of the middle ages, of the Albigenses and Waldenses, of Wickliffe and the Lollards, of John Huss and Jerome of Prague of pre-Reformation times ; of the Reformers, English, Scottish, and Continental; of the noble army of Confessors and Martyrs who suffered under Pagan and Papal Rome; of the Puritan theologians, of the Pilgrim Fathers of New England, of Mede and More, and Sir Isaac Newton, and Jonathan Edwards that greatest of American theologians, of Bengel the learned German exegete, of Alford and Wordsworth, of Birks and Bickersteth, of Faber and Elliott in England, and a host of others, men distinguished for their ability, their assiduity, their spirituality, their deep study of the prophetic world, in short by what appear to be the greatest and best of the expositors of the book. Modern historical interpreters of' the Apocalypse are in good company; they stand with the Fathers, the Confessors, the Martyrs, the Reformers, with men who suffered for the truth they believed, and were practically guided and inspired by the interpretations they have handed down to posterity. The fanciful interpretations of the Preterists who falsely conceive the Apocalypse to bear a Neronian date, and to be Neronian in its references, have never been a practical power in the history of the Church; the vague interpretations of a modern school, German and English, which ignoring the clearly defined order of the Apocalyptic Visions, their synchronisms and successions, their system of prophetic times, fixed and absolute, and sure as the times of the celestial luminaries, reduce the prophecy to a nebulous mass of anticipations of things in general in human history, have wrought no victories, have accomplished no reformations, have sustained no martyrs, and are self-refuted by their impotence, and unworthiness as expositions of the last great revelation of Jesus Christ concerning " the things" which were to "come to pass." The same may be said as regards the reveries of the Futurists

; barren of practical and worthy effects, they have denied accomplishments recognized by the great mass of prophetic interpreters in the past; they have invented future fulfilments, as unsubstantial and impossible as the dreams of those who they have forsaken the great trend, the main path, the well trodden highway of Apocalyptic interpretation, based upon divine explanations of prophetic symbols, and unquestionable historic facts, for empty speculations about the future unprofitable speculations mistake bizarre imaginations for sober realities as to the coming universal dominion of a short-lived infidel antichrist, to be seated in a literal temple to be erected by the Jews in Palestine, who in the brief space of three and a half years is to fulfil all the wonders of the Apocalyptic drama, and exhaust the meaning of the majestic prophecy which the Church of God has been blindly misinterpreting and misapplying throughout all these ages. Surely it is time for such interpreters to consider the unscripturalness and unreasonableness of the method of interpretation which they employ, the absence of authority, of warrant, for their views, the entire lack of demonstration human or divine; and the fruitlessness of their speculations, as afford rig no present guidance to the Church, and their injuriousness as extinguishing the lamp which God has given His people to guide their steps along the perilous way of their pilgrimage. I am well convinced from wide observation that many excellent persons adopt these modern prophetic speculations because good men have advocated them, here and there and for no better reason; they have heard them advanced in prophetic conferences, they have read them in books. and tracts, full of confident assertions, superficial and dogmatic compositions on the sublimest questions which can exercise the human mind, and they have been satisfied to believe without proof, and to repeat without independent investigation the marvellous inventions of busy brains as to the antichrist of the future, without ever having soberly inquired whether the Reformers and Martyrs were right or not in their recognition of the antichrist as already come, and as long reigning in the professing Church, the Standard Bearer of an abominable apostasy, the very Masterpiece of Satan for the delusion of mankind. Let us appeal to such to open their eyes to the facts of history, to turn their thoughts for awhile to the sublime story of the decline and fall of the Roman empire, of the rise of the great apostasies in the Eastern and Western Church, of the testimony and sufferings of the Christian witnesses of the middle ages, and Reformation days, and of the retributive acts of Providence in our own time, the manifest and awful judgments which have been poured forth on Papal Rome in and since the French Revolution, judgments whose afterwaves are rolling and reverberating still, uttering with no uncertain sound the solemn conclusion that so far from living in days preceding the fulfilment of Apocalyptic prophecy, we are living in the closing days of the accomplishment of the things which it has foretold.

In writing thus, and in making this appeal, I write as one who has long and deeply studied both Prophecy and History, and as one who knows that his days are numbered, and that he must give account before long of his stewardship as a teacher in the Christian church, for in the present year of the publication of this volume I have entered on the fiftieth year of my ministry, a ministry in which I have striven to teach in harmony with the oracles of God," and to declare, as far as in me lies, the whole counsel of God." I have no private ends to accomplish by the publication of this book; it is written in the

interest of truth, as a heritage for my children, a guide to those whom I would not and dare not mislead, a help to young men and women prosecuting their studies in their homes or colleges with a view to future usefulness; and for ministers of the gospel, most of them my younger brethren, to whom I would be of service; and for the sake of any into whose hands it may come, of open heart and unprejudiced mind, desirous of understanding more clearly the meaning of the last predictions in the Word of God. Brethren, beloved in the Lord, in writing thus, it is not I who testify, but the voice of a multitude of Witnesses, mostly gathered now before the throne of God. We shall spend eternity with them; are we prepared to join their songs of triumph, to echo the hallelujahs which break from their lips? Is the testimony of the Word of God to us what it was to them? Is our testimony in the world in harmony with theirs? Can we join the Reformers in their witness, and the Martyrs in their song? They stand on the sea of glass mingled with fire, having the harps of God, proclaiming the accomplishment of God's judgments in the fall of Papal Babylon; shall we stand apart from them, electing to sing some little song of our own out of harmony with the great volume of the voice of God's redeemed? Let it not be! It would be unworthy of us. Compassed about with "so great a Cloud of Witnesses" let us lay aside indifference and ignorance, prejudice, and misconception, and take our place with these in the great arena of conflict, dyed with martyr blood, to maintain "the Testimony of Jesus Christ, looking away from all beside to Him as the Author and Finisher of our faith, whose hand has given us this final prophecy to be our armour in the day of battle, our guide in the perils and perplexities of our pilgrimage, our morning star amid the darkness which precedes the dawn of eternal day. Behold the volume whose seals his hand, his providence, have loosed. Seal it not again. Neglect it not. Doubt no more its meaning. For lo Time, that great Interpreter, has rolled back the veil which once hung upon its mysteries, and is irradiating its pages as with the sunlight of heaven.

IT was towards the close of the first century of Christian history, in the year 95 or 96, that the aged Apostle John, banished by the Roman Emperor Domitian, to the lonely island of Patmos in the Aegean Sea, beheld the Apocalypse. More than sixty visions described in the eventful years had elapsed since the ascension of his blessed Lord. During that long period he had looked back to that sublime and glorious event, as the closing incident in his Master's earthly history, and often had retraced in thought every step of his last walk with the risen Saviour over the Mount of Olives, to the sloping fields above the little village of Bethany with the deep Jordan valley and the blue far-off hills of Moab full in view. On countless occasions he had recalled his Lord's last charge, and parting blessing, and gazed in thought on His ascending form, and on the white robed angels whose words directed the minds of the bereaved disciples from the sorrowing contemplation of their Lord's departure, to the glad anticipation of His return, saying, "This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." But when was it to be that promised return? Was it to take place in the lifetime of the disciple whom Jesus loved? Had not the Master said concerning that disciple when speaking to Peter, "If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? Follow thou Me." Peter had died, following his Lord to the

cross. Was he, John, to escape death? Was he to enjoy translation with the saints who were to be 'I alive and remain " to the Second Advent? Yet he remembered that Jesus had not promised he should not die, but had only said, "If I will that he tarry till I come." What could that mean? The strange mysterious sentence lived and lingered in his thoughts; he ends his gospel narrative with it. Was he to behold before his departure some glorious prefiguration of his Lord's return, like the scene on the Mount of Transfiguration; some vision, unveiling the secrets of the future more fully than they had been foreshadowed by that memorable event? No such revelation had been given, and he was now grown old; a venerable, patriarchal man, gentle and gracious in mien; the last survivor of the apostles. He had shared the promised baptism of Pentecost; had witnessed the marvellous growth of the Christian Church; had seen the fall of Jerusalem; the destruction of its glorious temple, of which now not one stone was left standing upon another; had witnessed the accomplishment of those dreadful judgments on the Jewish nation in anticipation of which his Master's tears had fallen on the Mount of Olives, bedewing the palm branches spread by the multitudes beneath His feet. He had seen too the preliminary fulfilment of the signs of the approach of the Second Advent which his Master had predicted; the earthquakes, famines, pestilences, wars, and persecutions, the appearance of false prophets, and false Christs, of fearful signs and wonders in heaven. The idolatrous ensigns of the desolating Roman power had been planted within the precincts of the Holy City. The triumphal arch of Titus had been reared in Rome, the mighty metropolis of the world, to commemorate Jerusalem's fall; that arch on which were represented in striking sculpture the sacred vessels of the sanctuary carried in triumph by heathen hands; the seven branched golden candlestick, the table of the shew bread, and the book of the law. Jerusalem was no more. The Jewish Dispensation founded ages before by those supernatural revelations granted to Moses and Israel on Mount Sinai had come to an end. The kingdom of heaven had taken its place, growing up silently as a grain of mustard seed, from small and despised beginnings to far reaching development. From the upper chamber of Jerusalem it had spread through Judea, Samaria, Galilee, and across the Roman Empire, in which there was scarce a city of importance which had not a Christian Church. It had reached Antioch and Alexandria, Crete and Corinth, Philippi and Thessalonica, Ephesus and Smyrna, Pergamos and Thyatira, Athens and Rome; it had spread throughout Asia Minor, Greece, Italy, Egypt, and even as far as the western confines of Spain, and the distant isles of Britain; and this in spite of the most violent opposition and persecution from Jews and Gentiles. The gospel had penetrated even to Caesar's household, and won the hearts of some of his nearest kindred. The aged Clement presided over the Christian Church in the city of Rome, undeterred by threats of imprisonment and martyrdom; while another Clement of high born position had just witnessed for Christ even unto blood, whose wife Domitilla had been banished to the desolate island of Pandateria, where she was suffering the same punishment for the Christian faith as John himself was enduring in Patmos.

And with the lapse of time changes for the worse had taken place in many Christian Churches, gross corruptions of the pure doctrines of the gospel had appeared. Self-righteous legalism and Judaic ritualism on the one hand, and false philosophy, the boasted wisdom, of the Gnostics on the other, had

perverted the minds of many, corrupting them from the simplicity which is in Christ. Sects had arisen in the Church which denied the divinity of Christ, and the atoning character of His death. Tares had been sown by the enemy among the wheat, and were already flourishing on every side. It appeared as though the Antichrist so long before foretold by Daniel, and so emphatically predicted by Paul, might speedily con; springing up as a horn or ruler among the kings of the divided Roman Empire, and exalting himself as an overseer in the Christian Church, in whose symbolical temple it was foretold he would sit supreme, clothed with divine honours and prerogatives, and deceiving many to their eternal destruction. These things were to be, and the times seemed dark enough to indicate that they might even then be at hand. Daniel had revealed in mystical language the time of the manifestation of this antichristian power, and the period of its continuance. But what was the exact meaning of those times of Daniel? What meant the "time, times, and a half time," of which he spoke; the 1,260, 1,290. and 1,335 days; the 2,300 ,evenings and mornings"; the periods which were to reach to the resurrection and promised "rest", of the righteous at the end of the days ? Were they literal days which were meant, or were the days he spoke of symbolical of larger periods? Were these revelations in Daniel the last to be granted on the subject, or was more light to shine forth through communications of the truth yet to be given to the Church of "the last days"? Questions such as these may well have occupied the mind of the aged apostle in the lonely hours of his banishment.

We can conceive him standing on the rocky height of some Patmos headland watching the western sun descending over the blue waters of the Aegean Sea, making a broad pathway of golden light on the waves, till they shone like "a sea of glass mingled with fire," or beholding the sun rise in the glowing east over the Asiatic shores, transporting his thoughts to the advent of the "morning without clouds," yet to shine upon the world. Or when he watched the host of heaven come forth by night, and fill the glittering canopy above the lonely isle, while the "many mansions " of which his Master had spoken came to his mind, and the angel hosts who do His bidding, can we not conceive him longing that one of these glorious beings might be sent to him as of old one had been sent to Daniel, the man "greatly beloved," to impart some of that knowledge of the future enjoyed in higher and holier realms? We know not what he thought or desired, but we know what God granted to the aged and privileged apostle.

It was on one Lord's day of his sojourn in Patmos, the day commemorating Christ's triumphant 'resurrection, that being alone, and 'I in the spirit," or rapt in ecstasy from the outward world, and oblivious of its presence, he suddenly heard behind him a great voice as of a trumpet, speaking to him such words as mortal ear had never heard before.

" I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and what thou seest write in a book and send it unto the seven Churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea."

And turning in the direction of the Voice he saw seven golden candlesticks, and standing in their midst, One whom he recognized as "like unto the Son of Man," but 0 how changed from the Christ on whom he had so often looked in

Galilee, and on whose bosom he had leaned in the upper chamber at Jerusalem! For every trace of humiliation was gone. No tears upon the cheek, no thorns upon the brow, He stood there transfigured and glorified; His face as the noonday sun shining in its strength; His garment white and glittering, and girt at the waist with a golden girdle; the hair of His head white with the snows of dateless years, as the "Ancient of days " beheld by Daniel; His eyes like a flame of fire; needing no exterior light to aid their vision, but penetrating the secrets of the soul with holy searching gaze; His feet as burning brass, strong as the pillars of heaven, and glowing as though they burned in a furnace; His voice as the mighty and majestic sound of many waters; seven stars glittered in His right hand, and a sharp two-edged sword, the evident symbol of the Word of God, living and powerful, and piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, proceeded from His lips.

At this sudden and marvellous apparition of the glorified Redeemer all strength forsook the aged apostle. Falling at the feet of the Son of God he lay there as one dead. Then touching his prostrate form with His right hand, the Lord strengthened him, saying in His own well-remembered voice, 'I Fear not; I am the First and the Last; I am He that liveth, and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore. Amen; and have the keys of death and of hades.'

And now aroused to wondering attention, the aged apostle received from the lips of Christ the divine commission to communicate to the seven Churches of Asia, representing symbolically the entire Christian Church throughout the world, a faithful record of all that he had seen, and was yet to behold.

"Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things, which are, and the things which shall be hereafter.-"

And first to the seven Churches of Asia Minor John is directed to write brief letters, charged with lofty meaning; letters appreciating, judging, encouraging, rebuking, and counselling these representative Churches; and conveying through them messages from the glorified Redeemer to the whole Christian Church throughout the world. In these letters, bearing on their forefront descriptive titles of Christ referring to attributes suited to the character and condition of the Churches addressed, our Lord speaks in the tone of sovereign authority, perfect knowledge, burning holiness, and tender love. His eyes as a flame of fire search the secrets of hearts, yet beam with infinite compassion. His lips are full of promises, his hands of gifts and graces. Every sentence in these celestial communications bears the impress of His personality. In listening to their words we car the very voice of the Son of God speaking to our individual souls, out of the world of glory. ,I know thy works." "I have somewhat against thee." "I am He that searcheth the reins and hearts." "I will give unto every one of you according to your works." I have set before thee, an open door." "I have loved thee." "I will keep thee". "I would thou wert cold or hot." "I will spew thee out of My mouth." "I counsel thee." "As many as I love I rebuke and chasten." "I stand at door and knock; if any man hear My voice and open to Me, I will come in to him and sup with him, and he with Me." Each letter closes with a special promise of glorious and eternal reward "to him that overcometh"; and with the solemn appeal to the individual Christian conscience, "he that hath an ear let him

hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches."

Having received these communications from the Lord Jesus Himself, standing amid the golden candlesticks which symbolized the Churches He addressed, John now beholds heaven opened, and sees the throne of God, and the worshipping hosts before the throne, and hears them crying, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come; " "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." In the right hand of Him who sits on the throne, John now beholds a seven sealed book, and hears an angel cry with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" None in heaven or earth is found worthy to open the book or look thereon. Then appears the sublime and solitary Exception. In the midst of the throne, standing among the four living creatures and adoring elders, is seen "a Lamb as it had been slain." He who had redeemed man by His blood shed on Calvary's tree, is there enthroned. Lo! The Lamb advances and takes the seven sealed book from the hands of Him who sits upon the throne, while the songs of the redeemed proclaim Him worthy to open its seals. and countless myriads of holy angels cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing." The whole creation takes up the anthem and sounds forth His praise. Then the Lamb opens the seals of the sacred and mysterious book, and unveils the contents of this final revelation of providence and prophecy.

As He opens the seven seals, successive visions appear to the gaze of the inspired seer of Patmos. First four horses, white, red, black, and livid, are beheld issuing forth, with their various riders. The souls of the martyrs are seen under the altar of sacrifice, and their cry for righteous retribution is heard. Heaven and earth are then shaken with the judgments attending the day of "the wrath of the Lamb." A pause follows in which the destructive winds of judgment are stayed, while a definite number of saints are sealed out of the twelve symbolical tribes of Israel. Then an innumerable multitude of the redeemed from all nations, kindreds, peoples and tongues, is seen gathered before the throne of glory, with palm branches of victory, and songs of grateful joy. "They have come out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb." The Lamb who has redeemed them leads them to fountains of living water, and God wipes away all tears from their eyes.

At the opening of the seventh seal there is silence in the symbolical heaven of the vision, during which seven angels prepare to sound trumpets of woe. At the successive sounding of these trumpets various judgments fall on the earth, seas, rivers, and sun of the symbolical world scene. After the sixth of these woe-trumpets occur parenthetical visions, followed by the sounding of the seventh trumpet, proclaiming the advent of "the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ." The parenthetical visions are then continued. There is seen the persecution of a sun-clothed woman by a wild beast power. Three stages of the conflict are marked. First the Draconic world power is cast down by "Michael and his angels," who overcome by "the blood of the Lamb," and the witness of martyrs who loved not their lives unto the death." Then the woman fees to the wilderness, from the persecutions of the revived wild

beast power, who makes war against the saints and overcomes them. Lastly, under the judgments of the seven vials, the persecuting wild beast power, and that of Babylon the great, are utterly destroyed. Great Babylon is burned, the beast is cast into the lake of fire, and Satan bound for a thousand years, while the saints and martyrs reign with Christ. The final judgment of the great white Throne succeeds, and the New Jerusalem, arrayed in the glory of God, as the Bride of the Lamb, descends from heaven into the new earth, and becomes the everlasting abode of righteousness and bliss.

Such in brief is the general outline of the Apocalyptic drama. How great the progress it depicts! At the beginning the crowns of glory and dominion are worn by the potentates of the world ; the saints are oppressed and persecuted, forced to flee to the wilderness, and trodden under foot; at the close, dominion, crown, and glory are transferred to the suffering saints and their great Leader. The Lamb is crowned with "many crowns," and the victorious martyrs are exalted to reign with Him in His eternal kingdom.

Prefacing his description of these visions by the title "The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass," John wrote as he was directed to the seven Churches of Asia; opening his message with greetings of God's grace and peace "from the Eternal Father, the Spirit, and the Son. A doxology of praise bursts from his lips to Him "Who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and made us kings and priests unto God and His Father." The keynote of the Apocalyptic prophecy is sounded, "Behold He cometh with clouds," indicating its character as the book of the Advent of Christ, and of the Kingdom of God. At the close is added the seal of Christ's own name and authorship. "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." "Surely I come quickly," is the final word of the prophecy.

THE RECEPTION OF THE APOCALYPSE BY THE EARLY CHURCH

From the seven Churches of Asia Minor copies of the Apocalypse, multiplied by Christian hands, rapidly spread in all the Churches throughout the Roman Empire. Its apostolical authorship was recognized from the first, and its sacred character admitted. Early added to the Canon of the New Testament, it became the closing book of the entire Word of God.

No book of the New Testament was accorded a more general reception. The chain of evidence on the subject is complete. Justin Martyr, a Christian philosopher, born about A. D. 103, six or seven years after John's banishment to Patmos, in his dialogue with Trypho thus refers to the Apocalypse: A man from among us by name John, one of the apostles of Christ, in the revelation made to him, has prophesied that the believers in our Christ shall live a thousand years in Jerusalem.— Justin Martyr suffered martyrdom for the Christian faith about A. D. 165. Irenaeus, Bishop of the Lyonese Church, in his book on Heresies written between A. D. 180 and 190, speaks of the Apocalypse as the work of John the disciple of the Lord, that same John that leaned on His breast at the last supper. Melito, Bishop of Sardis, about A. D. 170, wrote a treatise on the Revelation of John. Theophilus, Bishop of Antioch, about 181, according to Eusebius, made use of quotations from John's

Apocalypse. So also did the martyr Apollonius, at the close of the second century, in an eloquent apology before the Roman Senate, in the reign of Commodus. Clement of Alexandria, who flourished about 194, frequently quoted the Apocalypse. Tertullian, the contemporary of Clement, one of the most learned of the Latin fathers, quotes or refers to the Apocalypse in more than seventy passages in his writings, and declared that "the succession of bishops traced to John I rested' on John as its author" ¹ Hippolytus, a greatly esteemed Christian Bishop, and martyr, who flourished about A. D. 220, in early life a disciple of Irenaeus, wrote an express commentary on the Apocalypse. Origen, the most critical and learned of the early fathers, received the Apocalypse into the Canon of Scripture. "What shall we say of John," he asks, "who leaned on the breast of Jesus? He has left us a gospel:

. . . he wrote likewise the Revelation, though ordered to seal up those things which the seven thunders uttered : he left, too, one Epistle of very moderate length, and perhaps a second and a third, for of these last the genuineness is not by all admitted." ² Cyprian, Bishop and martyr, the contemporary of Origen, held similar views. Victorinus wrote a commentary on the Apocalypse in the third century, which is still extant; Methodius, Arnobius, Lactantius, Athanasius, Cyril of Alexandria, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine all received the Apocalypse, and regarded it as the inspired production of the last of the Apostles. In the centuries which followed the times of these Fathers, the acceptation of the Apocalypse by the Christian Church, both in the east and in the west, was universal. In all the early and later translations of the Scriptures, the Apocalypse found a place; and the literature to which its exposition has proved by its exceptional magnitude the interest which the prophecy has awakened in almost every age of the Church's history.

¹ "Adv. Marcion," Book IV, Ch. 5.

² Quoted by Eusebius, H. E. VI, 25

AS the direct gift of the ascended and glorified Redeemer, His message from heaven, His last message through the last of His apostles, the Apocalypse possessed from the very first for the Christian Church a special and incomparable interest. Granted in the days of Domitian towards the close of the first century while the Church was suffering from the cruel persecutions of heathen Rome, this prophecy of the sufferings and triumphs of her saints and martyrs, struck a cord which strongly vibrated in every Christian heart. To the Martyr Church of the first three centuries, this book of martyrs was at once the mirror of her experiences, and the treasury of her hopes. It illuminated the darkness, and dreariness of her lot with rays of celestial brightness. It was recognized as the golden crown of Revelation; the highest stone of its structure; the most triumphant note of its lofty music. What wonder that every sentence of the mysterious prophecy should have been studied with earnest attention by the Church of primitive times? What wonder that its visions should have arrested the gaze of men eager to read the meaning of the present, and to pierce the secrets of futurity? What wonder that the hands of humble sufferers, of lonely exiles, of holy martyrs, should have transcribed its pages with loving care, and transmitted them to their

beloved companions in "the Kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ"?

And that they did so study this closing prophecy of Scripture is evident from the fact that the entire Apocalypse can be reproduced from its quotations in the writings of the early Fathers which remain in our hands. ¹ One complete commentary on the book has come down to us from the third century, that of the martyr Victorinus a brief and simple exposition, exhibiting the views of the Church of that period on its mysterious meaning.

And now, going back in thought to those early days of purer faith, and nobler heroism, let us endeavour to realize what were the first faint dawns of the comprehension of this mysterious prophecy which penetrated the mind of the primitive Church; and mark the dawn light slowly increasing, as the course of history unfolded the meaning of the prophecy, and the secrets of Providence became revealed to every eye.

¹ See index to quotations from the Apocalypse in the writings of the early Fathers at the close of this chapter

I. Title and subject of the prophecy.

On opening the Apocalypse the early saints and martyrs saw plainly written upon its forefront its descriptive title,— The Revelation of Jesus Christ which God gave unto Him to show unto His servants things which must shortly come to pass . . . for the time is at hand." Here then they beheld an authoritative definition of the subject of the prophecy. Not to some distant period in the future of the Church's history, did this prophecy relate, but to events whose occurrence was even then, nineteen centuries ago, " at hand.— This inspired declaration determined the primitive interpretation. Not a single trace is to be found in that interpretation of the "gap theory " of modern futurism, the theory that the prophecy, overleaping the last nineteen centuries of Christian history, plunges at once into the remote future, and occupies itself with the events of a brief closing period, a mere stormy sunset hour, in the story of the world. To the Church of the first three centuries the fulfilment of the Apocalypse had already begun, and was to continue without a break to the final consummation of all things.

II. Her study of the prophecy revealed to the primitive Church its Christian character.

It was evident that the Apocalypse was sent to Christian Churches ; that it was prefaced by letters addressed to these Churches; that its leading prophetic features had their parallels in these prefatory letters ; that the warnings and promises in the letters related to things set forth more fully in the visions of the prophecy ; that the saints of the prophetic portion of the book were those who kept "the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus," ¹ and that its martyrs were 'I the martyrs of Jesus" ² Hence a Christian meaning was attached by the early Church to the entire book. It was regarded as the prophetic story of the trials and triumphs of the Church of Christ.

¹ Rev. 12:12 ² Rev 17:6.

III. The early Church regarded the Apocalypse as the New Testament continuation of the prophecies of Daniel.

The history of the Gentile world from the period of the Jewish captivities presented then, as now, the succession of four great Gentile Kingdoms; those of Babylon, Persia, Greece, and Rome. The last of these, the greatest of the four, was at that time in the fullness of its strength, and at the acme of its glory. Ptolemy of Alexandria, the great astronomer and chronologer of the second century, had traced and tabulated in his invaluable Canon, the order and succession of these four kingdoms; associating with a series of dates in the reigns of their kings the whole of his astronomical observations. To the early Church these four kingdoms of history were mirrored in the visions of prophecy. Daniel had doubly foretold their course in his vision of the quadripartite image, of gold, silver, brass and iron; and in his vision of the four beasts; the lion, bear, leopard, and ten-horned wild beast which trod down and crushed, with iron strength, the nations of the earth. The visions of the Apocalypse were recognized as the continuation of those of Daniel, as relating to the fourth of these Gentile kingdoms, and to that divine eternal kingdom which Daniel foretold, destined to destroy and replace the kingdoms of the world.

“The golden head of the image, and the lioness, denoted the Babylonians; the shoulder and arm of silver, and the bear, represented the Persians and Medes; the belly and thighs of brass, and the leopard, meant the Greeks, who held the sovereignty from Alexander’s time; the legs of iron, and the beast, dreadful and terrible, expressed the Romans, who hold the sovereignty at present; the toes of the feet, which were part of clay and part of iron, and the ten horns, were emblems of the kingdoms that are yet to rise; the other little horn that grows up among them meant the Antichrist in their midst; the stone that smites the earth and brings judgment upon the world was Christ. Speak with me, O blessed Daniel. Give me full assurance I beseech thee. Thou dost prophesy. concerning the lioness in Babylon, for thou, I wast a captive there. Thou hast tin folded the future regarding bear, for thou wast still in the world, and didst see the, things come to pass. Then thou speakest to me of whence canst thou know this, for thou art already gone to thy rest? Who instructed thee to announce these things, but He who formed thee in thy mother’s womb? That is God, thou sayest. Thou hast spoken indeed, and that not falsely. The leopard has arisen; the he-goat is come ; he bath smitten the Ram; he bath broken his horns in pieces; he bath stamped upon him with his feet. He has been exalted by his fall; (the) four horns have come up from under that one. Rejoice, blessed Daniel! thou hast not been in error! all these things have come to pass. After this again thou hast told us of the beast, dreadful and terrible. “It has iron teeth and claws of brass: it devoured and brake in pieces, and stamped the residue with the feet of it.’ Already the iron rules; already it subdues and breaks all in pieces; already it brings all the unwilling into subjection; already we see these things ourselves. Now we glorify God, being instructed by thee.”

IV. The early Church interpreted the first vision, that of the crowned Rider seated upon a white horse, armed with a bow, going forth “conquering and to conquer,” as a representation of Christ going forth on His victorious

mission.

Thus Victorinus in his commentary on the Apocalypse written in the third century says, "The first seal being opened he saw a white horse and a crowned horseman bearing a bow. For this ' was at first drawn by Himself. For after the Lord and opened all things, He sent the Holy Spirit, whose words the preachers sent forth as arrows, reaching to the human heart that they might overcome unbelief.

A comparison of this opening vision with that in the nineteenth chapter, of the rider on the white horse, whose name was "King of Kings and Lord of Lords," justified in the view of the early Church the application of the first seal to Christ's victorious mission.

The fact that Christ had founded a Kingdom whose power was greater even than that of Rome, became early apparent. The words of Origen in his answer to Celsus strikingly exhibit the conviction of the primitive Church, that its marvellous progress could only be explained by attributing it to the action of supernatural power. "Any one who examines the subject," says Origen, "will see that Jesus attempted and successfully accomplished works beyond the reach of human power. For although from the very beginning, all things opposed the spread of His doctrine in the world, -both the princes of the time, and their chief captains and generals, and all, to speak generally, who were possessed of the smallest influence, and in addition to these the rulers of the different cities, and the soldiers, and the people, -yet it proved victorious, as being the Word of God ' the nature of which is such that it cannot be hindered ; and becoming more powerful than all such adversaries, it made itself master of the whole of Greece, and a considerable portion of barbarian lands, and converted a countless number of souls to his religion." 1

"The outcry," says Tertullian, "is that the State is filled with Christians; that they are in the fields, in the citadels, in the islands; they make lamentation as for some calamity, that both sexes, every age and condition, even high rank, are passing over to the profession of the Christian faith."

The triumph of Christianity over Paganism described by the historian Gibbon is in striking harmony with the view of the early Church as to the destinies of Christ's kingdom. 'While the Roman world," says Gibbon, "was invaded by open violence, or undermined by slow decay, a pure and humble religion quietly insinuated itself into the minds of men ; grew up in silence and obscurity ; derived new vigour from opposition; and finally erected the triumphal banner of the Cross on the ruins of the Capitol. Nor was the influence of Christianity confined to the period, or to the limits of the Roman Empire. After a revolution of thirteen or fourteen centuries that religion is still professed by the nations of Europe, the most distinguished portion of humankind in arts and learning, as well as in arms. By the industry and zeal of the Europeans, it has been widely diffused to the most distant shores of Asia and Africa; and by the means of their colonies has been firmly established from Canada to Chili in a world unknown to the ancients."

With the vision of Christ going forth on His world-conquering mission, the

Apocalypse most naturally begins. At the outset of the drama, the glorious Conqueror goes forth to whose head at the close are transferred the "many crowns " of universal dominion.

And in the vision thus interpreted is found a key to the entire prophecy; for this is the starting point of the whole. Seals, trumpets, and vials set forth a continuous course of history stretching to the consummation, having as its commencement the going forth of the Gospel of Christ to accomplish its world-subduing work. The inference is unavoidable that the Apocalypse presents a prophetic foreview of the entire course of Christian history, from the foundation of the Church to the end of the world. Nor was any other interpretation ever known in the Christian Church till the rise of modern futurism.

V. The red, black, and livid horses, and their riders, of the second, third, and fourth seals, were explained by primitive interpreters as signifying the wars) famines and pestilences which our Lord had predicted in the twenty fourth of Matthew, as salient events which would occur in the interval between His departure and His return. Thus in the commentary of Victorinus, who died as a martyr under the persecution of Diocletian, after the application of the going forth of the rider on the white horse of the first seal to the victorious Kingdom of Christ, he adds, "The other three horses very plainly signify the wars, famines, and pestilences announced by our Lord in the gospel.

"VI. The vision under the fifth seal of the souls of the martyrs beneath the altar, was interpreted by the Church of the first three centuries as representing the continuous persecutions and martyrdoms of Christ's saints; while the sixth seal was regarded as a vision of the judgments attending the consummation, or close of the age. No other view of the meaning of the seals was possible to the early Church. Their scope seemed to reach to the consummation) and it was most natural that their mysterious symbols should be interpreted in the light of our Lord's plain unmetaphorical predictions concerning the events whose occurrence should extend to His Second Advent. Both prophecies were by the same divine Revealer; and both seemed to predict the same course of events; wars, famines, pestilences, earth quakes, persecutions; a universal proclamation of the gospel, a great tribulation; and then the darkening of the sun and moon; the falling of the stars; the shaking of the powers of heaven; and the advent of the Son of Man in the power and glory of His kingdom.

Holding this view as regards the six first seals, the early Church, unable to anticipate the long course of history which lay concealed in the future, considered that in the remaining visions of the book the revealing Spirit retraced the steps leading up to the consummation, in order to fill in, the features omitted in the introductory sketch. Thus Victorinus says with reference to the trumpets and vials, which succeeded the seals, "we must not regard the order of what is said, because frequently the Holy Spirit, when He has traversed even to the end of the last times, returns again to the same times, and fills up what He had (before) failed to say." To this interpreter the brief "silence" under the seventh seal was "the beginning of everlasting rest " ; while the judgments of the trumpets represented events connected

with the coming of Anti-Christ.

VII. According to Victorinus the mighty cloud-clothed angel of the covenant of Revelations 10, "is our Lord." His position as standing on sea and land signifies that all things are placed under His feet." The command to measure the temple," he regarded as relating, not to the rebuilding of the Jewish Temple, but to the right ordering of the Christian Church. By the assembly of its bishops its faith was to be brought into agreement with the teachings of the Word of God. The slaughter of the witnesses he explains as representing the slaying of holy prophets by Antichrist in the last times. The 1,260 days of their prophesying he interprets literally, as the period of three years and six months, during which the witnesses should prophesy in their sackcloth clothed character, as despised and persecuted by the world. To have interpreted the 1,260 days as symbolically representing 1,260 years of a suffering and subjected condition of witnesses to gospel truth, was of course impossible at that early period of the Church's history. The latter view only dawned upon the minds of Apocalyptic interpreters during the actual fulfilment of the prophecy in the middle ages.

VIII. The woman clothed with the sun, with the moon under her feet, and a crown of twelve stars, of Ch. 12, is, according to Victorinus, and all the early interpreters, "the ancient Church of fathers, and prophets, and saints, and apostles.— In his treatise on Christ and Antichrist, Hippolytus says, " By the 'woman clothed with the sun' he meant most manifestly the Church, endued with the Father's word, whose brightness is above the sun . . the words 'upon her head a crown of twelve stars,' refer to the twelve apostles by whom the Church was founded." The "three and a half times" of her seclusion in the wilderness is the period of 1,260 days, or three and a half years, during which the Church "seeks concealment in the wilderness," from the persecutions of Antichrist; finding no safety but in flight.

IX. The 144,000 sealed out of the twelve tribes of Israel, of Chs. 7 and 14, are interpreted by Tertullian as not Jews but Christians. 'With the same anti-Judaic view he markedly speaks of the Apocalyptic New Jerusalem (though with the names of the twelve tribes of Israel written on its gates) as Christian, not Jewish; the Jerusalem spoken of by St. Paul to the Galatians, as the Mother of all Christians." 1

The same view was clearly and powerfully advocated by the celebrated Origen ; and was held by Methodius, and Lactantius ; in fact was a leading feature of primitive exposition.

X. On the important subject of Antichrist, "while there was a universal concurrence in the general idea of the prophecy, there was in respect of the details of application, a considerable measure of difference; these differences, arising mainly out of certain current notions of the coming of Antichrist as in some way Jewish as well as Roman, and the difficulty of combining and adjusting the two characteristics." 2 The Roman view was derived from the Antichrist being represented in the prophecy as the eighth head of the Roman beast, arising after the healing of his deadly wound. 1 His Jewish character, where held, seems to have arisen from his being regarded as in some sense a false Christ, such as our Lord predicted in Matt. 24. Hence

Irenaeus and Hippolytus imagined that the place of his manifestation would be the Jewish sanctuary, and that its time would synchronize with the last half week of the "seventy weeks" of Daniel 9. The whole subject was necessarily involved in great perplexity to these early expositors. No correct anticipation of the fulfilment of the predictions relating to Antichrist, viewed as a whole, was possible in the opening centuries of the Church's history. Certain points, however, were clearly and correctly seen. Justin Martyr, one of the earliest of the Fathers, considered the Apocalyptic ten-horned beast, or rather its ruling head, to be identical with St. Paul's Man of Sin, and St. John's Antichrist: and Irenaeus directed his readers to look out for the division of the Roman Empire into ten kingdoms, as that which was immediately to be followed by Antichrist's manifestation. He also remarkably explained the number of Antichrist's name, 666, as symbolizing Latteinos, the Latin man, "seeing that they who thus held the world's empire were Latins." 2

XI. To the early Fathers the Babylon of the Apocalypse represented Rome.

This is an important point owing to the magnitude of the position occupied by "Babylon the Great" in Apocalyptic prophecy; and also to the fact that the angelic interpretation of the vision relating to Babylon makes it the key to the whole prophecy.

"Tell me, blessed John," says Hippolytus, "thou apostle and disciple of the Lord, what thou hast heard and seen respecting Babylon: wake up, and speak; for it was she that exiled thee to Patmos." "Babylon, in our own John," says Tertullian, "is a figure of the city of Rome, as being equally great and proud of her sway, and triumphant over the saints.— On Revelations 17:9, Victorinus says, "The seven heads are the seven hills on which the woman sitteth -that is the city of Rome." "On the Apocalyptic BabyIon's meaning Rome, all agreed."

XII. The continued existence of the Roman Empire was commonly regarded by the early Fathers as the "let" or hindrance to the manifestation of "the Man of Sin," or Antichrist. In his magnificent apology addressed to the rulers of the Roman Empire, Tertullian says that the Christian Church prayed for the stability of the empire, because they knew "that a mighty shock impending over the whole earth—in fact the very end of all things, threatening dreadful woes—was only retarded by the continued existence of the Roman Empire. We have no desire to be overtaken by these dire events; and in praying that their coming may be delayed we are lending our aid to Rome's duration." As to the 'I let' or hindrance to the manifestation of the "Man of Sin," "we have the consenting testimony of the early Fathers," says Elliott, "from Irenaeus, the disciple of the disciple of St. John, down to Chrysostom and Jerome, to the effect that it was understood to be the imperial power ruling and residing at Rome."

XIII. The Martyr Church of the first three centuries interpreted the first resurrection foretold in the twentieth chapter of the Apocalypse as a resurrection of the literal dead. Hence they believed in the pre-millennial Advent of Christ. On no point of interpretation was their agreement more remarkable. "On the millenary question, all primitive expositors except Origen, and the few who rejected the Apocalypse as unapostolical, were pre-

millenarians; and construed the first resurrection of the saints literally." 2 They looked for the appearance of Christ to destroy Anti-Christ. They believed that the Roman Empire would fall into ten kingdoms, then Antichrist would appear, and then Christ would come in the glory of His kingdom. Thus Lactantius held that after the destruction of Antichrist "the saints raised from the grave would reign with Christ through the world's seventh Chiliad, a period to commence, Lactantius judged, in about two hundred years at furthest: the Lord alone being thenceforth worshipped in a renovated world; its still living inhabitants multiplying incalculably in a state of terrestrial felicity; and the resurrection saints, during this commencement of an eternal kingdom in a nature like the angelic, reigning over them." 3

At the conclusion of his treatise on Christ and Antichrist, Hippolytus expresses himself as follows-,, Moreover, concerning the resurrection, and the kingdom of the saints, Daniel says, And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall arise, some to everlasting life.' Esaias says, "The dead men shall arise, and they that are in their tombs shall awake; for the dew from thee is healing to them." The Lord says, ' Many in that day shall hear' the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.' And the prophet says, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.' And John says, 'Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power.' Concerning the resurrection of the righteous, Paul also speaks thus in writing to the Thessalonians ' The Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice and trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first. Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air; and so shall we ever be with the Lord. These things then, I have set shortly before thee, O Theophilus, drawing them (from Scripture itself) in order that maintaining in faith what is written, and anticipating the things that are to be, thou mayest keep thyself void of offense both towards God and towards men, " looking for that blessed hope and appearing of our God and Saviour," when having raised the saints among us, He will rejoice with them, glorifying the Father. To Him be the glory unto the endless ages of the ages. Amen.' "

Such were the leading features of the interpretation of the Apocalypse by the Martyr Church of the first three centuries. In the Catacombs of Rome, there remains a profoundly interesting and touching reference to one of the opening and closing symbols of the Apocalypse in the oft recurring Monogram of the Name of Christ, in which the Greek letters Alpha and Omega., the first and the last of the Alphabet, are inserted on either side of the brief sign standing for Xpiorus or Christ; the whole being enclosed in a circle, the symbol of eternity.

The following are the passages in the Apocalypse forming the foundation of the monogram. " 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."

" / am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, and what thou seest write in a book." " / am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last ... I Jesus." " The two letters of Greece, the first and the last," says Tertullian, " the Lord assumes to Himself, as figures of the beginning and

end which concur in Himself: so that, just as Alpha rolls on till it reaches Omega, and again Omega rolls back till it reaches Alpha, in the same way He might show that in Himself is both the downward course of the beginning on to the end, and the backward course of the end up to the beginning; so that every economy, ending in Him through whom it began,—through the Word of God, that is, who was made flesh,—may have an end corresponding to its beginning.”

1

Such was the faith that overcame the world !

The place and power of the Apocalyptic prophecy as sustaining in the Martyr Church, the hope of the speedy advent of Christ, and thus strengthening that Church for its warfare and victory over the persecuting pagan Empire of Rome, were of the highest practical importance. The historian Gibbon recognizes the immense influence of the hope of Christ's speedy coming on the early Church. "The ancient Christians," he says, " were animated by a contempt for their present existence, and by a just confidence of immortality, of which the doubtful and imperfect faith of modern ages cannot give us any adequate notion. It was universally believed that the end of the world and the kingdom of heaven were at hand. The near approach of this wonderful event had been predicted by the apostles; " a view " productive of the most salutary effects on the faith and practice of Christians, who lived in the awful expectation of that moment when the globe itself, and all the various races of mankind, should tremble at the appearance of their divine Judge. The ancient and popular doctrine of the millennium was intimately connected with the Second Coming of Christ. As the works of creation had been finished in six days, their duration in their present state, according to a tradition which was attributed to the prophet Elijah, was fixed to six thousand years. By the same analogy it was inferred that this long period of labour and contention, which was now almost elapsed, would be succeeded by a joyful Sabbath of a thousand years; and that Christ, with the triumphant band of the saints and the elect who had escaped death, or who had been miraculously revived, would reign upon earth till the time appointed for the last and general resurrection."

While correct in its historical principle and leading features, the interpretation of the Apocalypse by the early Church was necessarily deficient in scope. It foreshortened the prospect to a narrow margin. It knew nothing of the long centuries which were destined to elapse before the dispensation had run its course. It knew nothing of the great Apostasy which was to darken the earth by its long and terrible eclipse ; and nothing of the glorious reformation which was to follow, although all these were foretold in the far-seeing prophecy. Rome Pagan, in her declining dominion, and proximate doom, filled the scene on which the early Christians gazed. One bright star shone in their sky, burning with intense and pristine splendour, the hope of the speedy coming of Christ. For that great event they watched and waited. They believed that to suffer with Christ was the prelude to reigning with Him, and that His kingdom was at hand. And this conviction nerved them to endure the utmost torments which heathen Rome had power to inflict. In this conviction they lived and died, " more than conquerors."

THE great historic event which immediately succeeded the Diocletian era of persecution was the fall of Paganism, and the establishment of Christianity as the religion of the Roman Empire.

It is only by assuming Christ's name that the simpler ones of believers can be seduced to go to Antichrist; for thus they will go to Antichrist, while thinking to find Christ.

In its internal character and far-reaching effects this revolution is one of the greatest and most remarkable that has ever taken place in the history of the world.

The ruin of Paganism, as Gibbon has pointed out, is perhaps "the only example of the total extirpation of any ancient and popular superstition." During the long period of a thousand years the dark shadow of Paganism had covered the city and empire of Rome. Its temples were innumerable and adorned with the utmost magnificence. Its wealth, the accumulation of ages, was fabulously great. Its priesthood was established and endowed by government, the Roman Emperor himself occupying the position of the supreme pontiff of the hierarchy. In the fourth century this monstrous system was brought to ruin. Working upwards from the lowest strata of society, the belief in the unity of the Godhead, and the divinity of the Christian religion, a belief commended by the lives, and sealed by the blood of the martyrs, had gradually reached the highest classes in the community, and effected the conversion of the Roman Emperor. The conviction that "the idolatrous worship of fabulous deities, and real demons, is the most abominable crime against the Supreme Majesty of the Creator," led to the subversion of the temples of the Roman world, and the total suppression of Paganism. Maxentius, the last persecuting Pagan Emperor, was overthrown by Constantine at the memorable battle of Milvian Bridge, and his legions drowned in the waters of the Tiber. The Christian religion, liberated from persecution, became the religion of the State. The suppression of Paganism gradually followed, and within less than a century its "faint and minute vestiges were no longer visible."

In this memorable event Apocalyptic prophecy was strikingly fulfilled, a fact clearly recognized and openly confessed by the leading Christian writers of the period, and even celebrated by Imperial Enactment.

The fall of Paganism shed a flood of light on the Apocalyptic vision in which the issue of the deadly conflict between the Christian Church and the Imperial Roman power is represented by the casting down of the seven-headed Satanically inspired dragon from his lofty position of rule and authority.

The conflict and its issue are thus symbolically described in Revelation 12: "And there was war in heaven: Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels, and prevailed not, neither was their place any more found in heaven, 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. 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. 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."

Several points in this most remarkable prophecy should be especially noticed.

1. The dragon is the ten-horned wild beast power of the Apocalypse whose identity with the fourth or ten-horned wild beast of the prophecies of Daniel was recognized by the Church of the second, third, and fourth centuries. Of the fourth beast "dreadful and terrible" Hippolytus says "who are these but the Romans ...the kingdom which is now established?" "John in the Apocalypse," says Irenaeus, "teaches us what the ten horns shall be which were seen by Daniel."

2. This ruling power, under a sevenfold succession of heads, is represented as Satanically inspired. In a later vision the sixth head is identified with the form of Roman rule which existed in St. John's own time, that of the Pagan Roman Caesars.

3. The dragon is described as "great." The power of heathen Rome was then the greatest in the world. It had conquered and crushed the nations.

4. As "red"; red with much bloodshed of war and persecution.

5. As wearing the "crowns" which symbolized its rule, not on the ten horns, which had not then arisen, but on its previous succession of "heads."

6. As first standing before the "woman," who represented as the Fathers clearly saw the Judeo-Christian Church, to devour her child as soon as it was born, and then warring against her, and "her seed."

7. The conflict is described as a fierce and obstinate "war."

8. The army of the just, under its Heavenly Leader, is victorious over the dragon.

9. The victory is celebrated by a song of praise in which the great event is regarded as a signal triumph of the Kingdom of God. "Now is come salvation and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ."

10. The victors are declared to have "overcome by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony": not by sword and spear, as in a mere carnal conflict, but by moral, spiritual, and Christian weapons.

11. The martyr character of the conquerors is touchingly described in the concluding sentence "they loved not their lives-even unto the death."

In connection with the application of this remarkable prophecy, it should be observed that the figure of the dragon was used as an ensign by the armies of heathen Rome. Ammianus Marcellinus thus describes this heathen Roman standard: "The dragon was covered with purple cloth, and fastened to the end of a pike gilt and adorned with precious stones. It opened its wide throat, and the wind blew through it; and it hissed as if in a rage, with its tail floating in several folds through the air." It was first used as an ensign

near the close of the second century of the Christian era. " In the third century it had become almost as notorious among Roman ensigns as the eagle itself; and is in the fourth century used by Prudentius,

Vegetius, Chrysostom, Ammianus, etc, in the fifth by Claudian and others." 1

Two stages in the casting down of Roman Paganism should be distinguished; first its primary dejection when headed by Maximin and Licinius; and secondly, its final overthrow as headed by the apostate Emperor Julian. The persecution under Diocletian was the most prolonged and severe of those endured by the early Church. Under Maximin this persecution reached its climax. " Before the decisive battle," says Milner, "Maximin vowed to Jupiter that, if victorious, he would abolish the Christian name. The contest between Jehovah and Jupiter was now at its height, and drawing to a crisis." "The defeat and death of Maximin," says Gibbon, "delivered the Church from the last and most implacable of her enemies."

The effort of the apostate Emperor Julian thirty years later to restore Paganism throughout the Roman Empire was similarly defeated by the wonder working hand of God. It was "the design of Julian," says Gibbon, "to deprive the Christians of the advantages of wealth, of knowledge and of power." They were condemned to rebuild at enormous cost, the Pagan temples which had been destroyed. By these rash edicts " the whole empire, and particularly the East, was thrown into confusion." The persecution which broke forth afresh against the Church was terminated by the tragic death of Julian on the field of battle, in A. D . 363.

Theodoret tells us that " as soon as the death of Julian was known in Antioch (followed by the accession of the orthodox Jovian) public festivals were celebrated. And not in the churches and martyr chapels only, but even in the theatres the victory of the cross was extolled, and Julian's oracles held up to ridicule. . . . They exclaimed as with one voice, ' Where are now thy predictions, O foolish Maximus ? God and His Christ have gotten the victory. ' " 1

Bishop Gregory Nazianzen in a public discourse delivered on the occasion says, " Hear this, all ye nations . all that are now, and all that shall be hereafter. Hear every power in heaven, even all ye angels, whose office was the destruction of the tyrant: not of Sihon, King of the Amorites, nor of Og, King of Bashan, rulers of little importance, and their afflicted Israel, a small people only of the habitable earth; but the destruction of the dragon, the apostate, the man of great mind, the common enemy and adversary of all; who madly did and threatened many things on the earth, and spoke and devised great wickedness against the height above. ... Who shall worthily celebrate these things? Who shall declare the power of the Lord, and speak all His praise? Who shivered the armour, the sword and the battle, and broke the heads of the dragon in the water? . . . It is the Lord mighty and powerful; the Lord mighty in battle."

Later on, alluding to the frustration of Julian's attempt to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem, and to destroy the very name of Christians, he says:—" What will be the end of the heathen if they turn not to Christ now ? Would

that they would consent to be ruled not with the rod of iron, but with that of the Good Shepherd."

To commemorate the fall of Paganism, the Emperor Constantine caused medals to be struck representing that event under the semblance of a dragon precipitated into the abyss. "As we see on the coins of Constantine," says ' Ranke, " the Labarum with the monogram of Christ above the conquered dragon, even so did the worship and name of Christ stand triumphant above prostrate heathenism."

In his Epistle to Eusebius and other bishops concerning the re- edifying and repairing of churches, Constantine' said that " liberty being now restored, and ' that dragon' being removed from the administration of public affairs by the providence of the Great God, and by my ministry, I esteem the great power of God to have been made manifest, even to all." 1

The Emperor Constantine, says Eusebius, " caused to be painted on a lofty tablet, and set up in the front of the portico of his palace, so as to be visible to all, a representation of the salutary sign placed above his head; and below it that hateful and savage adversary of mankind, who by means of the tyranny of the ungodly, had wasted the Church of God, falling headlong, under the form of a dragon, to the abyss of destruction. For the sacred oracles in the books of God's prophets have described him as a dragon and a crooked serpent, and for this reason the Emperor there publicly displayed a painted resemblance of the dragon beneath his own and his children's feet, stricken through with a dart, and cast headlong into the depths of the sea."

This triumphant celebration of the victory of the early Church over Roman Paganism was anticipated in the words of the Apocalyptic prophecy, " Now hath come the salvation, and the power, and the Kingdom of our God, and the authority of His Christ . . . therefore rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." " The very word," says Elliott, " eufraivesthe, used in the Apocalyptic prophecy to wish the Christian professors joy, was the identical word addressed more than once to them in the Imperial Edict of Constantine."

The exaltation of the Christian religion to the position of the religion of the State under Constantine, while productive of great advantages, especially in the cessation of persecution, led to serious declension, not only in the spiritual life of the Church, but also in her views as to the teachings of prophecy concerning her relations to the Roman Empire, and to the world. The divine weapon placed in the hand of the Church to preserve her from apostasy fell from her grasp. She lost the remembrance of her position as a pilgrim and a stranger on earth seeking a celestial city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God. The transformation of the Martyr Church of the early centuries into the Christendom of the Middle Ages involved the change of Apocalyptic interpretation as to the reign of Christ and His saints in a post-advent kingdom, into a prediction of a Romanized Christianity ruling after the fashion of the Caesars, the peoples of the world.

"The great Constantine revolution," says Elliott, "could hardly fail of exercising a considerable influence on Apocalyptic interpretation. A revolution by which Christianity should be established in the prophetically-

denounced Roman Empire, was an event the contingency of which had never occurred apparently to the previous exponents of Christian prophecy; and suggested the idea of a time, mode, and scene, of the fulfilment of the promises of the latter-day blessedness that could scarcely have arisen before; viz.— that its scene might be the earth in its present state, not the renovated earth after Christ's coming (and the conflagration) ; its time that of the present dispensation ; its mode by the earthly establishment of the earthly Church visible. For it does not seem to have occurred at the time that this might in fact be one of the preparations, through Satan's craft, for the establishment, after a while, of the great predicted antichristian ecclesiastical empire, on the platform of the same Roman world, and in a professing but apostatized Church." 1

This revolution of interpretation is strikingly visible in the case of Eusebius, who, though he seems in early life to have received the Apocalypse as inspired Scripture, and interpreted its seals in harmony with the method of Victorinus, was led, after the Constantine revolution, and the establishment of Christianity, to doubt the apostolic authorship of the prophecy. He continued, however, to apply the symbolic prefigurations of the Apocalypse to the changed events of the period; the casting down of the seven-headed dragon from its high and ruling position represented in the twelfth chapter seemed to him to agree in a marvelous manner with the dejection of Paganism, and of the Pagan Emperors, which had just taken place, from the supremacy which they had for ages exercised in the Roman world. The prophecies of Isaiah respecting the latter-day glory of the redeemed, and the Apocalyptic vision of the New Jerusalem, were applied by him to the Christian Church as newly established by Constantine. The millennial day of the glory and prosperity of the Church seemed to have dawned, and the language of the period was filled with the loftiest anticipations.

During the thousand years which followed, the Mediaeval period of history, the Church believed she was living in the millennium. The commencement of this millennium, or period during which Satan is bound, was variously dated; first with Augustine from Christ's ministry, when the Redeemer beheld Satan fall as lightning from heaven; and later on, when the lapse of time had proved the error of this view, from the Constantine revolution; the binding of Satan being taken to represent the restriction of Satanic power at the fall of Paganism. This extraordinary view continued to prevail up to the time of the Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Reformers supposing themselves to be living in the " little season " during which Satan was to be "loosed" at the close of the millennium. To carry out the view that the millennium had come, and that the Church, as Eusebius supposed, had reached the stage of existence represented by the latter-day glory predicted by Isaiah, and the new Jerusalem foretold by John, " must soon have been felt most difficult: the Arian and other troubles which quickly supervened, powerfully contributing to that conviction. It resulted, perhaps not a little from this cause, that the Apocalypse itself became for a while much neglected; especially in the Eastern Empire, where the Imperial seat was now chiefly fixed." 1

The sad effect of this neglect became evident in the dark apostasy which

speedily followed. The Harlot Church denounced in the Apocalypse was magnified as the Bride of Christ, enriched with the privileges and adorned with the glories of the millennial state. The reign of Satan was mistaken for the reign of Christ. The solemn warnings of the Word of God intended to preserve the Church from the apostasy were forgotten; and the "falling away" foretold took place, carrying with it the whole of Christendom, with the exception of a small and feeble remnant of faithful witnesses to New Testament truths.

The growing perception of this apostasy led the prophetic interpreters of the fourth and fifth centuries to the view which had presented itself to the pre-Constantine Fathers, that the scene of the manifestation of Antichrist would prove to be the professing Christian Church. Thus Athanasius taught that the Antichrist of prophecy would prove to be a heretical ruler of the Roman Empire, making a Christian profession; and that Antichrist would come with the profession, "I am Christ," assuming Christ's place and character, like Satan transformed into an angel of light. Hilary, Bishop of Poitiers, in France, the contemporary and friend of Athanasius, asked when the flood of Arianism swept over the western part of the Roman Empire, "Is it a doubtful thing that Antichrist will sit in Christian Churches?" He denounced the Emperor Constantine as a precursor of Antichrist; and speaks of Bishop Arius, and Bishop Auxentius as Antichrists. Cyril, of Jerusalem, says of Antichrist, "This man will usurp the government of the Roman Empire, and will falsely call himself the Christ." "He will sit in the temple of God: not that which is in Jerusalem, but in the Churches everywhere." 2 Jerome, in interpreting Paul's Man of Sin, declares that he "is to sit in the temple, that is in the Church." He adds, "It is only by assuming Christ's name that the simpler ones of believers can be seduced to go to Antichrist; for thus they will go to Antichrist, while thinking to find Christ.

WITH the Gothic invasion and the break-up of the western Roman Empire into ten kingdoms, came the predicted rise of Antichrist. The incipient fulfilment of the foretold partition of the empire began to be recognized as early as the fourth century. "In our time," said Jerome, "the clay has become mixed with iron. Once nothing was stronger than the Roman Empire, now nothing weaker, mixed up as it is with, and needing the help of barbarous nations." "He who withheld is removed, and we think not that Antichrist is at the door!" On the unthinking Church, blind to the meaning of the events occurring around her, came the predicted "Man of Sin," to take his foretold place and sit supreme for long disastrous centuries in the very Temple or Church of God.

THE RISE OF THE PAPACY TO UNIVERSAL DOMINION

"A mighty and majestic figure," says Pennington, "comes upon our view in the Middle Ages. Its feet rest upon the earth, while its head towers towards the stars. A triple tiara, rich with the most costly gems, glitters on its brow. It is clothed in the sacred robes of the priesthood, but bears in its hand the golden sceptre of temporal dominion. The nations of the earth crouch at its feet. Around it clouds of incense roll upwards from innumerable altars. The ground on which it stands is whitened with the bones of God's saints. 1

The rise of this power was gradual. The removal of the Imperial Government from Rome to Constantinople, and the break-up of the empire by invading hordes of barbarians, liberated the Bishop of Rome from the bonds which had confined his activities, and hindered the attainment of the supremacy to which he aspired. Rome had in earlier times sat queen among the nations. Why should not the Bishop of Rome be accorded the proud position of Head of the Churches of Christendom? Why should he not become their spiritual dictator? Applications for assistance and advice came to him from every quarter. His letters, first mild and moderate in tone, gradually assumed the form of arbitrary mandates. Encroachments were made on the spiritual jurisdiction of other bishops. Appeals addressed to him by bishops or presbyters, and applications from monarchs to interfere in their quarrels, led to his asserting the right to decide by his own arbitrary will the disputes of individuals and the controversies of the Church. Additional powers were gradually obtained. The Bishop of Rome was the alleged successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles, to whom Christ had committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven. In the fifth century the lineal descent of the Popes from St. Peter was an accredited article of Christianity. Claiming to have been bestowed as a divine gift, the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome over all other bishops was established by a law of the Roman Emperor. In the year 607 the Emperor Phocas, a blood-stained usurper, placed the crown of universal supremacy in the Christian Church on the brow of Boniface III. The temporal dominion of the Popes speedily followed. In the next century the usurper Pepin bestowed upon the Pope the city of Rome, and the exarchate of Ravenna, which he had wrested from the Lombards. Charlemagne, crowned by the Pope in the year 800 as Emperor of the Romans, enlarged the Pope's dominions; and the Roman Empire, which had been overthrown by the barbarians, restored by Charlemagne, took officially the title of the Holy Roman Empire.

King and priest stood side by side at the summit of this empire. Which stood highest? That question which took centuries to settle, ended by the exaltation of the Papal power in 1268 to supremacy over the Imperial power. A large space in the history of the Middle Ages is filled by the struggle between the empire and the papacy. Its termination witnessed the subjection of the temporal to the spiritual dominion.

In the Donation of Constantine—a forged document on which Papal supremacy was largely built—the emperor transfers the diadem from his own head to the head of the Pope of Rome, and says "in our reverence for the blessed Peter, we ourselves hold the reins of his horse, as holding the office of his stirrup-holder; and we ordain that all his successors shall wear the same mitre in their processions, in imitation of the empire and that the Papal crown may never be lowered, but may be exalted above the crown of the earthly empire. Lo, we give and grant not only our palace, as aforesaid, but also the city of Rome, and all the provinces and palaces and cities of Italy, and of the western regions, to our aforesaid most blessed Pontiff and universal Pope." The famous Decretal Epistles in the ninth century, now condemned as forgeries by the voice of Christendom, containing the "alleged judgment of the Popes in former ages, in unbroken succession from St. Peter, supplied them with everything they could require to establish the sovereignty of the Popes over the monarchs of the earth, and their authority over the doctrines and

practices of the Churches of Christendom." In the exercise of his supremacy the Pope exalted or deposed monarchs, absolved subjects from their oaths of allegiance, declaring in the synod of 1080 "we desire to show the world that we can give, or take away at our will, kingdoms, duchies, earldoms, in a word, the possessions of all men, since we can bind and loose." Gratian's work, the Decretum, in the middle of the twelfth century, deciding questions relating to the Canon law of the Church of Rome, quoting as authority sixty-five of the forged Decretal Epistles, gave to the papacy a legal and long unquestioned standing. " This work was always the authority for the Canon law of the Church of Rome, which was received into every nation before the Reformation. No book has ever exercised so much influence in the Church. In fact, this system of law constitutes the papacy."

The subjection of the Bishops to Papal supremacy was followed by the destruction of the independence of Councils. " The only business of Bishops at a Council was considered to be to inform the Pope of the condition of their dioceses, and to give him their advice in spiritual matters. The Pope in fact appropriated to himself all the rights and institutions of the Church. . . . National churches now found themselves subject to an irresistible despotism. Legates were appointed to represent the Majesty of the Pope in remote territories, who lived in splendour at the expense of the victims of their tyranny, deposing Bishops, holding Synods, promulgating Canons, and pronouncing sentences of Excommunication against those who dared to resist their arbitrary decrees."

In the year 1268 the Popes "blotted out the name of the House of Hohenstaufen from under heaven." The execution of Conradin, the grandson of Frederick II, the last heir of the House, leaving " another stain of blood on the annals of the papacy, marked the termination of the struggle for two hundred years between the Emperors and the Popes for supremacy over the nations. The latter now reigned without a rival in Christendom."

It only remained for the Popes to assume Divine honours. In the person of Boniface VIII, whose accession took place in 1294, the Pope sat "as God in the temple of God." Human ambition could rise no higher. The Pope boldly laid claim to the attributes and prerogatives of Deity. He represented the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. He claimed to rule in three worlds, Heaven, Earth, and Hell; and in token thereof was crowned with a triple crown. He paraded himself before the world as the infallible Teacher of faith and morals. Exalted above bishops, above councils, above kings, above conscience, from his decisions there was no appeal. He was the supreme Judge of mankind. Lifted up to sit on the high altar of St. Peter's, the chiefest Church in Christendom, he was publicly adored, cardinals, the princes of the Church, kissing in turn his feet; bishops bending low before him in deepest reverence; and nations worshipping him as the visible representative of the Godhead, possessed of power to pardon sins on earth, to canonize saints in heaven, to loose souls from the pains of purgatory in the world beneath; to judge, to govern, to bless, to save mankind; whose sentences, clothed with the authority of God, were inherently irreversible, irrevocable, final and everlasting.

And for what ends, and with what effects has the Godlike power of this great

Usurper been employed?

Let history answer. Let the stake reply. Let the Inquisition speak. Let the Waldenses, the Wickliffites, the Lollards, the Hussites, the Huguenots sound forth the answer. Let Italy, let France, let Spain tell what they have witnessed. Let Roman Catholic lands in their notorious degradation, and Protestant lands deluged with blood by Papal wars and massacres, bear their testimony. The Bible prohibited; idolatry enforced; the gospel denied; Christianity caricatured; millions deluded; millions led to destruction; who can estimate the world-wide effects of this diabolical travesty of the religion of Jesus Christ? The cup of salvation changed into the cup of death; revealed religion, God's greatest, highest gift to man, transformed into a snare, an instrument of delusion, tyranny, and eternal ruin to countless souls, and generations of mankind.

PARALLEL DEVELOPMENT OF PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

Did the prophetic expositors of the Middle Ages, after the breaking up of the old Roman Empire, and the rise of the Papal power to supremacy over the Gothic kingdoms, recognize, on his appearance, the predicted "Man of Sin," or Antichrist?

Not at first. The comprehension of the character of Romanism and the papacy was a gradual growth. In its slow development the doctrinal errors of the Church of Rome were recognized as unscriptural long before the antichristian character of the papacy was perceived. Not until the papacy reached the monstrous height of self-exaltation and depravity which it attained in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, was it seen to fulfill the predictions relating to the "Man of Sin," or Antichrist.

From the middle of the seventh century the Paulikians in Eastern Christendom, "bore a continuous and unvarying protest against the grosser superstitions of saint mediatorship, image worship, and other kinds of idolatry, as well as against the established system of priestcraft which supported them." 1 In Western Europe, Claude, Bishop of Turin, "was a true, fearless, enlightened, and spiritual witness for Christ's truth and honour, and against the superstition and wickedness of the age," 1 and earned the title of "the Protestant of the ninth century." "When sorely against my will, I undertook at the command of Louis the Pious the burden of a Bishoprick," says Claude, "and when contrary to the order of truth I found all the Churches of Turin stuffed full of vile and accursed images, I alone began to destroy what all were sottishly worshipping. Therefore it was that all opened their mouths to revile me. And forsooth, had not the Lord helped me, they would have swallowed me up quick." 32 From the works of Claude, and the treatises written against him, it appears that he protested against the "worship of saints, relics, and the wooden cross, as well as of images; against pilgrimages, and all the prevailing Judaic or formal and ceremonial system of religion; against masses for the dead; against what was afterwards called transubstantiation in the Eucharist; against the supremacy of the Pope of Rome; and the authority of tradition in doctrines of religion. The written Word was made by him the one standard of truth." 3

Agobard, archbishop of Lyons, from A . D . 810 to 841, was a determined enemy of all superstition. With reference to the invocation of saints, he held that " there is no other Mediator to be sought for but He that is the God-Man." "He combats the idea of merit in human works with as much zeal and force," says Leger, " as Calvin himself." 4 Gottschalc, a monk of the abbey of Fulda, left his monastery with missionary purposes, and after preaching the gospel agreeably with Augustine's views of it, in Dalmatia, Pannonia, Lombardy, and Piedmont, was condemned as a heretic, degraded from the priesthood, beaten with rods, and cast into prison, where he lingered refusing retractation till his death in 868. 5 Treatises from the Lyonnese Church of this period exhibit "the same decided adhesion to the doctrines of Augustine." A reference occurs in the letters of Atto, Bishop of Vercelli near Turin, A.D. 945, to "certain false teachers, known among the common people by the name of prophets, under whose teaching certain persons in his diocese had been induced to forsake their priests, and their Holy Mother the Church." 6 In 1028 the archbishop of Milan discovered on a visitation a sect of so-called heretics whose central point and refuge was "the castle of Montfort, in the near neighbourhood of Turin, its chief teacher there being one Gerard." When taken and imprisoned at Milan these heretics " spoke of their High Priest in contradistinction to the Roman High Priest." "In vain offers of life were made to them on condition of recantation. Gerardus especially, with happy countenance, seemed eager for suffering. The most continued steadfast; and so were burned, on the Piazza of the Cathedral." 1

At the Council of Arras, heretics from the confines of Italy, who had been summoned before their Bishop in 1025, admitted their rejection of " the whole doctrines, discipline, and authority of the Romish Church." Berenger, in the year 1045, Principal of the Public School at Tours, and afterwards Archdeacon of Angers, combated the received doctrine of transubstantiation. His teaching was "condemned in Councils held at Rome, Vercelli, and Paris, in the year 1050, and he was deprived of the temporalities of his benefice."

Peter de Bruys, originally a presbyter of the Church, " became a missionary and protestor against what he denounced as the superstitions of the day in the French provinces of Dauphiny, Province and Languedoc. His success was great, and a sect formed of his followers,, vulgarly called after him Petrobrussians, but who called themselves Apostolicah. At length in the year 1126, after nearly twenty years of missionary labour, he was seized by his enemies, and burned to death in the town of St. Giles, near Thoulouse."

The so-called heresies of Peter de Bruys " were propagated after his death by a monk named Henry." Beginning from Lausanne, in 1116, he preached in Paris and Languedoc "with eloquence such as to melt 'all hearts, and a character for both sanctity and benevolence such as to win all admiration. He was the Whitfield of the age and country, and with success that to a Catholic eye was fearful."- He was seized in the year 1147, convicted and imprisoned. " Soon after he died, whether by a natural death or by the flames, is a point disputed." In the same year heretics were discovered and burned at Cologne. Maintaining their doctrines in opposition to the Church of Rome " from the Words of Christ and His apostles," they suffered martyrdom, " and what is most wonderful," says Evervinus, " they entered to the stake, and bore the

torment of the fire, not only with patience, but with joy and gladness."

The Henricians, or followers of Henry of Italy (called also Boni Homines) who were examined and condemned at the Council of Lombers, in 1165, rejected the characteristic doctrines of the Church of Rome, basing their beliefs on the Word of God alone.

Peter Waldo, or Valdes, a man eminent among Mediaeval witnesses to the gospel of Christ, sold all he had in the year 1170, distributed to the poor, and became the leader to "certain missionary bands known thenceforth under the name of Waldenses, as well as "Poor Men of Lyons." Before the close of the next -century they were "well known as sectaries that had an intimate local connection with the Alpine valleys of Piedmont and Dauphiny." Perpetuated from the time of Claude of Turin, the separatists in Piedmont appear to have commingled later on with the sectaries of Lyonnese origin under the common name of Waldenses. Driven by persecution from the plain of Lombardy the Waldenses took refuge in the valleys of the neighbouring Alps, where for many centuries they maintained, in opposition to the Church of Rome, their witness to New Testament teachings. An ancient manuscript copy of their treatise, "The Noble Lesson" exists in the library of Geneva, and another in the library at Cambridge. The date of this famous composition is A . D . , 1100.

The record of the date of "The Noble Lesson " is preserved in the opening lines of the composition:

" O Frayres entende une noble Leycon
Souvent deven veglar e star en oreson
Car nos veen aquest mont esser pres del chavon.
Mot curios deorian esser de bonas obras far
Car nos veen aquest mont de la fin apropiar.
Benha mil et cent an compli entierement
Que fo scripta lara, que sen alderier temp."

Leger's translation of this ancient Waldensian confession is given as follows in the antiquated French of 230 years ago.

" O Freres ecoutes une noble Lecon,
Souvent devons veiller et etre en oraison.
Car nous voyons ce monde etre pres de sa fin.
Bien soignens devrions etre a faire bonnes ceuvres,
Car nous voyons ce monde de sa fin approcher :
Ily a mil et cent ans accomplis tout a fait
Que fut ecrite l'heure qu'estions es derniers terns.""

In this remarkable composition " the following doctrines are drawn out with much simplicity and beauty:--the origin of sin in the fall of Adam, and its transmission to all men; the offered redemption through the death of Jesus Christ, who " underwent agonies, such that the soul separated from the body, to save sinners;" the union and cooperation of the three Persons of the blessed Trinity in man's salvation ; the obligation and spirituality of the moral law under the gospel; the duties of prayer, watchfulness, self-denial, unworldliness, humility, love, as " the way of Jesus Christ" ; their

enforcement by the prospect of death and judgment, and the world's near ending; by the narrowness too of the way of life, and the fewness of those that find it; as also by the hope of the coming glory at the judgment and revelation of Jesus Christ. Besides which, we find in it a protest against the Romish system generally, as one of soul-destroying idolatry; against masses for the dead, the doctrine of purgatory, the confessional, priestly absolution, and priestly mercenariness; and "the suspicion is half hinted, and apparently half formed, that, though a personal Antichrist might perhaps be expected, yet popery itself, with its followers was probably one form of Antichrist." 1 The astounding development of papal ambition in Innocent III, and the papal war of extermination which followed against the Albigenses and Waldenses, led the latter, early in the thirteenth century, to accept as an article of their creed the doctrine "That the papacy and Church of Rome were to be regarded as the Apocalyptic Harlot Babylon, and by consequence Antichrist," a doctrine to which they held unalterably ever afterwards." 2 This doctrine they embodied in their Treatise on Antichrist, and other works. The idea of Antichrist as a person or power professedly Christian in character is seen slowly dawning on the mind in the Apocalyptic commentaries of the Middle Ages. Primasius, Bishop of the Carthaginian province, whose name appears in a Council held at Constantinople in 553,- in his "Commentary on the Apocalypse" (discovered with his other works in the monastery of St. Theuderic, near Lyons, in the sixteenth century) lays stress on Antichrist's affected impersonation of, or substitution of himself for Christ; and blasphemous appropriation to himself of Christ's proper dignity. He seems to view the second two-horned beast of Revelation 13, as ecclesiastical rulers, "hypocritically feigning likeness to the Lamb, in order the better to war against him: and by the mask of a Christian profession, under which mask the devil puts himself before men, acting out the Mediator."

The venerable Bede, whose death in a Northumbrian monastery took place A . D . 735, similarly interprets in his " Commentary on the Apocalypse," the lamb-like beast of Revelation 13, as meaning " Antichrist's pseudo-Christian false prophets." " He shews the horns of a lamb, that he may secretly introduce the person of the dragon. For by the false assumption of sanctity, which the Lord truly had in Himself, he pretends that a matchless life and wisdom are his. Of this beast the Lord says, 'Beware of false prophets' which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves."

Ambrose Anspert, a Latin expositor whose era was A. D. 760 or 770, and dedicated his Apocalyptic commentary to Pope Stephen, interpreted the second beast of Revelation 13 as "signifying the preachers and ministers of Antichrist; feigning the lamb, in order to carry out their hostility against the Lamb; just as Antichrist too, the first beast's head wounded to death, would, he says, exhibit himself pro Christo, in Christ's place."

Andreas, Bishop of Caesarea in Cappadocia, an expositor in the Greek Church during the latter part of the fifth century, explains after Irenaeus the two-horned beast as Antichrist's false prophet, " exhibiting a show of piety, and with pretense of being a lamb when in fact a wolf." "With regard to the harlot seated on the beast in Revelation 17, he observes that Rome had been

judged by certain earlier writers to be the city intended, because of its being built on seven hills; but he objects its having then for some time lost its imperial majesty: unless indeed, he adds, very remarkably, this should in some way be restored to her, "a supposition involving the fact of a previous overthrow of the city now ruling," ie., Constantinople.

Berengaud, a Latin expositor of the Apocalypse, towards the close of the ninth century, explains the beast-riding harlot of Revelation 17 as Rome, and her predicted burning and spoiling by the ten kings, as the destruction of ancient Rome by the Gothic barbarians, with reference, however, as Rome was professedly Christian at that time, to the reprobate in her. 4

Before the conclusion of the eleventh century, the papacy under Gregory VII " had risen to such a height of power as well as of pretension, and abused it to the enforcement of such unchristian dogmas, albeit in the professed character of Christ's vicar, as to force on the minds of the more discerning, surmising about the Popes and Papal Rome, and their possible prefiguration in Apocalyptic prophecy, scarce dreamed of before. Already, just before the year 1,000, Gherbert of Rheims had spoken in solemn council of the Pope upon his lofty throne, radiant in gold and purple; and how that if destitute of charity, he was Antichrist sitting in the temple of God. And Berenger, in the eleventh century, as if apocalyptically instructed, and with special reference to the Pope's enforcement of the antichristian dogma of transubstantiation, declared the Roman See to be not the apostolic seat, but the seat of Satan." 1 Joachim Abbas, elected abbot of the monastery of Curacio in Calabria, about the year 1180, who had a greater repute as an expounder of prophecy than any other in the Middle Ages, taught in his valuable " Commentary on the Apocalypse," that as Christ is both King and Priest, Satan would " put forth the first beast of Revelation 13, to usurp His Kingship, and the second to usurp His Priestly dignity: the latter having at its head some mighty prelate, some universal pontiff, as it were, over the whole world, who may be the very Antichrist of whom St. Paul speaks as being extolled above all that is called God, and worshipped ; sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself as God."

Thus gradually the idea of the professedly Christian character of the predicted Antichrist penetrated the minds of leading expositors in the Middle Ages, and the view that the professing Christian Church would be the sphere of his manifestation. The notion that the foretold break up of the Roman Empire had not taken place, because the Greek Byzantine ruler was still, after the Gothic catastrophe, called the Roman Emperor, and that therefore the rise of Antichrist should still be regarded as a future event, long hindered the application of the prophecies concerning Antichrist to the papacy: as also the supposition entertained in the Middle Ages that the period in which they lived was part of the Apocalyptic millennium precursive to the three-and-a-half-years' season of Satan's loosing, and the manifestation of Antichrist. " The passing away of the millennial year 1,000 without any such awful mundane catastrophe, loosing of Satan, and manifestation of Antichrist, as had been popularly expected, tended to make men earnestly reason and question both on the long received millennial theory, and on that of the Antichrist intended in prophecy, more than before.

Moreover, the incoming of the twelfth century from Christ, promised (should the world, last through it) to open to expositors the first possible opportunity of some way applying the year-day principle (which had never been recognized) not to the smaller three-and-a-half-days' prophetic period only, but also to the great prophetic period of the 1,260 days, without abandonment of the expectation, 3ver intended, of Christ's second advent being near."

I. The Identification of Babylon and Antichrist.

IN the three centuries which preceded the Reformation the papacy was seen by men in a new light, and with growing clearness. The development of the "Man of Sin" reached its culmination, and the veil of professed sanctity which had concealed his real character fell from his shoulders. The papacy stood self-revealed.

Victorious over the imperial power in the middle of the thirteenth century, the popes of Rome "displayed far more ambition, arrogance, cruelty, and rapacity, than the kingdoms of this world with which they had struggled for the mastery." "Self-constituted vicegerents of the Almighty, the popes now sat 'as God in the temple of God,' and compelled the nations of the earth to crouch in vassalage before them. They had enslaved alike the souls and bodies of their fellow creatures."1 Boniface VIII who ascended the pontifical throne in 1294 "surpassed even Innocent III in the arrogance of his pretensions, launching his spiritual thunderbolts against states and empires, summoning princes to his tribunal that he might as an infallible judge settle their controversies, and laying claim to supreme dominion over the monarchs of the earth."2 During the period of seventy years which began in 1305, a fierce struggle for the papacy was carried on between rival factions. A set of popes and anti-popes, in Rome and Avignon, fought for the tiara; pope hurled against pope the thunderbolts of anathemas and excommunications. The wealth of the papacy was enormous; the extortion and appropriation of benefices, the sale of bishoprics, of sacraments, of indulgences, yielded a golden tide of riches, "swelling the pomp, and augmenting the retinue of the pretended successors of the fisherman of Galilee."3 All efforts to reform the Church proved abortive. "The vices, flagrant sins, and public crimes of the popes of the last half of the fifteenth century, and the early part of the sixteenth, gave them a conspicuous place in the annals of infamy. Paul II (1464-1471) was a great drunkard, put up all offices to sale, and spent all his days in weighing money and precious stones. He also directed an infamous war against the Hussites; oppressed his subjects, tortured the members of a literary institution because he affected to discover in it a dangerous conspiracy against the Pope, and died in the possession of a large treasure Sixtus IV was not only guilty of conspiracy, and of kindling the flames of war, but he was also dissolute, avaricious, intemperate, ferocious and bloodthirsty. Innocent VIII established a bank at Rome for the sale of pardons. Each sin had its price which might be paid at the convenience of the criminal. Alexander VI, and his son Caesar, were literally monsters in human shape. In early life, after he had become a cardinal, he was publicly censured for his gross debauchery. Afterwards he had five acknowledged children by a Roman matron, named Vanozia. After the death of Innocent in 1492, he succeeded by

the grossest bribery in securing for himself the triple crown.

He had become rich through his preferment, and through inheritance from his uncle Cahxtus III. Of twenty-five cardinals, only five did not sell their votes. He is known to have sent four mules laden with silver to one, and to have given to another a sum of five thousand gold crowns. After his elevation he plunged without scruple and remorse into the practice of every vice, and the perpetration of every crime. His bastards were now brought forward and acknowledged as his children. The papal palace became the scene of Bacchanalian orgies. Licentious songs swelled by a chorus of revellers, echoed through its banqueting hall. Indecent play*s were acted in the presence of the pontiff. He himself quaffed large draughts of wine from the foaming goblet. He indulged in licentiousness of the grossest description. . . . Venality prevailed in the papal court. The highest dignities in the Church were conferred without shame upon the best bidders. He committed the greatest crimes for the advancement of his children. One of them, Caesar Borgia, was a fiend incarnate. The assassin's dagger, and the poison bowl were the constant instruments of his vengeance. Almost every night some assassination which he had ordered took place in the streets of Rome. The inhabitants were in constant terror of their lives. He caused the murder of his brother, of whom he was jealous, because he was preferred by a mistress with whom they were both intimate. These deeds were possible only in the spot where the highest temporal and spiritual authority were united in the same person. The palace of the popes was, in fact, a pandemonium. At length the reign of Alexander came to a sudden termination. He perished by a poisoned draught which Caesar had prepared for one of the cardinals whose wealth excited the cupidity of the Borgias. Multitudes which gazed on that livid corpse as it lay in state in St. Peter's Church, breathed a fervent thanksgiving to Almighty God for deliverance from the tyranny of an execrable monster, whose crimes had polluted the land, disgraced human nature, and placed him on a level with the very beasts that perish."The crimes, impurities, cruelties and tyrannies of these and other popes of the period opened the eyes of the nations, while the contemporaneous intervention of printing, and revival of learning, poured a blaze of light on these deeds of darkness. "The world stood aghast with horror at the contemplation of deeds as bad as those perpetrated in the darkest period of pagan antiquity."1 A distinguished Roman Catholic historian, whose testimony on this subject is not likely to be questioned, acknowledges the corrupt state of the Church of Rome before the Reformation in emphatic terms: "For some years," says Bellarmine, "before the Lutheran and Calvinistic heresies were published, there was not (as contemporary authors testify) any severity in ecclesiastical judicatories, any discipline with regard to morals, any knowledge of sacred literature, any reverence for Divine things, there was not almost any religion remaining."2

RECOGNITION OF THE FULFILMENT OF THE PROPHECIES RELATING TO THE "MAN OF SIN," OR ANTICHRIST

History had interpreted prophecy, and justified the predictions in the Word of God. Men's eyes were opened. This then was what apostles and prophets had foretold. The thing predicted, the thing unexpected, the incredible thing,

had come to pass. Antichrist was come. The "Man of Sin" was there, clothed in scarlet and purple, adorned with gold, and precious stones, and pearls; crowned with the priestly mitre, and the proud diadem of the tiara; the VICECHRIST; an enemy of the gospel; a persecutor of the saints; a monster of iniquity; he was there, lifted up at his coronation to sit on the high altar of St. Peter's; worshipped by cardinals; adored by superstitious multitudes; a usurper of the place and prerogatives of God; a false idol; covetous, cruel, blood-stained, "drunken with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus." He was there in the seven-hilled city; he was there in the temple of God. Yes, this was he. Such were the convictions and confessions of God's faithful saints and servants of those days.

In examining their testimony one cannot but be impressed by the spirit which animated the Mediaeval witnesses to gospel truth; for such they were, their whole contention against the system of Rome being on the ground of its antagonism to "the truth as it is in Jesus"; "the faith once delivered to the saints." The seriousness of their spirit, their whole-hearted earnestness, their depth of conviction, the simplicity and singleness of their aim, the unflinching courage, the boldness of their attitude and tone, recall the confessors of Apostolic days, "the men who had been with Jesus." In the presence of this long line of "witnesses," one seems to hear a voice as from heaven saying, "Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." As the eyes of the mind are opened, we come to see that the spirit which animated and upheld these noble men and women, was none other than the Spirit of Jesus; that He Himself was in them, and that that was the profound secret of their utter unworldliness, their bold antagonism to error and superstition, their deep humility, their sanctity and strength. In these His servants and followers Jesus Christ walked on earth during those long dark centuries. Risen from the dead, He repeated in them the testimony He had borne to the truths of "the Everlasting Gospel" in the days of His earthly life.

And the three and a half years of His own sackcloth clothed testimony had their parallel in the three and a half--times "of their sackcloth clothed" witnessing; the twelve hundred and sixty literal days of the one answering to the twelve hundred and sixty years of the other; whilst His death and resurrection "on the third day," were paralleled by their death and subsequent resurrection after that three years' interval during which their enemies pronounced their testimony extinct. Thus did the Lord of Glory pass twice through analogous terrestrial experiences; first, in His own person, and next in the persons of His saints and followers, the members of His body, His flesh and His bones; first in the briefer period, and then in the longer; the one period answering to the other, on the prophetic scale of "a day for a year." Here is one of the principal keys to the times and visions of the Apocalypse. Here is the key to the story of the Church of the Middle Ages, and it is furnished by the word of prophecy as compared with the facts of history.

When with our understanding thus opened to the meaning of this long central period of the history of the Christian Church, intervening between the fall of Paganism in the fourth century, and the Reformation of the sixteenth and

seventeenth centuries, we examine the records relating to the Paulicians, the Albigenses, the Waldenses, the Wyclifites, the Lollards, and the Hussites, who in Eastern and Western Europe, in Armenia, in Bulgaria, in the South of * France, in the Alps of Piedmont, in Lombardy, in England, and Bohemia, kept the lamp of gospel testimony burning all through the Middle Ages, unextinguished by the superstitions, apostasies, and persecutions of those dismal times, and handed it on to the firm grasp of the Reformers, to be lifted up and set on a candlestick in the midst of Europe, and in the eyes of the nations, to shine as the great luminary of modern days, we recognize the unbroken continuity of the testimony of the true and living Church of Christ, and the fulfilment of His promise that against the Church He founded eighteen hundred years ago upon a Rock, the gates of hell should never prevail; that the living Church should continue, and its witness continue, un-conquered and unchanged, from age to age; the very gospel sounded forth by His lips, and by those of His apostles, sounding still as an undying testimony, from century to century, in the utterances of His faithful saints, until triumphant over all opposition, it should fill the world as the voice of many waters and mighty thunders, and as the music of harpers harping with their harps.

And so we turn, though it be but for a brief and superficial examination, to the records of those days before the Reformation, and open the histories of the Albigenses, Waldenses, Lollards, and Hussites; the story of Constantine, of Sylvanus the Paulician, of Sergius; of Claude of Turin, of the Publicani in England; of the ancient Leonists, of the French Vallenses, and Peter Waldo; of Wycliffe and Huss, and Jerome of Prague.

The memorable story is told in such works as Sismondi's history of the crusade against the Albigenses; in Allix on the Churches of the Albigenses; in Faber's valuable book on the history and theology of the ancient Vallenses and Albigenses; in "Jean Leger's folio on the history of the Vaudois; in the "authentic details of the Valdenses "by Bresse; in Gilly's "Waldensian Researches"; in Dr. Alexis Mutton's "Israel of the Alps"; in the "Historical defence of the Waldenses "by Jeane Rodolphe Pegran ; in the valuable volume on "The Churches of Piedmont,"by Moreland, Cromwell's commissioner; in the illustrated book on the Protestant Valleys of Piedmont, Dauphiny, and the Ban de la Roche by Dr. Beattie ; in Foxe's "Acts and Monuments of the Martyrs"; in the writings of Wycliffe; in the voluminous works of John Huss; in the history of "The Reformation and Anti-reformation in Bohemia"; in McCree's history of the progress and suppression of the Reformation in Italy, and in Spain; in Limborch's massive work on the history of the Inquisition; in Llorente's history of the Inquisition in Spain from its establishment to the reign of Ferdinand VII, an author who had been "Secretary of the Inquisition "; and in Elliott's *Horae Apocalypticae* on "The Witnesses "of the Middle Ages; works which cast a flood of light on the history of the long line of Christian confessors in pre-Reformation times, and the noble army of martyrs of those never to be forgotten days.

And in the forefront of these testimonies we boldly place Bossuet's scornful work on the "Variations of the Protestant Churches" in which he pours forth the vials of contempt and obliquy on those despicable heretics the Waldenses, and Albigenses, and their predecessors the Paulicians of Armenia, and

Bulgaria, the poor men of Lyons, the Bohemian Brethren, the impious and pernicious English arch-heretic Wycliffe, the Taborites, the Calixtines, and others "of whom the world was not worthy. "As we turn over the pages of the eloquent Bishop of Meaux, the friend of Louis XIV, and persecutor of Madame Guyon and the Huguenots, we realize the truth of the Apocalyptic description of the Mediaeval "witnesses "to the gospel, which depicts them as "sackcloth clothed"for there in the pages of Bossuet's work these men of God stand dressed in the sackcloth of opprobrium. They are accused of ignorance, of error, of Manicheism, of schism, of hypocrisy, of presumption, of vain pretensions; they are treated as the scum of the earth, and "the oftscouring of all things."The learned and noble Leger, "one of the Vaudois Barbes (or pastors) and their most celebrated historian" is stigmatized "as unquestionably the most bold and ignorant of all mankind ! "Wycliffe, the blessed translator of the Bible into the English tongue, "subverted all order in the Church and State, and filled both with tumult and sedition."The poor men of Lyons were " obstinate heretics."Though St. Bernard testified of the "Thoulousian heretics "that "their manners are irreproachable, they oppress none, they injure no man; their countenances are mortified and wan with fasting; they eat not their bread like sluggards, but labour to gain a livelihood,"yet "their piety is but disguise. Inspect the foundation, it was pride, it was hatred against the clergy, it was rancour against the Church; this made them drink in the whole poison of an abominable heresy."

These heretics "never ceased inveighing against human inventions, and citing the Holy Scriptures, whence they always had a text on hand on all occasions."This was their crime, and it was the crime which later on produced the Reformation, and gave birth to the temporal and spiritual liberties of the modern world.

We pursue Bossuet no further. Faber has answered him in his learned work on the true history and doctrines of the ancient Vallenses and Albigenses; and in "The Variations of Popery"Edgar has turned the tables on the Bishop of Meaux, and has shewn that it is the Church of Rome that has swerved from the teachings of the Apostles, not the Waldenses, Wycliffites, Hussites and Reformers, and that in all her leading and characteristic doctrines Rome has declined and departed from the faith of Apostolic times.

And now we reach the question, as to how this long line of Mediaeval witnesses to gospel truth interpreted the predictions in the Apocalypse, and kindred prophecies, with reference to the Antichrist, or "Man of Sin."Did they recognize the fulfilment of these prophecies in the papacy? Rome stood before them, revealed in her thousand superstitions, her proud pretensions, her persecuting actions, The head of that Apostate Church stood forth before their eyes crowned with the glittering tiara of a triple sovereignty, in heaven, earth, and hell, claiming to be the Vicar of Christ, and a Vice-God on earth. Did they recognize his portrait in the Word of God? Did they write his name beneath that portrait, and leave their testimony for the enlightenment of later years? They did. And having written it, they sealed the testimony with their blood. Two hundred and fifty years before Wycliffe stood forth as the champion of Protestant truth; three hundred years before Huss and Jerome confronted the Council of Constance; four hundred years

before Luther published his ninety-five theses in Wittemberg, the Waldenses wrote their treatise on Antichrist, a copy of which is contained in Leger's folio volume, dated A . D . 1120. That treatise whose doctrine is the same as their catechism dated A . D . 1100, and was the doctrine they faithfully maintained century after century, thus begins—"Antichrist es falseta de damnation teterna cuberta de specie de la Verita . . . ap-pella Antichrist, O Babylonia, O quarta Bestia, O Meretrix, O home de pecca, filli de perdition."The treatise is given in full, with a French translation in Leger's work, pp. 71-83. In it is taught"that the Papal or Romish system was that of Antichrist, which from infancy in Apostolic times had grown gradually, by the increase of its constituent parts, to the stature of a full-grown man: that its prominent characteristics were to defraud God of the worship due to Him, rendering it to creatures, whether departed saints, relics, images, or Antichrist, ie: the antichristian body itself;—to defraud Christ, by attributing justification and forgiveness to Antichrist's authority and words, to saints' intercessions, to the merit of men's own performances, and to the fire of purgatory ; to defraud the Holy Spirit, by Attributing regeneration and sanctification to the opus operatum of the two sacraments;—that the origin of this antichristian religion was the covetousness of the priesthood ; its tendency to lead men away from Christ; its essence a vain ceremonial; its foundations the false notions of grace and truth."

"Antichrist,"says this treatise,"is covered with the appearance of truth and righteousness,"is "outwardly adorned with Christ's name, offices, scriptures, and sacraments,"but though "covered and adorned with the semblance of Christ, His Church, and faithful members, opposes himself to the salvation wrought by Christ."He "perverts unto himself"the worship "properly due to God alone,""he robs and deprives Christ of His merits, with the whole sufficiency of grace, righteousness, regeneration, remission of sins, sanctification, confirmation, and spiritual nourishment; and imputes and attributes them to his own authority, to his own doings, or to the saints and their intercession, or to the fire of purgatory. Thus he separates the people from Christ, and leads them away to the things already mentioned."1 "He attributes the regeneration by the Holy Spirit to a dead outward faith": "on which same faith he ministers orders and the other sacraments": "he rests the whole religion and sanctity of the people upon his Mass": "he does everything to be seen, and to glut his insatiable avarice."He allows manifest sins without, ecclesiastical censure and excommunication"; "he defends his unity not by the Holy Spirit, but by secular power"; "he hates, persecutes, and makes inquisition after, and robs and puts to death the members of Christ."These are the principal works of Antichrist."And this "sys- tem"of iniquity "taken together is called Antichrist, or Babylonia, or the fourth beast, or the Harlot, or the 'Man of Sin,' the son of perdition."

Such also, was the belief of the Albigenses. "All agreed,"says Sismondi, "in regarding the Church of Rome as having absolutely perverted Christianity, and in maintaining that it was she who was designated in the Apocalypse by the name of the whore of Babylonia."

Even in the Romish Church the same view began to make its appearance towards

the close of the twelfth century. The celebrated Joachim Abbas in his "Commentary on the Apocalypse," written in 1183 declared that the harlot city reigning over the kings of the earth undoubtedly meant Rome, and that the false prophet foretold in the Apocalypse would probably issue out of the bosom of the Church; and that Antichrist might even then be in the world though the hour of his revelation had not yet come. Joachim was an abbot of the Roman Catholic Church in Calabria, learned in the Holy Scriptures, a deep student of the prophetic word. A few years later Almeric and his disciples taught that Rome was Babylon, and the Roman Pope Antichrist. Jean Pierre D'Olive, "another professed follower of Joachim, and leader in Languedoc of the austerer and more spiritual section of the recently formed Franciscan body, in a work entitled "Pastils on the Apocalypse," affirmed that 'the Church of Rome was the whore of Babylon, the mother of harlots, the same that St. John beheld sitting upon a scarlet coloured beast, full of names of blasphemy, having seven heads and ten horns,' and the chief and proper Antichrist a pseudo-Pope; also very remarkably, that some reformation, with fuller effusion of Gospel light might be expected prior to Rome's final predicted destruction, in order that, through its rejection of that light, God's destruction of it might be the rather justified before the world."

In the following century, Robert Grossthead, Bishop of Lincoln (A . D . 1235-1253), boldly proclaimed the Pope to be Antichrist. "Christ came into the world to save and win souls," said he, "therefore he that feareth not to destroy souls, may he not worthily be called Antichrist?" He foretold on his death-bed, with tokens of the deepest emotion that "the Church should not be delivered from her Egyptian servitude but by violence^ force, and the bloody sword."1

In the same century the immortal Dante (A . D . 1265- 1321) denounced the Church of Rome as the Babylon of the Apocalypse, painting the papacy in his poem on Hell, Purgatory and Paradise, in vivid colours, as the world beheld it then.

"Woe to thee, Simon Magus. Woe to you
His wretched followers, who the things of God
Which should be wedded unto goodness, them
Rapacious as ye are, do prostitute
For gold and silver.

Your avarice
O'ercasts the world with mourning, underfoot
Treading the good, and raising bad men up.
Of shepherds like to you the evangelist
Was ware, when her, who sits upon the waves,
With kings in filthy whoredom he beheld;
She who with seven heads towered at her birth,
And from ten horns her proof of glory drew,
Long as her spouse in virtue took delight.
Of gold and silver ye have made your God,
Differing wherein from the idolater,
But that he worships one, a hundred ye?
Ah, Constantine, to how much ill gave birth

Not thy conversion, but that plenteous dower
Which the first wealthy Father gained from thee."

In his poem on Paradise he says:-

"My place he who usurps on earth hath made
A common sewer of puddle and of blood.
No purpose was of ours that the keys
Which were vouchsafed me should for ensigns serve
Unto the banners which do levy war
On the baptized: nor I for vigil mark
Set upon sold and lying privileges,
Which makes me oft to bicker, and turn red.
In shepherd's clothing, greedy wolves below
Range wide o'er all the pastures. Arm of God Why longer sleepest thou?"

At the end of his poem on Paradise, he refers to the Apostle John as:-

"The seer
That e'er he died, saw all the grievous times
Of the fair bride, who with the lance and nails
Was won."

Dante died in 1321. Petrarch, who was crowned with the laurel of poetry by the Roman Senate in 1341, drew in eloquent words the same picture of the papacy.

Three years after Dante's death, or about the year 1324, Wycliffe was born, the Morning Star of the Reformation. Grand and solitary witness, he stood forth, Bible in hand, 150 years before the days of Luther, a light shining in the darkness of the Middle Ages; like some mountain-top, while all the rest of the world lies in darkness, illuminated with the glory of the unrisen sun. He wrote a library of learned and powerful disquisitions, but his great work was the translation of the Bible into the English language. "The Scripture only is true" was his golden maxim, and he circulated as well as translated the priceless Word of God.

Roused to concern about his soul in his twenty-third year, at the time of the fearful pestilence which cut off so large a proportion of the population of the world in 1345, he reached spiritual conviction which was deep and abiding. "The pestilence subsided in England in 1348. The earliest of the works attributed to Wycliffe bears the date 1356, eight years later. This piece is entitled "Last age of the Church." The end of the world seemed to be approaching, and the coming of Antichrist at hand. In support of this view Wycliffe cites among others the Abbot Joachim, whose work on the Apocalypse he had read.

Later on Wycliffe came to regard the Pope of Rome seated in his blood-stained garments on the high altar in the Central Church of Christendom as the "Man of Sin," sitting in the temple of God, the true Antichrist of prophecy. Opening his English Bible, whose facsimile in black letter print, lies before us, we turn with interest to the "secounde pistel to tessalonicentes," and

read the words bearing on the papacy as he wrote them in 1380, "that no man deceyve you in any maner for no but departynge awaye schal come firste: and the man of synne schal be schewide, the sone of perdicionne ... so that he sitte in the temple of God : shewynge hymself as he be God . . . the mysterie (or pry vete) of wickednesse worchith nowe."

In his translation of the seventeenth chapter of the Apocalypse, he writes concerning Babylon the great: "I siye a womman sittyng on a reed beast ful of names of blasfemye : havynge sevene hedis, and ten horns . ' . . a womman drunken of the blood of seyntis and of the blood of martiris of Jhu. (Jesus), and when I siye hire I wondride with greet wondryng"

Yes, Wycliffe beheld her, as did John the blessed disciple of our Lord; the one in the visions of prophecy, the other in the facts of history. Seeing Rome in her true character, Wycliffe wrote his treatise "Speculum de Antichristo" (Mirror of Antichrist) in which he unveils "the deceits of Antichrist, and his clerkes." It is said openly, he observes, "that there is nothing lawful among Christian men without leave of the Bishop of Rome though he be Antichrist, full of simony and heresy. For commonly of all priests he is most contrary to Christ, both in life and teaching, and he maintaineth more sin by privileges, excommunications, and long pleas, and he is most proud against Christ's meekness, and most covetous of worldly goods and worships." To subject the Church to such a sovereignty, he says, must assuredly be to subject her to the power of Antichrist.

Sedulous to maintain the preaching of God's pure Gospel, in his tract entitled, "Of good preaching priests," he says:- "The first general point of poor priests that preach in England is this—that the law of God be well known, taught, maintained, magnified. The second is— that great open sin that reigneth in divers states be destroyed, and also the heresy and hypocrisy of Antichrist and his followers." He calls the ravening prelates and their officers "the clerks of Antichrist," and argues "that Christian men of the realm should not be robbed by simony of the first-fruits, to go to the Bishop of Rome . . . that Christian men should give more heed to Christ's gospel and His life than to any rules from the sinful bishops of the world; or else they forsake Christ, and take Antichrist and Satan for their chief governor. 1

"Worldly clerks show themselves traitors to God, and to their liege lord the king, whose law and regalia they destroy by their treason in favour of the Pope, whom they nourish in the works, of Antichrist, that they may have their worldly state, and opulence, and lusts maintained by him."2 "Antichrist and his clerks travail to destroy Holy Writ," teaching " that the Church is of more authority and more credence than any gospel." Writing on Indulgences, Wycliffe says, "This doctrine is a manifold blasphemy against Christ, inasmuch as the Pope is extolled above his humanity and deity, and so above all that is called God— pretensions which according to the declaration of the apostle agree with the character of Antichrist."2

"The same may be said concerning the fiction of the keys of Antichrist ... as might be expected from Antichrist, he sets forth new laws, and insists under pain of the heaviest censure, that the whole Church militant shall believe in them, so that anything determined therein shall stand as though it were a

part of the gospel of Jesus Christ.”

“. . . Arise,” he cries, “O soldiers of Christ. Be wise and fling away these things, along with the other fictions of the prince of darkness, and put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and confide undoubtedly in your own weapons, and sever from the Church such frauds of Antichrist, and teach the people that in Christ alone, and in His law, and in His members, they should trust; that in so doing they may be saved through His goodness, and learn above all things honestly to detect the devices of Antichrist”³

Summoned to appear before his judges at Oxford, Wycliffe stood alone and unfriended. The Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishops of Lincoln, Norwich, Hereford, Worcester, Salisbury, and London were there, sitting in judgment, together with the Chancellor of the University, and many of the inferior clergy. Forty years had passed since Oxford had first become the home of the Reformer. He was now gray with age and toil, but full of mental activity and divine illumination. Like another Elijah, he stood alone amid the generation of his countrymen, witnessing in clear, uncompromising terms to the eternal truths of God’s Holy Word. Banished from Oxford he continued to write in defense of the gospel to the end of his days. His closing years were passed in full expectation of imprisonment and martyrdom. Seized with paralysis in December, 1384, on the last day of the month and of the year, his noble spirit passed into the world of rest, and everlasting reward.

Wycliffe’s doctrines spread, not only over England, but to the continent, where they were the means of the enlightenment of John Huss. They were branded with condemnation by the Council of Constance, and the remains of the Reformer, by the command of the Pope, taken up and burned. His ashes were cast into the brook of Lutterworth, whence they were conveyed to the Avon, the Severn, and the sea; fit emblems of his doctrine now dispersed over the world.

A notable work entitled “The Ploughman’s Complaint” written by an unknown author about the time of Wycliffe, and subsequently reprinted by Tyndale and Foxe, the martyrologist, after declaring that none is more against Christ than he that “maketh himselfe Christe’s Vicar in earth,” terminates with the prayer, “Lord, gene our king and his lords hart to defenden Thy true shepheardes and Thy sheepe from out of the wolves’ mouthes, and grace to know Thee that Thou art the true Christ, the Son of the heavenly Father, from the Antichrist that is the source of pride. And, Lord, gene us Thy poore sheepe patience and strength to suffer for Thy law, the cruelness of the mischievous wolves. And, Lord, as Thou hast promised, shorten these days. Lord, we axen this now, for more need was there never.”¹

The followers of Wycliffe took the same ground. Boldly they tore away the mask from the pretended vicar of Christ. Among them Walter Brute occupies a place of prominence as a faithful witness to the truth, whose testimony is “detailed to us by the venerable Foxe from original documents.”

Brought up in the University of Oxford, Walter Brute, then a graduate, was accused of declaring that “the Pope is Antichrist, and a seducer of the people, and utterly against the law and life of Christ.” In speaking thus he

had blasphemed against the High Priest of Christendom. He had blasphemed Christ in the person of His sole representative. What had he to say? Walter Brute stands there solitary, defenseless, but courageous. He dares to speak the truth before these scarlet-cloaked doctors of the Church. Familiar with Wycliffe's New Testament, a student of the Word of God, he grounds his defense on the inspired words of prophecy. Did not the Pope answer to the Man of Sin prophesied by St. Paul? Was he not the chief of the false Christs, prophesied by Christ, who were to come in His name? Was not Rome the Babylon of the Apocalypse? Let it be admitted that this had been a mystery long hidden. "But if so, and only recently revealed, it would not be unaccordant with God's dealings and revelations. 'Make the heart of the people fat, that seeing they may not see,' was said by Isaiah of long-permitted judicial blindness in the Jews; and again by Daniel it was written, ' seal up the vision till the time of the end.' Now had come the time when the veil of mystery should be removed."2

"Very vain,"he says, "had been the usual and long received ideas about Antichrist: ideas as of one that was to be born in Babylon of the tribe of Dan, to give himself out as the Messiah come for the Jews' salvation, and preach three and a half years where Christ preached; to kill Enoch and Elijah, and be himself finally slain by lightning."The times of Daniel and the Apocalypse, he argues, connected with the Antichrist, were symbolical of larger periods; and should be interpreted as the "seventy weeks " extending to the past advent of Messiah on the year-day scale. As the seventy "weeks "after which Christ was slain meant weeks of years, not days, so the 1,290 days of prophecy meant 1,290 years; a period which he noticed extended from the placing of the desolating idol by Hadrian in the Holy Place, to the "revealing, or in other words the exposure of Antichrist,"in these latter days. As to that woman seated on the persecuting wild beast in Revelation 17, expounded by the angel to mean the city on seven hills, reigning over the kings of the earth, whose power was to continue forty-two months, or 1,260 days, this was Rome, whose duration was 1,260 years. Did not the ten days of Smyrna's suffering signify the ten years of Diocletian's persecution? Thus then, the 1,260 days represented 1,260 years. As to the Popes, "with their assumed kingly and priestly power, speaking like a dragon, and allowing none to sell their spiritual pardons but such as bore their mark, his name, identical with his number, 666, was Dux Cleri. "My counsel is,"says Walter Brute, "let the buyer be aware of those marks of the beast. For after the fall of Babylon, "If any man hath worshipped the beast and his image, and hath received his mark on his forehead, or on his hand, he shall drink of the wine of God's wrath, and be tormented with fire and brimstone in the sight of the holy angels, and of the Lamb; and the smoke of their torments shall ascend evermore."

"John Huss and "Jerome of Prague were contemporaries of Walter Brute, and bore the same testimony, for which they were burned at the stake by the Council of Constance in May, 1416. In a letter to Lord John de Clum, Huss declares that the Church of Rome is the Harlot Babylon "whereof mention is made in the Apocalypse." Writing to the people of Prague, he warns them to be "the more circumspect,"because "Antichrist being stirred up against them deviseth divers persecutions."

When cast into prison for the Word of God, he wrote thus to his friends and followers:- "Master John Huss, in hope, the servant of God, to all the faithful who love Him and His statutes, wisheth the truth and grace of God. . . Surely even at this day is the malice, the abomination, and filthiness of Antichrist marked in the Pope and others of this Council. . . . Oh, how acceptable a thing should it be, if time would suffer me to disclose their wicked acts, which are now apparent; that the faithful servants of God might know them. I trust in God that He will send after me those that shall be more valiant; and there are also at this day that shall make more manifest the malice of Antichrist, and shall give their lives to the death for the truth of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall give, both to you and me, the joys of life everlasting."

This epistle was "written upon St. John Baptist's Day, in prison and in cold irons. I having this meditation with myself that John was beheaded in his prison and bonds for the word of God."1

The year following that of the martyrdom of Huss and Jerome, witnessed the burning of Lord Cobham, at Smithfield. When brought before King Henry V and admonished to submit himself to the Pope as an obedient child, this was his answer:-"As touching the Pope, and his spirituality, I owe them neither suit nor service, forasmuch as I know him by the Scriptures to be the great Antichrist, the son of perdition, the adversary of God, and an abomination standing in the Holy Place."

For this testimony Lord Cobham was drawn on a hurdle to St. Giles' Fields, and "hanged there by the middle in chains of iron and so consumed alive in the fire, praising the name of God as long as life lasted."

II. The Pre-Reformation War Against the Protestant Witnesses.

Not in a merely metaphorical sense was the persecution waged against the Albigenses, the Waldenses, and the Hussites, a "war" but in stern reality. It commenced by a crusade against the Albigenses in A . D . 1208. In his history of the period Sismondi tells us that " Innocent III, impelled by hatred, had offered to those who should take up the cross against the Provincials the utmost extent of indulgence which his predecessors had ever granted to those who laboured for the deliverance of the Holy Land. As soon as these new Crusaders had assumed the sacred sign of the Cross, which to distinguish themselves from those of the East, they wore on the breast instead of the shoulders, they were instantly placed under the protection of the Holy See, freed from the payment of the interest of their debts, and exempted from the jurisdiction of all the tribunals; whilst the war which they were invited to carry on at their doors, almost without danger or expense, was to expiate all the vices and crimes of a whole life. . . . Never, therefore, had the Cross been taken up with a more unanimous consent."

The first to engage through the commands of their pastors in this war which was denominated sacred were Eudes III, Duke of Burgundy, Simon de Montfort, Count of Leicester; the Counts of Nevers, of St. Paul, of Auxerre, of Geneve, and of Forez.

The Abbot of Citeaux with the Bernardines appropriated the preaching of the Crusade as their special province. "In the name of the Pope, and of the Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, they promised to all who should perish in this holy expedition plenary absolution of all sins committed from the day of their birth to the day of their death." St. Dominic and his followers were sent by Innocent III to travel on foot, two by two, through the villages, to obtain full information about the so-called heretics, and to stir up persecution against them. Thus began the mission of the Dominicans, in subsequent times the terrible agents of the papacy in the work of the Inquisition. Descending the valley of the Rhone, by Lyons and Avignon, the principal army of the Crusaders began their dreadful work in Languedoc. "Men and women were all precipitated into the flames amidst the acclamations of the ferocious conquerors." The cities of Beziers and Carcassonne had been armed by Raymond Roger against the advancing papal army, but were unable to resist the attack. When asked how the Catholics were to be distinguished from the heretics in the slaughter which followed, Amalric, Abbot of Citeaux answered, "Kill them all; the Lord will well know those who are His."1 This command was carried out.

Vainly did the persecuted inhabitants of Beziers take refuge in the churches. In the great Cathedral of Saint Nicaise all were slaughtered; in the Church of the Magdalen seven thousand dead bodies were counted. The city was then fired, and reduced to a grand funeral pile. "Not a house remained standing, not a human being alive." This dreadful crusade was continued until the greater part of the Albigenses had perished. "During the six hundred years which followed these events, invariably as far as occasions have served, the Church of Rome has avowed the same principles, and perpetrated or stimulated the same deeds. As soon as the war against the Albigenses was terminated the Inquisition was brought into full and constant action, encouraged and supported by the Romish Church to the utmost of its power."2

We turn from the Albigenses and the South of France to the Vaudois in Piedmont. From the top of the famous Cathedral of Milan there is a magnificent view of the Alps of Piedmont. East and west they are seen to stretch as far as the eye can reach. The sun at noon falls full upon their crowded peaks. Dark forests mantling their lower slopes, they stand in silent sublimity, their summits crowned with glaciers and eternal snows. To the west among these, beyond the city of Turin rises the vast white cone of Monte Viso. Among the mountains at its base lie the Waldensian valleys. Five in number, they run up into narrow elevated gorges, winding among fir-clad steeps, and climbing to the region of the clouds which hover around the Alpine peaks. These valleys were the refuge and home of the "Israel of the Alps." Protestants before the Reformation, they constituted a faithful remnant of the Church who had never bowed the knee to Baal. The first combined measures taken by the secular authority at the instigation of Rome for the destruction of the Vaudois do not appear to date before 1209, during the period of the Pontificate of Innocent III, when the Archbishop of Turin was empowered to destroy them by force of arms. At the commencement of the fourteenth century, (about 1308), the Inquisitors re-newed their murderous warfare. In 1487, Innocent VIII fulminated against the Vaudois a bull of extermination. "Thousands of volunteers—vagabond adventurers, ambitious

fanatics, reckless pillagers, merciless assassins—sembled from all parts of Italy to execute the behests of the pseudo- successor of St. Peter. This horde of brigands, suitable supporters of a profligate pontiff, marched against the valleys in the train of another army of 18,000 regular troops, contributed in common by the king of France and the sovereign of Piedmont."The Vaudois fled to the heights of the Alps, and sought to protect themselves against their foes. At the moment of their greatest danger they were sheltered by a thick fog; their enemies falling over the humid rocks into the fatal abyss below. The following year their assailants were more successful. The Vaudois had retired to the rugged slopes of Mont Pelvoux, 6,000 feet above the level of the valley. Here they had taken refuge in a huge cavern. Led by La Pelud, Cataneo's ferocious fanatics climbing above the cavern, descended on the Vaudois, and piling up wood at its entrance set fire to it; "those who attempted to issue forth were either destroyed by the flames, or by the sword of the enemy, while those who remained within were stifled by the smoke. When the cavern was afterwards examined, there were found in it four hundred infants suffocated in their cradles, and the arms of their dead mothers. Altogether there perished in this cavern more than 3,000 Vaudois—including the entire population of Val Louise."

We pause in the history of the Vaudois persecution to glance at the contemporaneous war waged against the Hussites in Bohemia. After the martyrdom of Huss and Jerome, their followers were subjected to the most cruel persecutions. "In the year 1421 the miseries of the Bohemians greatly increased. Besides the executions by drowning, by fire, and by the sword, several thousands of the followers of Huss, especially the Taborites, of all ranks, and both sexes, were thrown down the old ruins and pits of Kuttemburg. In one pit were thrown 1,700, in another 1,308, and in a third 1,321 persons."¹ A monument still marks the place. This warfare against the Hussites continued until their, testimony was silenced, and their name almost erased from the earth.

In his histories of the progress and suppression of the Reformation in Spain and Italy, McCrie has traced the propagation of the gospel in these lands by the instrumentality of the Albigenses in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. "Province and Languedoc were at that time more Arragonese than French."¹ "In consequence of the connection between the two countries some of the Vaudois had crossed the Pyrenees, and established themselves in Spain as early as the middle of the twelfth century."From 1412 to 1425 a great number of persons who entertained the sentiments of the Vaudois were committed to the flames by the Inquisitors of Valencia, Rousillon, and Majorca. "In Italy many of the Vaudois and Albigenses established themselves in the year 1180. In 1231 Gregory IX published a furious bull against them, ordaining that they should be sought out and delivered to the secular arm to be punished. In 1370 the Vaudois from the valleys of Pragela emigrated to Calabria, and for a while flourished in peace. The colony received accessions to its numbers by the arrival of their brethren who fled from the persecutions raised against them in Piedmont and France; it continued to flourish when the Reformation dawned on Italy; and after subsisting for nearly two centuries, it was basely and barbarously exterminated."²

The chief instrument in the suppression of the Reformation in these lands was the infamous Inquisition, whose infernal cruelties have made its name a horror to this day. That Satanic tribunal! What shall we say of it? Before us lie the two quarto volumes of Limborch's history of the Inquisition; together with Llorente's detailed and dispassionate account; also Rule's book, in two volumes, and other works on the Inquisition in English and Spanish. When the Cjuemadero was opened at Madrid in 1870, and the ashes of the martyrs who had been burned by the Inquisition brought to light, we were present, and saw that thick bank of human remains, and stood breast deep in the ashes. We have seen in Mexico skeletons of victims of the Inquisition who had been buried alive; have visited the Inquisition in Rome; have seen its prisons, and conversed with its Inquisitors. Cold blooded tribunal! Ne plus ultra of tyranny! Its history, written in tears and blood, fills next to the story of the Crucifixion of Christ, the darkest page in the records of humanity. Llorente, who was secretary of the Inquisition in Madrid from 1789 to 1791, and in whose hands its archives were placed at the date of its suppression in 1811, has lifted the veil of secrecy which hid its diabolical character; has described its processes, and confirmed the copious witness of its victims to the almost incredible account of its cruelties. By his aid we see its all-powerful judges sitting in secret, during long centuries, under a succession of forty-four Inquisitor-generals, who in denial of every principle of justice, never permitted the accused to know the accusations laid to his charge, to face his accusers, or "to know more of his own cause than he could learn of it by the interrogations and accusations to which he was compelled to reply; "who extracted the confessions they sought by the infliction of the most ingenious, the most prolonged and the most exquisite tortures the mind of man has ever invented; putting into operation "water, weights, fire, pulleys, screws,—all the apparatus by which the sinews could be strained without cracking, the bones bruised without breaking, and the body racked exquisitely without giving up the ghost: "renewing those tortures from day to day; alternating the dungeon and the rack; until pain and anguish had done their work on the wreck of body and mind which remained in their hands, and then committing the victim to the flames, to burn like a fagot in the fire, until nothing; remained but his ashes encumbering the chain which hung around the blackened stake. The Holy Inquisition! The Holy Office! Foe of truth and justice; minister of Satan; thy name has yet to be invented, for no one word employed by human lips can adequately describe thee. Miscalled preserver of the faith, thou hast been the nurse of hypocrisy, the parent of fear, of falsehood, of slavery; mental and moral degradation and national ruin have followed in thy wake. Monster of mediaeval cruelty, thy black shadow flees from the light of modern days, pursued by the abhorrence and execration of the world.

The following is a numerical summary of victims who suffered during, the years 1481 to 1498, under the Inquisition in Spain:

1481. Burned alive in Seville, 2,000; burned in effigy 2,000; penitents, 17,000.

1482. Burned alive, 88; burned in effigy, 44; penitents, 625.

1483. About the same as in preceding year in Seville, and in Cordova; in Jaen

and Toledo, burned alive, 688; burned in effigy, 644; penitents 5,725.

1484. About the same in Seville; and in the other places, burned alive, 220; burned in effigy, 110; penitents, 1,561.

1485. Seville, Cordova, as the year preceding. In Estramadura, Valladolid, Calaborra, Murcia, Cuenza, Zaragoza, and Valencia, there were burned alive 1 620; burned in effigy, 510; and penitents, 13,471

1486. In Seville and Cordova as the year before. In other places burned alive, 528; burned in effigy, 264; penitents, 3,745.

1487. About the same as the year before, and in Barcelona and Majorca many more, making in all, burned alive, 928; burned in effigy, 664; and penitents, 7,145.

1488. In the thirteen Inquisitions, burned alive, 616; burned in effigy, 308; and penitents 4,379.

1489. About the same as the preceding year.

1490. Burned alive, 324; burned in effigy, 112; and penitents, 4,369.

1491 to 1498. At about the same rate.

“Torquemada, Inquisitor-General of Spain, during the eighteen years of his inquisitorial ministry, caused 10,220 victims to perish in the flames ; burned the effigies of 6,860 who died in the Inquisition, or fled under fear of persecution; and 97,321 were punished with infamy, confiscation of goods, perpetual imprisonment, or disqualification for office, under colour of penance; so that no fewer than 114,401 families must have been irrecoverably ruined. 1 And the most moderate calculation gathered from the records of the Inquisition by the laborious Secretary, Llorente, up to the year 1523, when the fourth Inquisitor died, exhibits the fearful aggregate of 18,320 burned alive, 9,660 in effigy, 206,526 penitents. Total number of sufferers, 234,506, under the first four inquisitors-general.”

THE WITNESSES SILENCED

The Inquisition continued its career of persecution under its forty-four inquisitors-general till 1820, when it was finally suppressed. But as early as the Lateran Council in 1514. the whole of the pre- reformation witnesses to the gospel in PVance, Spain, Piedmont, Italy and Bohemia, by means of the sword, the rack, and the stake, had been crushed and silenced. In England the Lollards were extinct. None remained to witness to New Testament truth. The orator of the session, ascending the pulpit, addressed to the assembled members of the Lateran Council, the memorable exclamation of triumph :—“ There is an end of resistance to the Papal rule and religion; opposers there exist no more.”

“After three days I will rise again.”—Matt. 27:63.

IT was on the 5th day of May, 1514, at the ninth session of the Lateran Council that the Papal Orator "pronounced his pasan of triumph over the extinction of heretics and schismatics."

"Jam nemo reclamat, nutlus obsistit."

"There is an end of resistance to the papal rule and religion: opposers there exist no more."

Three years and a half later on, to a day, on October Jist, 1517, Luther posted up his Theses at Wittemberg. "The voice of an obscure monk rang through Europe, like the mighty thunder peal; awakening men from the slumber of ages, and shaking to its foundation the usurped dominion of Romanism."1 In Luther and the Reformers the slaughtered witnesses to the truth of the gospel, risen from the dead, stood once more upon their feet before Rome and the world.

This was what the martyr Huss, a hundred years before, had foretold. "I am no vain dreamer,"he said, "but hold for certain that the image of Christ shall never be effaced. They wish to destroy it: but it shall be painted afresh in the hearts of gospel-preachers better than myself. And I, awaking as it were from the dead, and rising from the grave, shall rejoice with exceeding great joy."

Jerome of Prague, his fellow martyr, named the interval one hundred years, "after which their memory would be vindicated, their cause triumphant."

This double prophecy was fulfilled.

Pope Adrian, Leo X's successor, in a brief addressed to the diet of Nuremberg in 1523, wrote thus: "The heretics Huss and "Jerome seem now to be alive again in the person of Luther." "Not in the compass of the whole ecclesiastical history of Christendom, save and except in the death and resurrection of Christ Himself, is there any such example of the sudden, mighty, and triumphant resuscitation of His cause and Church from a state of deep de- pression."2 Their lofty and animated descriptions of this divine revival are clothed by the writers of the period in metaphors borrowed from the pages of the Apocalypse. Thus Milton wrote:-

"When I recall to mind at last, after so many dark ages, wherein the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the Church; how the bright and blissful Reformation, by divine power, struck through the black and settled night of ignorance and anti-christian tyranny, methinks a sovereign and reviving joy musf needs rush into the bosom of him that reads or hears; and the sweet odour of the returning Gospel imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of heaven. Then was the sacred Bible sought out of the dusty corners where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it j the schools opened, divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues, the princes and cities now trooping apace to the new-erected banner of salvation; the martyrs with the unresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red dragon."

A new era had dawned upon the world: an era of Light, Liberty, Life, Progress; the Age of the Book. Then was the Bible translated into the vernacular languages of Europe, and later on into all the leading languages of the world, its sacred pages opened in the eyes of the nations, its truths expounded in their ears, its records placed in their hands, yea, its teachings written in the hearts, and reflected in the lives of millions emancipated from the prison house of papal bondage.

Then, to use the language of the historian, Gibbon, "the lofty fabric of superstition, from the abuse of indulgences to the intercession of the Virgin, was levelled with the ground. Myriads of both sexes of the monastic profession were restored to the liberty and labours of social life. An hierarchy of saints and angels, of imperfect and subordinate deities, were stripped of their temporal power . . . their images and relics banished from the Church; and the credulity of the people no longer nourished with the daily repetition of miracles and visions. The imitation of paganism was supplanted by a pure and spiritual worship of prayer and thanksgiving . . . The chain of authority was broken . . . the popes, fathers, and councils, were no longer the supreme and infallible judges of the world; and each Christian was taught to acknowledge no law but the Scriptures, no interpreter but his own conscience."

ADVANCE IN PROPHETIC INTERPRETATION

The advent of the Reformation shed a broad beam of light upon the very centre and heart of Apocalyptic prophecy. It illuminated the visions in the tenth and eleventh chapters, removing the obscurity which had hitherto hung upon their meaning; and caused the trumpet call to God's people in the eighteenth chapter, to come out of Babylon, to sound forth as never before.

Now was the mighty cloud-clothed, rainbow crowned angel of the vision in the tenth chapter seen as it were to descend from heaven holding in his hand a little book open • and setting his feet on land and sea, he was heard to cry aloud as when a lion roareth. Then were heard the seven thunders of Rome's anathemas, pealing forth their defiant reply. Then did the Reformers take from the hands of the angel the "little book" of the newly-opened Word of God, and eating it themselves, as Ezekiel had done before them, renew their prophecy, "before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings."¹ Then did the Reformers "rise and measure the temple of God" as commanded, "and the altar and them that worship therein," leaving out, or casting out, as bidden, "the outer court" as given to the Gentiles to remain unreformed, and continue trodden under foot. Then too, was "the great city which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt" denounced as such; ² and the prophesying of Christ's sackcloth clothed witnesses, like that of the Jewish prophets in the days of the Baalitical and Babylonian apostasies, clearly recognized: the "olive trees" or anointed ones, like the faithful reformers in the days of Ezra and Nehemiah, after the return of Judah from the ancient typical Babylon seen to be "candlesticks" or light bearers, "standing before the God of the earth."

Now was the mystery cleared up; now was the meaning of these wondrous visions revealed, and the testimony of prophecy confirmed the faith, and justified the position of the Reformers. What Ezra and Nehemiah, Joshua and Zerubbabel

had been in the great work of the restoration of Judah from Babylonish captivity, of the rebuilding of the altar, and temple of God, and of the ruined walls of Jerusalem, such were the modern Reformers in the still more glorious work of the Reformation of the Church After her long captivity in the anti-typical "Babylon the Great"; and the visions of the Apocalypse based as to their symbolism, upon the history of Judah's restoration, stood forth explained by the events of modern history; a brilliant lamp lighting the Reformers.' feet; a miracle of divine prescience ; a seal of approbation upon the Reformation movement; a warrant for its work, a pledge of its success.

A TWOFOLD DISCOVERY

The Reformation was born of a twofold discovery; the discovery of Christ, and the discovery of Antichrist. This discovery was first developed in the mind of Luther; and from his mind it passed into the mind of Western Europe; from whence it has since gone forth throughout the world. It arose from Luther's finding a Bible. To the awakened monk God revealed through His word the glorious gospel of salvation. Profoundly convinced of sin, Luther embraced "the righteousness of God" revealed in the Scriptures, and justification by faith in contrast with justification by works became the thrilling theme of his testimony.

There followed the posting up in October, 1517, of Luther's ninety-five theses against indulgences, which he affixed to the door of the chief church at Wittemberg, boldly offering to maintain them against all impugnors. "The truths most prominently asserted in them were the Pope's utter insufficiency to confer forgiveness of sin, or salvation,—Christ's all-sufficiency,—and the true spiritual penitent's participation, by God's free gift, independently altogether of papal indulgence or absolution, not merely in the blessing of forgiveness, but in all the riches of Christ. There were added other declarations also, very notable as to the gospel of the glory and grace of God, not the merits of saints, "being the true and precious treasure of the Church ",—a denunciation of the avarice and soul deceivings of the priestly traffickers in indulgences;—and a closing exhortation to Christians to follow Christ as their Chief, even through crosses and tribulation, thereby at length to attain to His heavenly kingdom. Bold indeed were the words thus published; and the effect such that the evening of their publication I has been remembered ever afterwards, and is ever memorable, as the Epoch of the Reformation." 2

Following Luther's discovery of Christ came his discovery of Antichrist. In the month of June, 1520, the Pope hurled a thunderbolt at Luther, condemning his doctrines in a bull, and ordering that " unless within sixty days he retracted his errors, he was to be seized and sent as a prisoner to Rome."

On December 20th, 1520, "a pile of wood was erected at the east gate of Wittemberg. One of the oldest members of the university lighted it. As the flames arose, Luther advanced arrayed in his frock and cowl, and amid bursts of approbation from the doctors, professors and students, hurled into the fire the Canon Law, the Decretals, and the Papal Bull." "The defiance of Wittemberg was followed by the emancipation of half the nations of Europe from their spiritual and temporal bondage."1

Hidden from his persecutors in a lonely castle in the Wartburg forest, Luther now translated the New Testament into vernacular German. He prefixed to the Apocalypse, in his great edition of the German Bible, in 1534, an outline of his views as to the meaning of the prophecy. He considered it contained a prefiguration of the chief events in the history of the Christian Church. The woman clothed with the sun, and crowned with twelve stars, who flees to the wilderness from her persecutors, represents in his view, the true Church; and the two witnesses a succession of faithful witnesses for Christ. Of the opposing wild beast powers, the first beast represents the papal secular revived Roman Empire; and the second beast the Pope's ecclesiastical or spiritual empire. The number of the beast, 666, signifies according to Luther, the number of years that the beast may be destined to endure, measured, he says in his Table Talk, from Gregory, or perhaps Phocas. The Antichrist is, in his view, an ecclesiastical person. In his "De Antichristo," he says, "The Turk cannot be Antichrist, because he is not in the Church of God." "Whoever so came in Christ's name," he exclaims, "as did the Pope?"

As the Reformation advanced, the true meaning of the predictions in the tenth and eleventh chapters of the Apocalypse more and more forced itself upon men's minds. Bullinger, at Zurich, in his expository discourses on the Apocalypse, published in 1557, boldly explains the angel vision in Apocalypse 10, as representing Christ's intervention through the Reformers. The "little open book" in the hand of the angel he interprets as the gospel, opened to men by the Reformers, and given to the world with the aid of the newly invented art of printing. He says the oath in the tenth chapter alludes to the three and a half "times" of Daniel 12, and surmises that the redemption of the Church at Christ's coming, to raise the dead and transform the living was even then drawing nigh. As to the witnesses, the number two indicated that they were to be few, yet sufficient. The great city of their slaughter is the empire of Papal Rome. The falling of the tenth of the city represented the mighty defections already begun from the Papal Church and Empire. On the seventh trumpet he says, "It must come soon, therefore our redemption draweth nigh." He explains the second beast as the Papal Antichrist, rising under Gregory I, and his successor Boniface, to the position of Universal Bishop. "On the name and number of the beast he adopts Irenaeus' solution, dwelling on the Latinism of the Papacy, much like Dr. More afterwards."

Bale, Bishop of Ossory under Edward VI, published an Apocalyptic Commentary entitled "Image of Both Churches," i.e. the true and the false. He explains the vision of Apocalypse like Bullinger, as representing the Reformation; the book opened being the Scriptures - then newly translated into the vernacular languages, and expounded by gospel-preachers. The measuring rod in Revelation II he explains as God's Word, "now graciously sent as out of Zion," the temple as God's congregation or Church, distinguished by His Word from the synagogue of Satan; the witnesses as faithful protestors for Christ that continue with God's people all through the time of the Church's oppression by her so-called "Gentile" foes. The fall of the tenth part of the city, represents the diminution of the Papal Church. We have here, says Bale, "what is done already, and what is to come under this sixth trumpet, whereunder we are now; which all belongeth to the second woe."

In David Chytrceus' *Explicatio Apocalypsis*, published at Wittemberg, in 1571, the 1,260 days of the Gentiles treading down the holy city are explained as 1,260 years, to be calculated either from Alaric's taking of Rome in A . D . , 412, or from Pboocas' decree, A.D., 606; and thus to end in A . D . , 1672, or in A . D . , 1866. The resurrection of the witnesses he explains of their speedy revival "on each individual occasion of their temporary suppression by Antichrist."

Augustin Marlorafs exposition of the Revelation of St. John, published in 1574, under Queen Elizabeth, "is professedly collected out of divers notable writers of the Protestant Churches, viz:— Bullinger, Calvin, Caspar Meyander, Justus Jonas, Lambertus, Musculus, JEcolampadius, Pellicanus, Meyer, Firet." On Apocalypse 10 he sets forth "the clear decisive explanation of its Angel-vision usual among the Reformers, as figuring the opening of the Scriptures and revived gospel preaching at the Reformation: also the exclusion of the outer court in Apocalypse 11, as signifying the exclusion of Papists."

Thus similarly the venerable martyrologist John Foxe in his exposition of the Apocalypse written in the year 1586, —a work interrupted by his death,—applies the magnificent vision of Christ in Apocalypse 10 to the restoration of gospel preaching, the book in the angel's hand representing God's Word. The temple of Apocalypse he takes to be the Church; its inner court the true worshippers; its outer the false; the measuring of the temple its separation and reformation "as in our day," implying a previous corruption under Antichrist. All this had been done under the sixth, or Turkish trumpet, whose end he considered to be near. Under the seventh trumpet which would follow, the Church would have its time of blessedness accomplished, in Christ's coming, and the saints' resurrection.

Brightman's "Commentary on the Apocalypse "dedicated to " the holy reformed churches of Brittany, Germany and France," was published in A . D . 1600 or 1601, before the death of Queen Elizabeth. In this remarkable work which was deservedly popular with the Protestant Churches of the time, Brightman rightly identifies the locust woe of the fifth trumpet with the Saracen invasion, and the Euphratean woe of the sixth trumpet with the Turkish. The casting down of the dragon in Apocalypse 12, and his restoration in a new form under the beast of Apocalypse 13, he applies to the casting down of the rule of heathen Rome under Constantine, and the subsequent revival of Roman rule under the Popes ; the head of the empire being wounded J:o death by the Gothic invasions, and healed by Justinian and Pboocas in the exaltation of the papacy in the restored empire.

Considering the Apocalyptic interpretation of the sixteenth century as a whole we recognize not only a considerable advance in the understanding of the prophecy, but a practical application and use of its leading predictions of the highest importance. The glorious work of the Reformation was built upon doctrinal, practical, and prophetic grounds. Apocalyptic prophecy was accorded a prominent position among the stately pillars of its foundation. To the reformers the Church of Rome was "Babylon the great" of the Apocalypse, clad in purple and scarlet, adorned with "gold, and precious stones, and pearls," a faithless harlot seated on a wild beast power, intoxicating the

nations with the cup of her idolatries and superstitions, and drunken with "the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus." The duty of separation from the Church of Rome was boldly proclaimed on the ground of the divine command in Revelation 18, "Come out of her my people that ye be not partaker of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The duty to reform the Church was urged on the authority of the command in Revelation 11, "Rise, and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein." While Rome excommunicated the Reformers, the Reformers excommunicated Rome in obedience to the command in Revelation 11, "The court which is without the temple, leave out (or rather 'cast out') and measure it not." The Pope of Rome was resisted and condemned as "the Man of Sin," "the Antichrist," the "standard-bearer" as Calvin calls him, "of an abominable apostasy." The long line of pre-reformation martyrs, and the reformers and martyrs of the Reformation, were regarded as the sackcloth clothed and faithful witnesses of the Apocalypse, God's anointed "prophets," like Elijah and Elisha in the days of the Baalitical apostasy of Israel, and Ezra and Nehemiah in the time of the restoration of Jerusalem, and rebuilding of the temple, who, warred against and overcome by the wild beast power, had been figuratively raised from the dead, and exalted in full view of their amazed antagonists. To the Reformers of the sixteenth century the era of the seventh trumpet was at hand, when "The kingdoms of this world" would become "the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ." And they awaited the predicted and proximate hour when "like a great millstone" "that great city Babylon" should be "thrown down and found no more at all," and the "great voice of much people in heaven" should lift up the rejoicing utterance, with thrice repeated hallelujahs, "salvation, and glory, and honour, and power unto the Lord our God, 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." The prominence of Apocalyptic interpretation in the voluminous writings of the Reformers is one of their most marked features. They wielded the word of prophecy as the sharp two-edged sword of the Spirit, "piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit." And while God sealed their testimony with lasting spiritual success, they, on their part, sealed their witness with their blood. They inaugurated an era of light and liberty such as the world had never seen before, which remains as the colossal confirmation of their testimony, as interpreters and teachers of "the Word of God which endureth forever."

IN tracing the development of the interpretation of the Apocalypse as ceaselessly following the unveiling of the plan of Providence by the events of history-, we direct our attention at this stage to the fresh page of history which lay before the eyes of prophetic interpreters in the seventeenth century.

I. The Reformation of the sixteenth century was succeeded by the great Papal Reaction of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; a movement which included the founding of the Order of the Jesuits, the Marian persecutions, the wars in France against the Huguenots; the Auto-da-fes of the Inquisition in Spain; the decrees and anathemas of the Council of Trent; the diabolical attempt of the Duke of Alva to exterminate the Protestants in the

Netherlands, of whom 18,000 were slaughtered in six years; the fearful massacre of St. Bartholomew in 1572; the invasion of the Spanish Armada in 1588 ; the Jesuit attempts on the life of Queen Elizabeth; the Gunpowder plot in 1605; the sanguinary thirty years' war beginning 1618; the massacre of 20,000 Protestants in Magdeburg in 1631; the diabolical barbarities of Count Tilly in Saxony; the massacre of 40,000 Protestants in Ireland in 1641; and wholesale slaughter of the Waldenses in 1655; together with other wars, massacres, and persecutions too numerous to be mentioned. By these dreadful acts the papacy was revealed as the persecuting Antichrist, in colours so glaring and terrible as to compel universal recognition. It is note-worthy that while the Church of England in her Thirty-nine Articles drawn up at an earlier date, in 1562—articles strongly Anti-Romish in character—refrains from identifying the Pope with the predicted " Man of Sin,"the Confession of the Westminster Assembly of Divines in 1647 (a confession ratified and established by Act of Parliament in 1649), does so identify him; as witness the following article,—"There is no other Head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ. Nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof, but is that Antichrist, that Man of Sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God."Thus also the Articles of the Church of Ireland, drawn up in 1615, declare "The Bishop of Rome is so far from being the Supreme Head of the Uni- versal Church, that his works and his doctrines do plainly discover him to be that "Man of Sin "foretold in the Holy Scriptures, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and abolish with the brightness of His coming."With these solemn affirmations of the Protestant Churches of the seventeenth century the voices of all the leading prophetic interpreters of the period agree. Their works are before us as we write. We have carefully examined their teachings, from those of Lord Napier's "Commentary on the Apocalypse" 1 published in 1593, to Vitranga's, a century later, including Cressener's "demonstrations"of the principles of Apocalyptic interpretation in 1690; the works of Dent (1607), Taffin (1614), Forbes (1614), Brightman (1615), Bernard (1617), Cowper (1619), Taylor (1633), Goodwin (1639,) Mede (1643), Pareus (1643), Cotton (1645 and 1655), Roberts (1649), Holland (1650), Homes (1654), Tillinghast (1654), Stephens (1656), Guild (1656), Durham (1680), More (1680), Jurieu (1687), Marckius (1689), Cressener (1690), Vitranga (1695), Cradock (1697),and others. All these seventeenth century writers are agreed as to the historical principle of interpretation, and as to the general outline of events fulfilling Apocalyptic prophecy. Their views on the thirteenth chapter of Revelation are especially important in their clear recognition of the papacy as heading the second, or revived stage of the wild beast power; and its persecution of the saints during the forty-two prophetic "months,"or 1,260 years, of its domination. Cressener's works may be especially mentioned as containing a powerful demonstration of this view.

II. Turning now to events in eastern Christendom we note that the capture of Constantinople, and overthrow of the Eastern Roman Empire by the Turks in 1453was too near in point of time to the opening of the sixteenth century to be properly judged of by the Reformers. The event was one of such enormous magnitude as to require a more distant standpoint for its correct appreciation. But in the course of the sixteenth century its full character and effects be- came plainly visible. The Saracenic and Turkish conquests in

the time of Solomon the Magnificent, and the Amariths and Achmets of the age were seen in their true colours. The House of Othman was "lord of the ascendant, and numerous and fair provinces had been torn from the Christians, and heaped together to increase its already ample dominions." The fulfilment of the locust and Euphratean woes of the fifth and sixth trumpets, in the conquests of the Saracens and Turks was now clearly recognized. In 1615 Brightman explained the 150 days ravages of the Locust horsemen as the 150 years of Saracenic conquests reckoned from their first ravages of Syria about A . D . 630. The year, month and day of Turkish conquests he reckons as 396 years (365 + 30+1)5 measuring it from the revival of the Othmans A . D . 1300, to the then future date of 1696. It is remarkable that the peace of Carlowitz in 1699, terminating seventeen years of war with Turkey, marked a closing crisis of Turkish power. "From that time forth," says Sir Edward Creasy, "all serious dread of the military power of Turkey ceased in Europe." The prophetic period may be reckoned as 391 years (360+30 + 1), 1 and as extending from the reign of Alp Arslan (1063-1072 according to Gibbon) to the fall of Constantinople in 1453. Under Alp Arslan the Turks crossed the Euphrates, and invaded Europe. "The myriads of Turkish horse" says Gibbon, "overspread a frontier of 600 miles from Tauris to Erzeroum, and the blood of 130,000 Christians was a grateful sacrifice to the Arabian prophet." The story of the Turks in Eastern Europe is that of a succession of dreadful massacres without a parallel in the history of the world. With the capture of Constantinople, when Constantine XIV, the last Christian Emperor of the East fell and was "buried under a mountain of the slain," Gibbon terminates his history of "the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire."

Goodwin (1639), expounds the fallen star of the fifth trumpet as Mahomet, fallen from the profession of "Christianity; and the smoke issuing from the pit as the false religion of the prophet. Of the sixth trumpet, or Euphratean woe, he says, "No prophecy doth or can more punctually describe any nation or event than this doth the Turks, and their irruption upon the Eastern Empire, who when they came first out of their native country, about the year 1040 after Christ, did seat themselves first by the River Euphrates, and were divided into four several governments or kingdoms," etc., and completed their conquest of the Roman Empire "in the year 1453, which is 186 years since, who possess that whole Eastern Empire unto this day." Mede (1643), reckons the Turkish woe from 1057 to 1453; and More (1680), does the same. There is perhaps no point on which historical interpreters of the Apocalypse from Mede and Goodwin onwards are more agreed than in the application of the fifth and sixth trumpets to the overthrow of the corrupt and apostate Eastern Empire by the Saracens and Turks.

III. The recognition of the fall of the Western and Eastern Empires, under the six first trumpets, led Mede, to the view that the Apocalypse contains two principal prophecies; first the prophecy relating to the decline and fall of the Roman Empire in the West, and in the East, figured under the seals, and six first trumpets; and secondly, the prophecy concerning the fortunes of the Christian Church, beginning with the vision of the descent of the angel in Chapter X, holding in his hand "a little book open." An analogous twofold feature certainly characterizes the prophecies of Daniel, which consist of an earlier series relating to the Thrones, or governments of the world, and a

later series relating to the Temple, and people of God, and the approaching Advent of Messiah. Throne prophecies followed by Temple prophecies,—such is the twofold order both in the book of Daniel and in the Apocalypse.

IV. From the fourth and fifth centuries up to the time of the Reformation the binding of Satan introducing the millennium was regarded as a past event. The Church of the Middle Ages imagined itself to be living in the millennium, and the Reformers considered that the outbreak of Papal persecution at the close of the Middle Ages was the fulfilment of the loosing of Satan for “a little season,” prior to the Great Day of Judgment.

By the middle of the seventeenth century the imagined “little season” of Satan’s loosing had so lengthened out as to prove the error of this interpretation. Mede was the first to appreciate the fact. His demonstration of the futurity of the millennium was an immense advance, and created an era in Apocalyptic interpretation. Elliott truly describes it as “a mighty step of change from the long continued explanation of the symbol as meant of Satan’s 1,000 years’ binding from Christ’s time, or Constantine’s.” The futurity of the millennium has held its ground as a Canon of interpretation from Mede’s time to the present day.

V. In harmony with this view, Mede, like the oldest Patristic Expositors, Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, etc., interpreted the first resurrection as a literal resurrection of the Saints to be accomplished at the time of Antichrist’s destruction, at the commencement of the Millennial Age. In this Mede was followed by an imposing array of Puritan Expositors. This was a return to primitive doctrine resulting from the abandonment of the false millennium of the Middle Ages. Dr. Twisse, then prolocutor of the Westminster Assembly of Divines, in an admirable and appreciative preface to Mede’s “Commentary on the Apocalypse,” gives a summary outline of the Apocalyptic interpretation of this learned Puritan, and says of him “many interpreters have done excellently, but he surmounteth them all.”

VI. Mede’s Synchronisms form the leading feature of his “Key to the Apocalypse.” He laid down the principle that in order to the correct understanding of this mysterious prophecy, it is necessary in the first place to fix the order of its principal visions, apart altogether from the question of their interpretation. In doing this he gives central prominence to the five times recurring period of 1,260 days, forty-two months, or three and a half “Times”; and locates the chief visions of the prophecy by their relation to this period, as preceding it, cotemporizing with it, or succeeding it. 1

The first synchronism established by Mede is that of what he calls “a noble quaternion of prophecies,” remarkable by reason of the equality of their times : —

1. The woman remaining in the wilderness three and one-half “Times,” or 1,260 “days.”
2. The revived Beast ruling forty-two “months.”

3. The outer court trodden down forty-two "months."
4. The witnesses prophesying in sackcloth 1,260 " days."

These periods, Mede shows, are not only equal, but begin at the same time, and end together ; and therefore, synchronize throughout. As the various Apocalyptic visions are connected with this central period, as introducing it, cotemporizing with it, or succeeding it, their place in the Apocalyptic drama is clearly indicated.

THE 1,260 YEARS OF PROPHECY

VII. The lapse of time now led to a further important development of the historic interpretation. Sixteen and a half centuries had rolled by since the commencement of the Christian era; thirteen and a half centuries from the fall of Paganism in the days of Constantine; and twelve and a half centuries since the invasion of the Roman Empire by Alaric, the initial act of its Gothic overthrow.

The principle of the "year day interpretation" of the prophetic times was already recognized, and the fulfilment of the great prophetic period of 1,260 years now forced itself on general attention, —a period occurring in different forms no less than seven times in Daniel and the Apocalypse.

Room at last existed in Christian history for the location of this great prophetic period, and from the beginning of the seventeenth century onwards it was accorded a prominent place in the historical interpretation of prophecy.

Naturally, with the lapse of time, and the progressive fulfilment of the predictions relating to the Papal downfall, the location of the period was shifted forward from earlier to later dates. The fall of the Papacy has been gradual, like its rise ; and the period in question was found to measure with remarkable accuracy the intervals which extended from the principal dates connected with its commencement, to corresponding dates in its decline and overthrow.

Lord Napier in his "Commentary on the Apocalypse," published in 1593, places the first commencement of the 1,260 years "between the year of Christ 300 and 316," and its corresponding end "about the year 1560," at which date "the tenth part of the Papistical Empire was reformed." He indicates a second possible fulfilment of the period in the interval extending from the accession of Justinian—a notable date in the rise of the Papacy—to the then future year 1786 ; which was a remarkable anticipation for the time, of the date of the French Revolution. Had Lord Napier dated the 1,260 years from the decree of Justinian in 533, constituting the Bishop of Rome "head of all the holy Churches and of all the holy priests of God," he would have correctly anticipated its primary termination in the central year of the French Revolution, 1793,—the year of the execution of Louis XVI, and of the reign of terror, in which the Papal Church and State were overthrown as if by the explosion of a volcano.

Mede in 1642, placed the commencement of the 1,260 years at Alaric's irruption, in 395; the date according to his view of the sounding of the first of the four trumpets connected with the overthrow of the Western Empire. Reckoning it thus, the termination fell in the then future year 1655, the year of the great massacre of the Protestant witnesses in Piedmont of which Milton wrote his memorable sonnet.

"Avenge O Lord, Thy slaughtered saints, whose bones Lie scattered on the Alpine mountains cold."

This location of the 1,260 years is prominent in Mede's Chart of the Visions in the Apocalypse.

Pareus, whose valuable "Commentary on the Apocalypse" was published in 1643, shortly after Mede's, places the beginning of 1,260 years in A . D . 606, when Boniface III was exalted by a decree of the Emperor Phocas to "the chaire of universal pestilence." "From the yeare of Christ therefore 606, until this time the holy citie hath been trodden under foot by the Romane Gentiles, which is the space of 1,073 years, and is yet to be trodden down 223 years more, to wit, until the yeere of Christ 1866." We have lived to see the correctness of this remarkable anticipation.

In the year 1866 the overthrow of Papal Austria by Protestant Prussia took place, and the Papal invitation to all Catholic bishops to "celebrate the eighteenth century of the martyrdom of Peter and Paul" was sent forth: 599 bishops were present at the Allocution delivered by the Pope in 1867. The Pope's encyclical letter summoning the Vatican Council was issued in 1868, and the decree of Papal infallibility coinciding with the outbreak of the Franco-German war, together with the fall of the French Empire and the Papal Temporal Power took place in 1870. In the four years 1866- 1870 Papal power was overthrown in Austria, Spain, France, and Italy; and since 1870 the Pope has ceased to possess even a shadow of political sovereignty.

Pareus was not the first to point out 1866 as the termination of the 1,260 years. David Chytrceus in A . D . 1571 indicated Alaric A . D . 412, and the decree of Phocas, A . D . 606, as possible starting-points of the period. But the anticipation of Pareus was more definite in character; and he takes a leading place in the list of prophetic interpreters who during the last two hundred years have fixed on A . D . 606 and 1866 as the chief termini of the 1,260 years period of Papal rule.

It is a noteworthy fact that the historic interpretation of prophecy, constantly developing century by century with the unveilings of Providence, assumed in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as to its leading outlines, a definite form from which it has never since departed. One has but to compare Mede's diagram of the historical fulfilment of the Apocalyptic visions (1641), and that of Whiston (1706), with that of Elliott (1844-1862), to be convinced of the fact.

HERE we reach the beginning of the last act of the Papal tragedy. Louis XIV sat on the throne of France at Versailles. At his side was Madame de

Maintenon. Behind her stood the Jesuit Confessor Pere la Chaise. Behind him again the Pope, and his inspirer the Prince of Darkness.

In Piedmont the trembling remnant of Protestants left by the great massacre of 1655 still clung to their native rocks, and Alpine fastnesses.

In England James II was struggling to restore Papal supremacy, and enslave the children of the Puritans who had bought their liberties at so great a price.

Behind the scene historically lay ages of darkness; before it ages of light.

O thou who wouldst draw near to behold this sight—the bush that burned with fire and was not consumed, take thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place on which thou standest is holy ground.

Clear away the mists of ignorance which hide the great tragedy from thine eyes. Thou art the heir of freedom purchased by the sufferings and sacrifices of these martyr days. Gaze then upon the sublime and touching spectacle, and let it fix itself in thy memory forever.

Fear not to enter this gloomy region for light shall spring from the sepulchral darkness; life from the ashes of the dead.

Hark! a wail bursts forth from the lips of thousands of Protestant parents robbed of their children. That wail is the prelude of the last great Papal persecution of the Huguenots; a persecution which was followed by the French Revolution, inaugurating the modern era of civil and religious liberty.

“A terrible law strikes dismay into the hearts of fathers and mothers—a law that will bring us to the determination to go and cast ourselves at the feet of the king; begging him to grant us either death, or freedom of conscience for us and for our children; or permission, leaving behind us our property, to forsake the nation, and drag out a languishing existence, scattered in every country of the globe.” It is Pierre Jurieu who utters this bitter cry in his “Last Efforts of Afflicted Innocence,” relating to the effects of the statute of Louis XIV, of June, 1681.

And what was this law? It was a law which struck at the existence of the family; which authorized the wholesale compulsory conversion of all the children of the Protestants throughout France to the Roman Catholic Church. It authorized children of the tender age of seven years to renounce the religion of their Protestant parents, and gave freedom to the Romish priests and population to ensnare them into an enforced confession of the Romish faith; a mere sentence, a word expressing admission of some popish doctrine sufficing; forbidding the poor innocent to take back its words; and thus tearing the child from its parents and its home, and hurrying it, in spite of frantic protests from the father and the mother, into some nunnery or other place, to be there immured until “conversion “was complete.

A refinement of cruelty this, unmatched even in the persecutions of old heathen Rome.

Institutions spring up at once all over France, Nouveaux Catholiques for boys; Nouvelles Catholiques for girls; they are quickly crowded. Bereaved Protestant parents sit in their desolated homes, weeping over the children who have been torn away from them. "All the torments that have heretofore been inflicted upon us are as nothing," say they, "in comparison with this." It is, however, but the beginning of the tragedy. The parents are not yet converted. Unreasonable parents! The elder brothers and sisters still remain Protestants. They dare to hold prayer-meetings in their desolated homes. They bow down on their knees, and hide their weeping faces in their hands. They cry to the Father in heaven. What infamy! A stop must be put to this.

But how? Had Satan ingenuity equal to the occasion? How were the parents and elder sons and daughters to be compelled to come wholesale into the Catholic fold? By a new method. By Dragonnades. The army of Louis XIV was vast and powerful; his soldiers unscrupulous, ungodly, superstitious, lustful, intolerant, ready instruments for artful abomination. Quarter the soldiers in the homes of the Protestants. Commission these "booted evangelists" to convert them; give them leave to do as they will in these homes with the women, as well as the men; with the mothers and the daughters. Set them to work. Let them stable their horses in the parlours; break the furniture; devour the provisions; tie the fathers hand and foot, and violate in their presence the wives and daughters. Let them prevent the wretched Huguenots from closing their eyes in sleep until they have renounced their Protestantism.

Keep the heretics awake; beat them; drag them about. Shout at them, walk them up and down the rooms all night long, Keep up this fiendish treatment day and night till they submit. Cursed heretics, what right have they to resist the will of Louis XIV, and the almighty Pope of Rome?

And these horrors were done; done throughout all France. The soldiers quartered on the Protestants "pinched them, prodded them, hung them up by ropes, tormented them in a hundred other ways, until their unhappy victims scarcely knew what they were doing." They spat in the faces of women, made them lie down on burning coals, made them put their heads into ovens whose hot flames stifled them." The new mission went forward rapidly, Louis XIV directing. "From Guyenne and Upper Languedoc the Dragonnades extended to Saintonge, Aunis, and Poitou on the west, and to Vivarais on the East. Next came the turn of the province of Lyonnaise, of the Cevennes, of Lower Languedoc, of Province, of Gex. Later still the rest of the kingdom became a prey to the hideous work of the "booted mission" as it was called—Normandy, Burgundy, and the central provinces, even to far-off Brittany, and to Paris itself." "The horrors the dragoons inspired, the crimes they perpetrated, the sufferings the wretched victims endured," who shall describe? But this was only the beginning of the tragedy.

A statute still remained—the Edict of Nantes—protecting the lives and liberties of the Huguenots. By one fell stroke this last, protection was swept away. The Edict was revoked. The floodgates were opened, and persecution in its worst, form rolled over the Protestant population of France.

The fatal day of the revocation of the Edict of Nantes was the 17th of October, 1685.

The first article of the new law recalled all legislation favourable to the Huguenots.

The second forbade all gatherings of Protestants for the services of their religion.

The three following had reference to Protestant ministers. All these were commanded to leave France within fifteen days from the publication of the Edict, on pain of the galleys.

The seventh article abolished all private schools for the instruction of Protestant children.

The eighth prescribed that all children hereafter born of Protestant parents should be baptized by the parish priests, and brought up in the Roman Catholic religion. Recalcitrant parents incurred a fine of five hundred livres or more.

In the tenth article the king issued "very express and repeated prohibitions to all his Protestant subjects against leaving his kingdom, or allowing their wives or children to leave it, and against exporting their goods and chattels. The penalty was the galleys for men, and confiscation of body and goods for women."

All the Protestant churches throughout France were shut or pulled down. Nothing but ruins remained. The pastors were exiled, and the flocks forbidden to follow them. An entire people, the best and noblest of the land, lay crushed under the cruel heel, the iron hoof, of the relentless Papal persecutor.

Then followed the great Exodus. Nothing could arrest it. Thousands on thousands of Huguenots fled from France.

The frontiers were guarded in vain. Disguised in all manner of ways, their faces disfigured, their garments rent, in the darkness of night, by sequestered paths, through forests, across mountains, and over the seas in open boats, they fled, and still fled, until half a million had escaped. They fled to Switzerland, to Holland, to England, and other countries. Four hundred thousand perished in the effort to escape. The prisons were crowded. The homes of the Protestants emptied, their houses left tenantless.

Thousands of Protestants had broken down under the strain, and professed submission to their Roman Catholic persecutors; but the great mass of the Huguenots had remained faithful. No power could conquer their convictions, or compel them to deny their Lord. Chained to the oars in the horrible galleys, and brutally beaten and bastinadoed by their captors, they remained faithful. Crammed into filthy jails, left to rot in dungeons, they remained faithful. Broken on the wheel they remained faithful. Aged pastors lay bound by their limbs to that cruel instrument, while through a long agony, protracted sometimes for hours, every bone in their body was broken. Stroke followed

stroke while life remained. Groans went up from the galleys, from the prisons, from the lands of exile. In The Tower of Constance Huguenot women were immured without hope of release. The walls were nearly ninety feet high, and eighteen feet in thickness. It contained two great circular vaulted chambers one above the other. High and narrow loopholes admitted a feeble light. By that ray one of the noble women imprisoned there wrote on the wall."Rhistez ." Yes, they "resisted unto blood" in that awful strife. Who were the victors in that struggle? Louis XIV and the Pope and priests of Rome, or the suffering Huguenots? Was not the Crucified the Conqueror? Is not the martyr the Victor? So they overcame. "When young Chamier underwent his horrible torture, for the scene of which, by a refinement of cruelty, the street in front of his paternal home had been selected, it was his mother that chiefly urged him to fortitude in suffering for the faith. "I have yet," said she, "three children whom I shall cheerfully give up, if they be called to die for religion's sake."

Like the noble martyrs of primitive times "they loved not their lives unto the death." They overcame; for greater is He who was in them, than he who was in the opposing world. Rome believed and boasted that she had triumphed. She rang her joybells. She struck Commemoration Medals. On one of them the crowned monarch stands on the steps of the altar, and extends to France, represented by a kneeling suppliant the sceptre of his mercy, while around are inscribed the words Sacra Romana Restituta.—"The Roman religion restored."

The Queen of Sweden received and sheltered some of the refugees. "I pray with all my heart," said she, "that the false joy and triumph of the Church may not some day cost her tears and sorrows." What it did cost France history has since related. In the Vaudois valleys at this same period the wave of persecution had reached its highest altitude. "In thy book," cried Milton,

*"record their groans
Who were thy sheep, and in their ancient fold
Slain by the bloody Piedmontese, that rolled
Mother with infants down the rocks. Their groans
The vales redoubled to the hills, and they To heaven."*

The Vaudois Protestants were cut up alive, roasted over fires, impaled on stakes, disembowelled, torn limb from limb, tortured in ways too horrible to describe. Leger's volume contains pictures of all these horrors, and gives the names and numbers of the sufferers.

In 1686 Louis XIV sent 14,000 men under the Marquis de Catinat to join the Piedmontese army, to enforce the submission of the Vaudois. Following his victory over the Protestants of the Valleys the Duke condemned 14,000 of them to the prisons of Turin: of these 11,000 perished by heat, cold, hunger, and thirst in their imprisonment. The remaining three thousand on emancipation from prison fled over the mountains to Switzerland and Brandenburg. The republic of Geneva extended to the exiles a touching welcome.

In England James II had opened negotiations with the Pope. Papists were in full patronage and Jeffreys was holding his "bloody assizes." In the army

Protestant officers were replaced by Romanists; the Papal Nuncio was received at Windsor, and the seven Bishops sent to the Tower, the people venting their feelings in tears and prayers.

A storm was brewing, and a dark cloud hung over the land.

This closing crisis of Papal persecution had long been expected. Students of prophecy in the days of the Reformation and of the Puritan Revolution had forecast its advent and sought to calculate the period of its occurrence. They knew that the Protestant religion would be suppressed in some unprecedented way before the final judgments of God were poured forth on their persecutors.

They believed that the Protestant "witnesses" were yet to be slain; that they were to lie unburied for three and a half years, and then to be raised from death, and exalted to power and supremacy.

Peter Jurieu, one of the exiled Huguenot ministers wrote a book in 1687, a copy of which lies before us, entitled, "The accomplishment of the Scripture prophecies on the approaching deliverance of the Church, proving that the present persecution may end in three years and a half; after which the destruction of the Antichrist shall begin, which shall be finished in the beginning of the next age, and then the Kingdom of Christ shall come upon earth."

It is a volume of six hundred pages, and remarkable for the clearness and force of its argument.

Was Jurieu mistaken?

The Revocation of the Edict of Nantes took place on the 17th of October, 1685.

The English Revolution followed in 1688, and the coronation of William of Orange and Queen Mary took place on the 4th of April, 1689.

From October, 1685, to April, 1689, the interval is three and a half years.

The English Revolution marked the end of Papal supremacy in England, and Papal persecution on any widely extended scale in the world. It was the first stage in the inauguration of a new era.

In 1688, James II, the last Popish King of England, abandoned his throne, and fled. The victories of William of Orange in Ireland and on the continent followed; including those of Marlborough over the armies of Louis XIV, in the nine years' war with France from May, 1689, to January 1697.

The almost unexampled series of English victories of this war was succeeded by the Treaty of Ryswick in September, 1697, and the full establishment of civil and religious liberty.

Encouraged by the English Revolution in 1689, the Vaudois refugees in Switzerland resolved to attempt to return to their country. Embarking at Nyon

on the 16th of August, 1689, they crossed the Lake of Geneva, ascended the opposite heights, crossed the bridge of Marni, passed the towns of Cluse and Sallenches; crossed Mount Haute Luce, Mount Bon Hornme, and the River Isere; crossed Mount Tisserand and Mount Cenis, Mount Tourliers, the Valley of Jaillon, by Chamont above Suza, Mount Sei, and descended into the Valley of Pragela, the most northern of the Vaudois valleys. In this long and perilous journey across the Alps, they were led by Henry Arnaud. Though opposed by 10,000 French and 12,000 Piedmontese, they cut their way through, losing only thirty of their number in their numerous encounters with their enemies.

Climbing the precipitous Alps, crossing the snows, sleeping on the bare ground: subsisting only on bread and herbs, they escaped or put to flight their foes, preserved as by a miracle from all the perils of the way. Their return to their native valleys celebrated as "La Rentree Glorouse" was effected three and half years after their total dissipation.

We have said that Jurieu published a work on the "Approaching deliverance of the Church," in 1687, in which he anticipated that the Restoration of Protestantism would follow three and a half years after its overthrow at the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685.

Another work on the Apocalypse written in 1685 by an exiled French minister contains the same anticipation. Copies of both of these works are lying before us. The latter contains the following reference to its authorship on the title-page, – "written by a French minister in the year 1685, and finished but two days before the Dragoons plundered him of all except this Treatise."

It is a small volume of about 300 pages. Fallen to pieces with age, with broken binding, and separated leaves, my copy is tied together with string to preserve it from destruction; an eloquent witness to the last great Papal persecution, and the anticipation based on the sure word of prophecy, of the speedy restoration of Protestant liberties. The author tells us that he was unacquainted with Jurieu's view when he wrote. "There were divers of the refugees," says he, "who had the sight of this discourse when they were in France. For the author had finished it near the end of August, 1685, about two days before the arrival of the new missionaries, the Dragoons, who plundered him of all he had. So that this was the whole that he was able to save out of that doleful shipwreck; which since his arrival at a place of security he hath reviewed and corrected, in several places. And having met with "the Accomplishment of Prophecies," written by the famous Monsieur Jurieu, the author was exceedingly pleased to find that he had explained the eleventh chapter (of Revelation) as promissory of the reestablishment of the Reformed in France, according as that great man hath done."

Not in France, however, but chiefly in England whither great numbers of the refugees had come, and in the Waldensian Valleys, was the restoration of Protestantism to be effected. It came at the expected time. A darker experience awaited France, the execution of terrible judgments in retribution for her cruel and long continued persecution of the Huguenots. Regarded in its widest aspects, the English Revolution under William of Orange marked the commencement of the modern era of full Protestant liberties, and the

political ascendancy of Protestant power in Europe, and throughout the world.

Next: [History Unveiling Prophecy by H. Grattan Guinness – Part II](#)

[Evidence that Textus Receptus IS the Earliest and Therefore the Most Reliable Greek Manuscript of the New Testament](#)



This article is from pages 533 – 537 of a book scanned and sent to me in PDF format by my good friend, [Dr. John Gideon Hartnett](#), a professor at the University of Adelaide, Adelaide, South Australia. It proves all modern translations of the New Testament have errors and omissions because they are not based on the Textus Receptus Greek manuscript. It also shows that the statement in the New International Version (NIV), about Mark 16:9-20 which says, “The earliest manuscripts and some other ancient witnesses do not have verses 9–20” is **false!**

There may be some errors in article for it was scanned from a book and converted to text with optical character recognition software (ORC). Any typos brought to my attention will be corrected as soon as I get word of them.

THE MUTILATION OF MARK 16:9-20 **FLOYD NOLEN JONES, Th.D., Ph.D.**

Most modern Bible versions have a footnote to the effect that “these verses are not in the oldest, best, most reliable Greek manuscripts”. In laymen’s terms this means that Mark 16:9-20 are not in the 4th century Greek manuscripts, *Vaticanus B* and *Sinaiticus Aleph* which were derived from Origen’s (AD 185-254) edited New Testament (a 12th century minuscule also omits the verses. These verses are the Great Commission spoken by our Lord as

recorded by Mark. It is an apostolic commission delegating great power to the body of Christ that it may continue the ministry of the Lord Jesus.

Of the approximately 3,119 Greek manuscripts of the NT extant today, none is complete. The segment of text bearing Mark 16 has been lost from many, but over 1,800 contain the section and verses 9-20 are present in all but the 3 cited above. **The footnote is thus unveiled and laid bare as dishonest and deliberately misleading in intimating that these verses are not the Word of God.** The external evidence is massive. Not only is the Greek manuscript attestation ratio over 600 to 1 in support of the verses (1,800 to 3 =99.99%) – all but one of the approximately 8,000 extant Latin mss, all but one of the approximately 1,000 Syriac versions as well as all the over 2,000 known Greek Lectionaries contain the verses. Mark 16:9-20 were cited by Church “Fathers” who lived 150 years or more *before Vaticanus B* or Sinaiticus Aleph were written: Papias (c.100), Justin Martyr (c.150), Irenaeus (c.180), Tertullian (c.195), and Hippolytus (c.200; see: John Burgon, *The Revision Revised*, London: John Murray Pub, 1883, pp.422-423).

Vaticanus B is an “uncial” manuscript. This means that all the letters are block capitalized; there are no spaces between the words, and there are no vowels. It is a codex (a book, not a scroll) of 759 leaves (10? by 10? inches) with three columns per page, each of which ranges from 40 to 44 lines per column. There are 16 to 18 letters on each line.

Vaticanus B adds to the Bible as it includes the Old Testament Apocrypha. Yet God said don't add. It contains the Epistle of Barnabas (part of the Apocalyptic books of New Testament times) which teaches that water baptism saves the soul, again adding to the Word of God. However, the Word of God has also been deleted as *Vaticanus B* does not include Genesis 1:1-46:28, Psalms 106-138, Matthew 16:2-3, Romans 16:24. The Lord also said not to subtract. It also lacks Paul's Pastoral Epistles (1st and 2nd Timothy, Titus and Philemon). In addition, the Book of Revelation as well as Hebrews 9:15-13:25 are missing. The latter teaches that the once for all sacrifice of Jesus ended the sacraments forever. There is also a conspicuous blank space where Mark 16:9-20 should be.

Erasmus was well aware of *Vaticanus B* and its variant readings in 1515 AD at which time he was preparing the New Testament Greek text. Because they read so differently from the vast majority of the approximately 200 mss he had already examined, Erasmus considered such readings spurious. For example, **Vaticanus B** leaves out “Mystery Babylon the Great”, “the seven heads that are the seven mountains upon which the harlot (the apostate religious system that began at Babel of which the Roman church is a part) sits”, and leaves out “the woman which is that great city which reigns over the kings of the earth” which has seven mountains. All of this may be found in Revelation 17.

Mark 16 of the Vatican MSS has 42 lines in its first column and has only five letters in the 31st line of the second column. Thus there is a blank space left at the end of verse 8 separating Mark from the Gospel of Luke. That it is the only blank column in the entire 759 leaf MSS should alert us that something is very wrong here.

Mark 16:9-20 contains 971 Greek letters. Were 18 letters placed on each line in the void, 967 letters would be placed within it; hence, a scribe need only work in 4 letters over the last 519 (??)lines. As the lines do not all equally end at the same place on their right margin, this would have been an easy task for any scribe. He certainly would not have placed a few scant letters on a single line in the following column to end Mark, leave the other 41 lines blank and then begin Luke at the top of the next column (a new book was always begun at the top of a column). *Vaticanus* written on very expensive vellum made from antelope hide; thus, great effort would have been taken to avoid such waste.

As the void would faithfully accommodate verses 9-20, the scribe who prepared *Vaticanus* B obviously knew of both the existence of these verses as well as their precise content. The older MSS from which Codex B was copied must have infallibly contained the 12 verses. For whatever reason, the scribe was instructed to leave them out; he obeyed but left a blank in memorial. Never was silence more eloquent! By leaving a space for the omitted verses, *Vaticanus* B brings to our attention a witness more ancient than itself – the earlier scribe! (see: John W. Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, Oxford and London: James ParkeR & Co. Pub, 1871, p. 165)

Also an uncial, *Codex Sinaiticus Aleph*, (the first letter in the Hebrew alphabet) has 346 leaves or 694 pages each measuring 13 by 15 inches. Made from the finest antelope hides, each page. has four columns with 48 lines per column, and there are 12 to 14 letters to a line. The first portion of *Sinaiticus* was discovered in 1844 by Constantine von Tischendorf in the burn pile at the monastery of St. Catharine at the foot of Mount Sinai at which time he procured but 43 leaves of a Greek Old Testament (i.e., a Septuagint. That which is now known as *Sinaiticus Aleph* II is the codex he brought from Mt. Sinai in 1859.

It is always stated that *Aleph* is a “complete” Greek New Testament, but it is not. It **adds**, for example, the Shepherd of Hermas and Barnabas to the NT. It **omits** John 5:4,8:1-11; Mat. 16:2-3; Rom. 16:24; Mark 16:9-20; 1 John 5:7; Acts 8:37 and about a dozen other verses.

The most significant fact regarding these fourth-century MSS is that in both *Vaticanus* B and *Sinaiticus Aleph*, John 1:18 reads that Jesus was the only begotten “God” instead of the only begotten “Son”. That is the original Arian heresy! The most widely used Greek text in Bible colleges and seminaries today is Eberhard Nestle’s Greek text. Nestle likewise reads... only begotten “God” which means that God had a little God named Jesus who is thus a lesser God than the Father. This means that at first there was big God and He *created* a little god. Thus, Jesus comes out to be a created being, a God with a little “g”, but at the incarnation a god was not begotten. Our Lord already was and always had been God. At the incarnation God begat a son who, in so far His deity is concerned, is *eternal* (Micah 5:2). This reading renders these MSS as untrustworthy and depraved! Yet these are the two manuscripts most venerated by text critics over the past century.

These critics have ignored the text in nearly all the extant Greek

manuscripts and have taken about 90% of all the words for their so called "restored" New Testament from *Vaticanus B*. About 7% of the remaining 10% comes from *Sinaiticus Aleph*. What makes this all the more confounding is that these two uncials have over 3,000 significant differences between themselves in the four Gospels alone! That B and Aleph have come to so dominate the discipline of Textual Criticism is all the more bewildering when we consider that no less than Theodore Cressy Skeat (1907-2003), formerly of the British Museum and coauthor of *Scribes and Correctors of Codex Sinaiticus*, London, Trustees of the British Museum Pub, 1938) believed that codex *Vaticanus* was a reject among the 50 copies that Eusebius prepared for the major churches throughout the Empire at the behest of Emperor Constantine (Bruce Metzger, *The Text of the New Testament*, 3rd ed, Oxford Uni. press, 1992, pp. 47-48)

The resulting corrupt Greek text has replaced the traditional *Textus Receptus* Greek New Testament which the believing Church has always accepted as the inerrant God inspired word. Moreover, its readings have recently been verified as going back at least as far as AD 66. Indeed, until 1904 the Greek Church had guaranteed the Byzantine text of the *Textus Receptus*, but even it finally succumbed to the continual onslaught from so called modern scholarship. Although they still hold fast to the readings found only in the Byzantine manuscripts, the Greek Church has departed from its centuries held declaration that the *Textus Receptus* reflected precisely the NT it had hand copied all the way back to the time of the Apostles and has instead adopted a "majority Byzantine text" mindset. The result is, that even though nearly all are of a very minor nature, the 1904 (as well as their 1960 upgrade) text departs from the *Textus Receptus* almost 2,000 lines (their estimation).

Sinaiticus is not a bound codex. Thus, any given folio (a sheet of paper folded in half to form four pages) can easily be pulled free and later replaced. Tischendorf himself noted that the folio containing Mark 14:54 to 16:8 and Luke 1:1 to 1:56 had not been written by the scribe which he designated as "A". He said that *Sinaiticus* exhibited a different handwriting and ink on this leaf. Tischendorf goes on to add that scribe A wrote all of the New Testament in Aleph except six leaves plus part of a seventh) and that these six (which included Mark 16) were written by A's colleague, scribe D. He stated that D wrote part of the Old Testament and also acted as *diorthota* or corrector of the New Testament. Tischendorf also identified Scribe D as the man who years earlier had penned *Vaticanus B* and left out Mark 16:9-20 resulting in the third column being left blank! Dr. F.H.A. Scrivener, as well as Hort, likewise concluded that D was the scribe of *Vaticanus* (Scrivener, *A Plain Introduction to the Criticism of the New Testament*, 4th ed, Edward Miller cd, London: George Bell and Sons Pub, 1894, Vol. 2, p. 337, fn. 1).

But there is more. Tischendorf further observed that there is a change in spacing and size of the individual letters. This was done by scribe D in an attempt to place some words in the void left by his removal of verses 9-20 that scribe A had originally placed in the codex. This is seen in that the first three columns on page 228 have 14 Greek letters per line; however, the letters in the fourth column are somewhat wider such that each line has only 12 letters. Coming to page 229 of the folio, we find that the first column has but 11.6 letters to the line, the second column has only three and one

third lines with a letter spacing of 10.7. Having accomplished his goal of placing some words in the heretofore blank second column, the situation returns to normal and third column, which begins with Luke 1:1, has 14.1 letters per line and the fourth column 13.9.

Taken together, these circumstances undeniably testify that the sheet is a forgery. For whatever reason, scribe D, who years before had left the blank column in *Vaticanus B*, simply slipped the folio out that scribe A originally prepared, then rewrote and replaced it. He was obviously determined not to leave another column blank; a circumstance which for years he undoubtedly had to explain to various associates and authorities many times over. Thus, the blank column in B and Aleph are the work of a single scribe and thereby does not constitute the voice of two witnesses against the inclusion of Mark 16:9-20. The omission (or disappearance) is due to only one and the same person – the scribe who wrote B and then revised Aleph, or perhaps to an editor whose directions he acted. Furthermore, we have seen that the blank space Scribe D left in the *Vaticanus B* proves that he knew of the passage. As he is the copyist of that folio in Aleph, rather than being witnesses against the last twelve verses of Mark 16, both B and Aleph must be seen as actually bearing testimony to their existence in antiquity (see: John Burgon, *The Traditional Text of the Holy Gospels Vindicated and Established*, Edward Miller ed, London: George Bell and Sons, 1896, pp. 298-301).

As to how and why verses 9-20 of Mark 16 came to be omitted in B and Aleph, we do not know with certainty – we were not there. Still, as already shown, we do know that the passage as well as its precise content was well known when these highly vaunted codices were prepared. However, a likely, logical explanation which is borne out by ecclesiastical usage does exist.

It is a historical fact that, at least as early as the 4th century, lessons from the NT were publicly read in the assemblies according to a definite scheme. Moreover, there is no sign of Mark 16:9-20 being omitted until the 4th century AD. Cyril at Jerusalem, Chrysostom at Constantinople and Antioch, and Augustine in North Africa all expressly bear witness that, at least by their time, a Lectionary was fully established in the churches throughout Christendom. The lections of portions of Scripture that were read aloud in public church services, very much like the responsive readings that are given in many of today's assemblies (see: Burgon, *The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark*, *op. cit*, pp. 287-320.)

Just when the Lectionary first took the form of a separate book is not known, but before the Church started producing Lectionaries, the start and end of the lections were indicated by inserting the Greek word ἀρχή (beginning) and το τέλος (the end) in the margin. Often, the latter was placed within the text itself. These words were normally written in red ink so as to disassociate them from the actual Scriptures they were marking off. The twelve verses in dispute are found in every known copy of the Lectionary of the East, and they constitute one lection of the highest possible distinction. From the very first, Mark 16:9-20 has everywhere and by all branches of the Church been used for two of its greatest Festivals – Easter and the Ascension. To suppose a portion of Scripture singled out for such extraordinary honor by the Church universal is a spurious addition to the Gospel of Mark must be

recognized as absolutely irrational.

There was an ancient Church-lection for Easter (and other occasions) which ended at the 8th verse of Mark 16, and the Ascension Day lection began at verse nine. Now Eusebius tells us that το τελο (the end) is written in almost all the copies of the Gospel of Mark immediately after verse 8 (*Burgon, The Last Twelve Verses, op. cit, p. 315*). Thus, it must be seen as most reasonable that at some remote period an uninformed copyist penning Mark came across "the end" after the final words of verse eight- εφοβουντο-γαρ ("for they were afraid"). Upon seeing εφοβουντο-γαρ το τελο the scribe could well have misunderstood the significance of the liturgical note "το τελο" even τελο) and concluded that it meant to bring Mark's Gospel to an end there. Such would account for the mutilation of the last chapter of Mark. This would even be more likely should Mark 16:8 occasionally happen to fall at the bottom of the left hand page of a manuscript and the text leaf was damaged or missing (which is true of one of the codices at Moscow). Once the mistake was made, any copies would obviously spread the omission. Of course, it is well known today that το τελο (or τελο) indicates the close of an ecclesiastical lection and not the close of a book.

Writing around 325 AD, Eusebius certainly knew of the so called "long ending" of Mark 16. In a fragment of a lost work addressed "to Marinus" which was written at least two decades before Vaticanus B saw the light of day, Marinus asks Eusebius: "How is it that according to Matthew (28:1) the Saviour appears to have risen 'in the end of the Sabbath;' but, according to Mark, 'early the first day of the week?'" Now this last citation is from Mark 16:9, thus the verse already existed. In his answer, Eusebius replied that someone who wished to get rid of the entire passage (i.e., Mark 16:9-20, fnj) would offer that "... it is not met with in *all* the copies of Mark's Gospel". Eusebius goes on to say that a man of such persuasion would add that they were not in "the accurate copies" – that the passage is "met with seldom" and that it was absent from "almost all" copies (*Burgon, The Last Twelve Verses of the Gospel According to S. Mark, op. cit, pp. 120-123*). Here the issue is not whether or not Eusebius supports the verses, the point is he testifies that Mark 16:9-20 was clearly known and its validity debated in his day. Obviously, if the "long ending" existed in Eusebius' day, how can the text critics insist that it was inserted *after* B and *Aleph* but *before* the time of Erasmus?

Finally, do we really believe that God would have the greatest story ever told end at verse 8: "And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulcher for they trembled and were amazed: neither said they any to any man; for they were afraid". Would God allow the good news of the Gospel of His Son to end with his disciples cringing in fear? Is it really logical or even reasonable that Mark would conclude his Gospel without any reference to the appearance of the risen Christ to His disciples? I think not! Our reader should feel a deep sense of righteous indignation upon learning of the unscrupulous manner in which these verses have been presented by nearly All Bible publishers. το τελο.

You can download a complete work about the Bible from Dr. Floyd Nolen Jones, [Which Version is the Bible](#) in PDF format by right clicking this link and click save link.

A better discourse on this subject can be found on [John Gideon Hartnett's Revolution for Jesus website](#).

[Observations upon the Apocalypse of St. John, by Isaac Newton](#)



This is part two of a document written by Sir Isaac Newton titled: [“Observations upon the Prophecies of Daniel, and the Apocalypse of St John”](#) You can download the PDF file I got the text from by right clicking the above link and click save link. There is alternative text at the end of the file which I did not include in this post.

CHAP. I. Introduction, concerning the time when the Apocalypse was written.



Isaac Newton

Irenæus introduced an opinion that the Apocalypse was written in the time of Domitian; but then he also postponed the writing of some others of the sacred books, and was to place the Apocalypse after them: he might perhaps have heard from his master Polycarp that he had received this book from John about the time of Domitian's death; or indeed John might himself at that time have made a new publication of it, from whence Irenæus might imagine it was then but newly written. Eusebius in his Chronicle and Ecclesiastical History

follows Ireneoſus; but afterwards [1] in his Evangelical Demonstrations, he conjoins the banishment of John into Patmos, with the deaths of Peter and Paul: and so do [2] Tertullian and PseudoProchorus, as well as the first author, whoever he was, of that very antient fable, that John was put by Nero into a vessel of hot oil, and coming out unhurt, was banished by him into Patmos. Tho' this story be no more than a fiction yet was it founded on a tradition of the first churches, that John was banished into Patmos in the days of Nero. Epiphanius represents the Gospel of John as written in the time of Domitian, and the Apocalypse even before that of Nero. [3] Arethas in the beginning of his Commentary quotes the opinion of Irenæus from Eusebius, but follows it not: for he afterwards affirms the Apocalypse was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, and that former commentators had expounded the sixth seal of that destruction.

With the opinion of the first Commentators agrees the tradition of the Churches of Syria, preserved to this day in the title of the Syriac Version of the Apocalypse, which title is this: The Revelation which was made to John the Evangelist by God in the Island Patmos, into which he was banished by Nero the Cæsar. The fame is confirmed by a story told by [4] Eusebius out of Clemens Alexandrinus, and other antient authors, concerning a youth, whom John some time after his return from Patmos committed to the care of the Bishop of a certain city. The Bishop educated, instructed, and at length baptized him; but then remitting of his care, the young man thereupon got into ill company, and began by degrees first to revel and grow vitious, then to abuse and spoil those he met in the night; and at last grew so desperate, that his companions turning a band of highway men, made him their Captain: and, saith [5] Chrysostom, he continued their Captain a long time. At length John returning to that city, and hearing what was done, rode to the thief; and, when he out of reverence to his old master fled, John rode after him, recalled him, and restored him to the Church. This is a story of many years, and requires that John should have returned from Patmos rather at the death of Nero than at that of Domitian; because between the death of Domitian and that of John there were but two years and an half; and John in his old age was [6] so infirm as to be carried to Church, dying above 90 years old, and therefore could not be then suppos'd able to ride after the thief.

This opinion is further supported by the allusions in the Apocalypse to the Temple and Altar, and holy City, as then standing; and to the Gentiles, who were soon after to tread under foot the holy City and outward Court. 'Tis confirmed also by the style of the Apocalypse itself, which is fuller of Hebraisms than his Gospel. For thence it may be gathered, that it was written when John was newly come out of Judea, where he had been used to the Syriac tongue; and that he did not write his Gospel, till by long converse with the Asiatick Greeks he had left off most of the Hebraisms. It is confirmed also by the many false Apocalypses, as those of Peter, Paul, Thomas, Stephen, Elias and Cerinthus, written in imitation of the true one. For as the many false Gospels, false Acts, and false Epistles were occasioned by true ones; and the writing many false Apocalypses, and ascribing them to Apostles and Prophets, argues that there was a true Apostolic one in great request with the first Christians: so this true one may well be suppos'd to have been written early, that there may be room in the Apostolic age for the writing of

so many false ones afterwards, and fathering them upon Peter, Paul, Thomas and others, who were dead before John. Caius, who was contemporary with Tertullian, [7] tells us that Cerinthus wrote his Revelations as a great Apostle, and pretended the visions were shewn him by Angels, asserting a millennium of carnal pleasures at Jerusalem after the resurrection; so that his Apocalypse was plainly written in imitation of John's: and yet he lived so early, that [8] he resisted the Apostles at Jerusalem in or before the first year of Claudius, that is, 26 years before the death of Nero, and [9] died before John.

These reasons may suffice for determining the time; and yet there is one more, which to considering men may seem a good reason, to others not. I'll propound it, and leave it to every man's judgment. The Apocalypse seems to be alluded to in the Epistles of Peter and that to the Hebrews and therefore to have been written before them. Such allusions in the Epistle to the Hebrews, I take to be the discourses concerning the High Priest in the heavenly Tabernacle, who is both Priest and King, as was Melchisedec; and those concerning the word of God, with the sharp twoedged sword, the σαββατισμος, or millennial rest, the earth whose end is to be burned, suppose by the lake of fire, the judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries, the heavenly City which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God, the cloud of witnesses, mount Sion, heavenly Jerusalem, general assembly, spirits of just men made perfect, viz. by the resurrection, and the shaking of heaven and earth, and removing them, that the new heaven, new earth and new kingdom which cannot be shaken, may remain. In the first of Peter occur these:

[10] The Revelation of Jesus Christ, twice or thrice repeated; [11] the blood of Christ as of a Lamb foreordained before the foundation of the world; [12] the spiritual building in heaven, 1 Pet. ii. 5. an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept unto the salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time, 1 Pet. i. 4, 5. [13] the royal Priesthood, [14] the holy Priesthood, [15] the judgment beginning at the house of God, and [16] the Church at Babylon. These are indeed obscurer allusions; but the second Epistle, from the 19th verse of the first Chapter to the end, seems to be a continued Commentary upon the Apocalypse. There, in writing to the Churches in Asia, to whom John was commanded to send this Prophecy, he tells them, they have a more sure word of Prophecy, to be heeded by them, as a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the daystar arise in their hearts, that is, until they begin to understand it: for no Prophecy, saith he, of the scripture is of any private interpretation; the Prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake, as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. Daniel [17] himself professes that he understood not his own Prophecies; and therefore the Churches were not to expect the interpretation from their Prophet John, but to study the Prophecies themselves. This is the substance of what Peter says in the first chapter; and then in the second he proceeds to describe, out of this sure word of Prophecy, how there should arise in the Church false Prophets, or false teachers, expressed collectively in the Apocalypse by the name of the false Prophet; who should bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, which is the character of

Antichrist: And many, saith he, shall follow their lusts [18]; they that dwell on the earth [19] shall be deceived by the false Prophet, and be made drunk with the wine of the Whore's fornication, by reason of whom the way of truth shall be blasphemed; for [20] the Beast is full of blasphemy: and thro' covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandize of you; for these are the Merchants of the Earth, who trade with the great Whore, and their merchandize [21] is all things of price, with the bodies and souls of men: whose judgment—lingreth not, and their damnation [22] slumbreth not, but shall surely come upon them at the last day suddenly, as the flood upon the old world, and fire and brimstone upon Sodom and Gomorrha, when the just shall be delivered [23] like Lot; for the Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished, in the lake of fire; but chiefly them that walk after the flesh in the lust of uncleanness, [24] being made drunk with the wine of the Whore's fornication; who despise dominion, and are not afraid to blaspheme glories; for the beast opened his mouth against God [25] to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. These, as natural brute beasts, the tenhorned beast and twohorned beast, or false Prophet, made to be taken and destroyed, in the lake of fire, blaspheme the things they understand not:—they count it pleasure to riot in the daytime—sporting themselves with their own deceivings, while they feast [26] with you, having eyes full of an [27] Adulteress: for the kingdoms of the beast live deliciously with the great Whore, and the nations are made drunk with the wine of her fornication. They are gone astray, following the way of Balaam, the son of Beor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness, the false Prophet [28] who taught Balak to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel. These are, not fountains of living water, but wells without water; not such clouds of Saints as the two witnesses ascend in, but clouds that are carried with a tempest, &c. Thus does the author of this Epistle spend all the second Chapter in describing the qualities of the Apocalyptic Beasts and false Prophet: and then in the third he goes on to describe their destruction more fully, and the future kingdom. He saith, that because the coming of Christ should be long deferred, they should scoff, saying, where is the promise of his coming? Then he describes the sudden coming of the day of the Lord upon them, as a thief in the night, which is the Apocalyptic phrase; and the millennium, or thousand years, which are with God but as a day; the passing away of the old heavens and earth, by a conflagration in the lake of fire, and our looking for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness.

Seeing therefore Peter and John were Apostles of the circumcision, it seems to me that they staid with their Churches in Judea and Syria till the Romans made war upon their nation, that is, till the twelfth year of Nero; that they then followed the main body of their flying Churches into Asia, and that Peter went thence by Corinth to Rome; that the Roman Empire looked upon those Churches as enemies, because Jews by birth; and therefore to prevent insurrections, secured their leaders, and banished John into Patmos. It seems also probable to me that the Apocalypse was there composed, and that soon after the Epistle to the Hebrews and those of Peter were written to these Churches, with reference to this Prophecy as what they were particularly concerned in. For it appears by these Epistles, that they were written in

times of general affliction and tribulation under the heathens, and by consequence when the Empire made war upon the Jews; for till then the heathens were at peace with the Christian Jews, as well as with the rest. The Epistle to the Hebrews, since it mentions Timothy as related to those Hebrews, must be written to them after their flight into Asia, where Timothy was Bishop; and by consequence after the war began, the Hebrews in Judea being strangers to Timothy. Peter seems also to call Rome Babylon, as well with respect to the war made upon Judea, and the approaching captivity, like that under old Babylon, as with respect to that name in the Apocalypse: and in writing to the strangers scattered thro'out Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia, he seems to intimate that they were the strangers newly scattered by the Roman wars; for those were the only strangers there belonging to his care.

This account of things agrees best with history when duly rectified. For [29] Justin and [30] Irenæus say, that Simon Magus came to Rome in the reign of Claudius, and exercised juggling tricks there. Pseudo Clemens adds, that he endeavoured there to fly, but broke his neck thro' the prayers of Peter. Whence [31] Eusebius, or rather his interpolator Jerom, has recorded, that Peter came to Rome in the second year of Claudius: but [32] Cyril Bishop of Jerusalem, Philastrius, Sulpitius, Prosper, Maximus Taurinensis, and Hegesippus junior, place this victory of Peter in the time of Nero. Indeed the antienter tradition was, that Peter came to Rome in the days of this Emperor, as may be seen in [33] Lactantius. Chrysostom [34] tells us, that the Apostles continued long in Judea, and that then being driven out by the Jews they went to the Gentiles. This dispersion was in the first year of the Jewish war, when the Jews, as Josephus tells us, began to be tumultuous and violent in all places. For all agree that the Apostles were dispersed into several regions at once; and Origen has set down the time, [35] telling us that in the beginning of the Judaic war, the Apostles and disciples of our Lord were scattered into all nations; Thomas into Parthia, Andrew into Scythia, John into Asia, and Peter first into Asia, where he preacht to the dispersion, and thence into Italy. [36] Dionysius Corinthius saith, that Peter went from Asia by Corinth to Rome, and all antiquity agrees that Peter and Paul were martyred there in the end of Nero's reign. Mark went with Timothy to Rome, 2 Tim. iv. 11. Colos. iv. 10. Sylvanus was Paul's assistant; and by the companions of Peter, mentioned in his first Epistle, we may know that he wrote from Rome; and the Antients generally agree, that in this Epistle he understood Rome by Babylon. His second Epistle was writ to the same dispersed strangers with the first, 2 Pet. iii. 1. and therein he saith, that Paul had writ of the same things to them, and also in his other Epistles, ver. 15, 16. Now as there is no Epistle of Paul to these strangers besides that to the Hebrews, so in this Epistle, chap. x. 11, 12. we find at large all those things which Peter had been speaking of, and here refers to; particularly the passing away of the old heavens and earth, and establishing an inheritance immoveable, with an exhortation to grace, because God, to the wicked, is a consuming fire, Heb. xii. 25, 26, 28, 29.

Having determined the time of writing the Apocalypse, I need not say much about the truth of it, since it was in such request with the first ages, that many endeavoured to imitate it, by feigning Apocalypses under the Apostles

names; and the Apostles themselves, as I have just now shewed, studied it, and used its phrases; by which means the style of the Epistle to the Hebrews became more mystical than that of Paul's other Epistles, and the style of John's Gospel more figurative and majestic than that of the other Gospels. I do not apprehend that Christ was called the word of God in any book of the New Testament written before the Apocalypse; and therefore am of opinion, the language was taken from this Prophecy, as were also many other phrases in this Gospel, such as those of Christ's being the light which enlightens the world, the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, the bridegroom, he that testifieth, he that came down from heaven, the Son of God, &c. Justin Martyr, who within thirty years after John's death became a Christian, writes expressly that a certain man among the Christians whose name was John, one of the twelve Apostles of Christ, in the Revelation which was shewed him, prophesied that those who believed in Christ should live a thousand years at Jerusalem. And a few lines before he saith: But I, and as many as are Christians, in all things right in their opinions, believe both that there shall be a resurrection of the flesh, and a thousand years life at Jerusalem built, adorned and enlarged. Which is as much as to say, that all true Christians in that early age received this Prophecy: for in all ages, as many as believed the thousand years, received the Apocalypse as the foundation of their opinion: and I do not know one instance to the contrary. Papias Bishop of Hierapolis, a man of the Apostolic age, and one of John's own disciples, did not only teach the doctrine of the thousand years, but also [37] asserted the Apocalypse as written by divine inspiration. Melito, who flourished next after Justin, [38] wrote a commentary upon this Prophecy; and he, being Bishop of Sardis one of the seven Churches, could neither be ignorant of their tradition about it, nor impose upon them. Irenæus, who was contemporary with Melito, wrote much upon it, and said, that the number 666 was in all the antient and approved copies; and that he had it also confirmed to him by those who had seen John face to face, meaning no doubt his master Polycarp for one. At the same time [39] Theophilus Bishop of Antioch asserted it, and so did Tertullian, Clemens Alexandrinus, and Origen soon after; and their contemporary Hippolytus the Martyr, Metropolitan of the Arabians, [40] wrote a commentary upon it. All these were antient men, flourishing within a hundred and twenty years after John's death, and of greatest note in the Churches of those times. Soon after did Victorinus Pictaviensis write another commentary upon it; and he lived in the time of Dioclesian. This may surely suffice to shew how the Apocalypse was received and studied in the first ages: and I do not indeed find any other book of the New Testament so strongly attested, or commented upon so early as this. The Prophecy said: Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep the things which are written therein. This animated the first Christians to study it so much, till the difficulty made them remit, and comment more upon the other books of the New Testament. This was the state of the Apocalypse, till the thousand years being misunderstood, brought a prejudice against it: and Dionysius of Alexandria, noting how it abounded with barbarisms, that is with Hebraisms, promoted that prejudice so far, as to cause many Greeks in the fourth century to doubt of the book. But whilst the Latins, and a great part of the Greeks, always retained the Apocalypse, and the rest doubted only out of prejudice, it makes nothing against its authority.

This Prophecy is called the Revelation, with respect to the scripture of truth, which Daniel [41] was commanded to shut up and seal, till the time of the end. Daniel sealed it until the time of the end; and until that time comes, the Lamb is opening the seals: and afterwards the two Witnesses prophesy out of it a long time in sackcloth, before they ascend up to heaven in a cloud. All which is as much as to say, that these Prophecies of Daniel and John should not be understood till the time of the end: but then some should prophesy out of them in an afflicted and mournful state for a long time, and that but darkly, so as to convert but few. But in the very end, the Prophecy should be so far interpreted as to convince many. Then, saith Daniel, many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased. For the Gospel must be preached in all nations before the great tribulation, and end of the world. The palmbearing multitude, which come out of this great tribulation, cannot be innumerable out of all nations, unless they be made so by the preaching of the Gospel before it comes. There must be a stone cut out of a mountain without hands, before it can fall upon the toes of the Image, and become a great mountain and fill the earth. An Angel must fly thro' the midst of heaven with the everlasting Gospel to preach to all nations, before Babylon falls, and the Son of man reaps his harvest. The two Prophets must ascend up to heaven in a cloud, before the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of Christ. 'Tis therefore a part of this Prophecy, that it should not be understood before the last age of the world; and therefore it makes for the credit of the Prophecy, that it is not yet understood. But if the last age, the age of opening these things, be now approaching, as by the great successes of late Interpreters it seems to be, we have more encouragement than ever to look into these things. If the general preaching of the Gospel be approaching, it is to us and our posterity that those words mainly belong: [42] In the time of the end the wise shall understand, but none of the wicked shall understand. [43] Blessed is he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein.

The folly of Interpreters has been, to foretel times and things by this Prophecy, as if God designed to make them Prophets. By this rashness they have not only exposed themselves, but brought the Prophecy also into contempt. The design of God was much otherwise. He gave this and the Prophecies of the Old Testament, not to gratify men's curiosities by enabling them to foreknow things, but that after they were fulfilled they might be interpreted by the event, and his own Providence, not the Interpreters, be then manifested thereby to the world. For the event of things predicted many ages before, will then be a convincing argument that the world is governed by providence. For as the few and obscure Prophecies concerning Christ's first coming were for setting up the Christian religion, which all nations have since corrupted; so the many and clear Prophecies concerning the things to be done at Christ's second coming, are not only for predicting but also for effecting a recovery and reestablishment of the longlost truth, and setting up a kingdom wherein dwells righteousness. The event will prove the Apocalypse; and this Prophecy, thus proved and understood, will open the old Prophets, and all together will make known the true religion, and establish it. For he that will understand the old Prophets, must begin with this; but the time is not yet come for understanding them perfectly, because the main

revolution predicted in them is not yet come to pass. In the days of the voice of the seventh Angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God shall be finished, as he hath declared to his servants the Prophets: and then the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and his Christ, and he shall reign for ever, Apoc. x. 7. xi. 15. There is already so much of the Prophecy fulfilled, that as many as will take pains in this study, may see sufficient instances of God's providence: but then the signal revolutions predicted by all the holy Prophets, will at once both turn mens eyes upon considering the predictions, and plainly interpret them. Till then we must content ourselves with interpreting what hath been already fulfilled.

Amongst the Interpreters of the last age there is scarce one of note who hath not made some discovery worth knowing; and thence I seem to gather that God is about opening these mysteries. The success of others put me upon considering it; and if I have done any thing which may be useful to following writers, I have my design.

Notes to Chap. I.

- [1] Dem. Evang. l. 3.
- [2] Vid. Pamelium in notis ad Tertull. de Præscriptionibus, n. 215 & Hieron l. 1. contra Jovinianum, c. 14. Edit. Erasmi.
- [3] Areth. c. 18, 19.
- [4] Hist. Eccl. l. 3. c. 23.
- [5] Chrysost. ad Theodorum lapsum.
- [6] Hieron. in Epist. ad Gal. l. 3. c. 6.
- [7] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 3. c. 28. Edit. Valesii.
- [8] Epiphan. Hæres. 28.
- [9] Hieron. adv. Lucif.
- [10] 1 Pet. i. 7, 13. iv. 13. & v. 1.
- [11] Apoc. xiii. 8.
- [12] Apoc. xxi.
- [13] Apoc. i. 6. & v. 10.
- [14] Apoc. xx. 6.
- [15] Apoc. xx. 4, 12.
- [16] Apoc. xvii.
- [17] Dan. viii. 15, 16, 27. & xii. 8, 9.
- [18] ασελγειας, in many of the best MSS.
- [19] Apoc. xiii. 7, 12.
- [20] Apoc. xiii. 1, 5, 6.
- [21] Apoc. xviii. 12, 13.
- [22] Apoc. xix. 20.
- [23] Apoc. xxi. 3, 4.
- [24] Apoc. ix. 21. and xvii. 2.
- [25] Apoc. xiii. 6.
- [26] Apoc. xviii. 3, 7, 9.
- [27] μοιχαλιδος.
- [28] Apoc. ii. 14.
- [29] Apol. ad Antonin. Pium.
- [30] Hæres. l. 1. c. 20. Vide etiam Tertullianum, Apol. c. 13.
- [31] Euseb. Chron.
- [32] Cyril Catech. 6. Philastr. de hæres. cap. 30. Sulp. Hist. l. 2. Prosper

de promiss. dimid. temp. cap. 13. Maximus
serm. 5. in Natal. Apost. Hegesip. l. 2. c. 2.
[33] Lactant de mortib. Persec. c. 2.
[34] Hom. 70. in Matt. c. 22.
[35] Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. l. 2. c. 25.
[36] Euseb. Hist. l. 2. c. 25.
[37] Arethas in Proæm. comment. in Apoc.
[38] Euseb. Hist. l. 4. cap. 26. Hieron.
[39] Euseb. Hist. l. 4. c. 24.
[40] Hieron.
[41] Dan. x. 21. xii. 4, 9.
[42] Dan. xii. 4, 10.
[43] Apoc. i. 3.

The Apocalypse of John is written in the same style and language with the Prophecies of Daniel, and hath the same relation to them which they have to one another, so that all of them together make but one complete Prophecy; and in like manner it consists of two parts, an introductory Prophecy, and an Interpretation thereof.

The Prophecy is distinguished into seven successive parts, by the opening of the seven seals of the book which Daniel was commanded to seal up: and hence it is called the Apocalypse or Revelation of Jesus Christ. The time of the seventh seal is subdivided into eight successive parts by the silence in heaven for half an hour, and the sounding of seven trumpets successively: and the seventh trumpet sounds to the battle of the great day of God Almighty, whereby the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, and those are destroyed that destroyed the earth.

The Interpretation begins with the words, And the temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his temple the Ark of his Testament: and it continues to the end of the Prophecy. The Temple is the scene of the visions, and the visions in the Temple relate to the feast of the seventh month: for the feasts of the Jews were typical of things to come. The Passover related to the first coming of Christ, and the feasts of the seventh month to his second coming: his first coming being therefore over before this Prophecy was given, the feasts of the seventh month are here only alluded unto.

On the first day of that month, in the morning, the HighPriest dressed the lamps: and in allusion hereunto, this Prophecy begins with a vision of one like the Son of man in the HighPriest's habit, appearing as it were in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, or over against the midst of them, dressing the lamps, which appeared like a rod of seven stars in his right hand: and this dressing was perform'd by the sending seven Epistles to the Angels or Bishops of the seven Churches of Asia, which in the primitive times illuminated the Temple or Church Catholick. These Epistles contain admonitions against the approaching Apostacy, and therefore relate to the times when the Apostacy began to work strongly, and before it prevailed. It began to work in the Apostles days, and was to continue working till the man of sin should be revealed. It began to work in the disciples of Simon, Menander, Carpocrates, Cerinthus, and such sorts of men as had imbibed the

metaphysical philosophy of the Gentiles and Cabalistical Jews, and were thence called Gnosticks. John calls them Antichrists, saying that in his days there were many Antichrists. But these being condemned by the Apostles, and their immediate disciples, put the Churches in no danger during the opening of the first four seals. The visions at the opening of these seals relate only to the civil affairs of the heathen Roman Empire. So long the Apostolic traditions prevailed, and preserved the Church in its purity: and therefore the affairs of the Church do not begin to be considered in this Prophecy before the opening of the fifth seal. She began then to decline, and to want admonitions; and therefore is admonished by these Epistles, till the Apostacy prevailed and took place, which was at the opening of the seventh seal. The admonitions therefore in these seven Epistles relate to the state of the Church in the times of the fifth and sixth seals. At the opening of the fifth seal, the Church is purged from hypocrites by a great persecution. At the opening of the sixth, that which letted is taken out of the way, namely the heathen Roman Empire. At the opening of the seventh, the man of sin is revealed. And to these times the seven Epistles relate.

The seven Angels, to whom these Epistles were written, answer to the seven Amarcholim, who were Priests and chief Officers of the Temple, and had jointly the keys of the gates of the Temple, with those of the Treasuries, and the direction, appointment and oversight of all things in the Temple.

After the lamps were dressed, John saw the door of the Temple opened; and by the voice as it were of a trumpet, was called up to the eastern gate of the great court, to see the visions: and behold a throne was set, viz. the mercyseat upon the Ark of the Testament, which the Jews respected as the throne of God between the Cherubims, Exod. xxv. 2. Psal. xcix. 1. And he that sat on it was to look upon like Jasper and Sardine stone, that is, of an olive colour, the people of Judea being of that colour. And, the Sun being then in the East, a rainbow was about the throne, the emblem of glory. And round about the throne were four and twenty seats; answering to the chambers of the four and twenty Princes of the Priests, twelve on the south side, and twelve on the north side of the Priests Court. And upon the seats were four and twenty Elders sitting, clothed in white rayment, with crowns on their heads; representing the Princes of the four and twenty courses of the Priests clothed in linen. And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voices, viz. the flashes of the fire upon the Altar at the morningsacrifice, and the thundering voices of those that sounded the trumpets, and sung at the Eastern gate of the Priests Court; for these being between John and the throne appeared to him as proceeding from the throne. And there were seven lamps of fire burning, in the Temple, before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God, or Angels of the seven Churches, represented in the beginning of this Prophecy by seven stars. And before the throne was a sea of glass clear as chrystal; the brazen sea between the porch of the Temple and the Altar, filled with clear water. And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, were four Beasts full of eyes before and behind: that is, one Beast before the throne and one behind it, appearing to John as in the midst of the throne, and one on either side in the circle about it, to represent by the multitude of their eyes the people standing in the four sides of the peoples court. And the first Beast was like a lion, and

the second was like a calf, and the third had the face of a man, and the fourth was like a flying eagle. The people of Israel in the wilderness encamped round about the tabernacle, and on the east side were three tribes under the standard of Judah, on the west were three tribes under the standard of Ephraim, on the south were three tribes under the standard of Reuben, and on the north were three tribes under the standard of Dan, Numb. ii. And the standard of Judah was a Lion, that of Ephraim an Ox, that of Reuben a Man, and that of Dan an Eagle, as the Jews affirm. Whence were framed the hieroglyphicks of Cherubims and Seraphims, to represent the people of Israel. A Cherubim had one body with four faces, the faces of a Lion, an Ox, a Man and an Eagle, looking to the four winds of heaven, without turning about, as in Ezekiel's vision, chap. i. And four Seraphims had the same four faces with four bodies, one face to every body. The four Beasts are therefore four Seraphims standing in the four sides of the peoples court; the first in the eastern side with the head of a Lion, the second in the western side with the head of an Ox, the third in the southern side with the head of a Man, the fourth in the northern side with the head of an Eagle: and all four signify together the twelve tribes of Israel, out of whom the hundred forty and four thousand were sealed, Apoc. vii. 4. And the four Beasts had each of them six wings, two to a tribe, in all twenty and four wings, answering to the twenty and four stations of the people. And they were full of eyes within, or under their wings. And they rest not day and night, or at the morning and eveningsacrifices, saying, holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. These animals are therefore the Seraphims, which appeared to Isaiah [1] in a vision like this of the Apocalypse. For there also the Lord sat upon a throne in the temple; and the Seraphims each with six wings cried, Holy, holy, holy Lord God of hosts. And when those animals give glory and honour and thanks to him that sitteth upon the throne, who liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty Elders go into the Temple, and there fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 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. At the morning and eveningsacrifices, so soon as the sacrifice was laid upon the Altar, and the drinkoffering began to be poured out, the trumpets sounded, and the Levites sang by course three times; and every time when the trumpets sounded, the people fell down and worshiped. Three times therefore did the people worship; to express which number, the Beasts cry Holy, holy, holy: and the song being ended, the people prayed standing, till the solemnity was finished. In the mean time the Priests went into the Temple, and there fell down before him that sat upon the throne, and worshiped.

And John saw, in the right hand of him that sat upon the throne, a book written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals, viz. the book which Daniel was commanded to seal up, and which is here represented by the prophetic book of the Law laid up on the right side of the Ark, as it were in the right hand of him that sat on the throne: for the festivals and ceremonies of the Law prescribed to the people in this book, adumbrated those things which were predicted in the book of Daniel; and the writing within and on the backside of this book, relates to the synchronal Prophecies. [2] And none was found worthy to open the book but the Lamb of God. And lo, in the

midst of the throne and of the four Beasts, and in the midst of the Elders, that is, at the foot of the Altar, stood a lamb as it had been slain, the morningsacrifice; having seven horns, which are the seven Churches, and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. And he came, and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne: 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. 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; and hast made us, unto our God, Kings and Priests, and we shall reign on the earth. The Beasts and Elders therefore represent the primitive Christians of all nations; and the worship of these Christians in their Churches is here represented under the form of worshiping God and the Lamb in the Temple: God for his benefaction in creating all things, and the Lamb for his benefaction in redeeming us with his blood: God as sitting upon the throne and living for ever, and the Lamb as exalted above all by the merits of his death. And I heard, saith John, 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; 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. 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, honour, glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four Beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty Elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever. This was the worship of the primitive Christians.

It was the custom for the High Priest, seven days before the fast of the seventh month, to continue constantly in the Temple, and study the book of the Law, that he might be perfect in it against the day of expiation; wherein the service, which was various and intricate, was wholly to be performed by himself; part of which service was reading the Law to the people: and to promote his studying it, there were certain Priests appointed by the Sanhedrim to be with him those seven days in one of his chambers in the Temple, and there to discourse with him about the Law, and read it to him, and put him in mind of reading and studying it himself. This his opening and reading the Law those seven days, is alluded unto in the Lamb's opening the seals. We are to conceive that those seven days begin in the evening before each day; for the Jews began their day in the evening, and that the solemnity of the fast begins in the morning of the seventh day.

The seventh seal was therefore opened on the day of expiation, and then there was silence in heaven for half an hour. And an Angel, the High Priest, stood at the Altar, having a golden Censer; and there was given him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all Saints, upon the golden Altar which was before the throne. The custom was on other days, for one of the Priests to take fire from the great Altar in a silver Censer; but on this day, for the High Priest to take fire from the great Altar in a golden Censer: and when he was come down from the great Altar, he took incense from one of

the Priests who brought it to him, and went with it to the golden Altar: and while he offered the incense, the people prayed without in silence, which is the silence in heaven for half an hour. When the HighPriest had laid the incense on the Altar, he carried a Censer of it burning in his hand, into the most holy place before the Ark. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the Saints, ascended up before God out of the Angel's hand. On other days there was a certain measure of incense for the golden Altar: on this day there was a greater quantity for both the Altar and the most holy Place, and therefore it is called much incense. After this the Angel took the Censer, and filled it with fire from the great Altar, and cast it into the earth; that is, by the hands of the Priests who belong to his mystical body, he cast it to the earth without the Temple, for burning the Goat which was the Lord's lot. And at this and other concomitant sacrifices, until the eveningsacrifice was ended, there were voices, and thundrings, and lightnings, and an earthquake; that is, the voice of the HighPriest reading the Law to the people, and other voices and thundrings from the trumpets and templemusick at the sacrifices, and lightnings from the fire of the Altar.

The solemnity of the day of expiation being finished, the seven Angels found their trumpets at the great sacrifices of the seven days of the feast of tabernacles; and at the same sacrifices, the seven thunders utter their voices, which are the musick of the Temple, and singing of the Levites, intermixed with the soundings of the trumpets: and the seven Angels pour out their vials of wrath, which are the drinkofferings of those sacrifices.

When six of the seals were opened, John said: [3] And after these things, that is, after the visions of the sixth seal, 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. And I saw another Angel ascending from the East, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four Angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea, saying, Hurt not the earth, nor the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads. This sealing alludes to a tradition of the Jews, that upon the day of expiation all the people of Israel are sealed up in the books of life and death. For the Jews in their Talmud [4] tell us, that in the beginning of every new year, or first day of the month Tisri, the seventh month of the sacred year, three books are opened in judgment; the book of life, in which the names of those are written who are perfectly just; the book of death, in which the names of those are written who are Atheists or very wicked; and a third book, of those whose judgment is suspended till the day of expiation, and whose names are not written in the book of life or death before that day. The first ten days of this month they call the penitential days; and all these days they fast and pray very much, and are very devout, that on the tenth day their sins may be remitted, and their names may be written in the book of life; which day is therefore called the day of expiation. And upon this tenth day, in returning home from the Synagogues, they say to one another, God the creator seal you to a good year. For they conceive that the books are now sealed up, and that the sentence of God remains unchanged henceforward to the end of the year. The same thing is signified by the two Goats, upon whose foreheads the HighPriest yearly, on the day of expiation, lays the two lots

inscribed, For God and For Azazel; God's lot signifying the people who are sealed with the name of God in their foreheads; and the lot Azazel, which was sent into the wilderness, representing those who receive the mark and name of the Beast, and go into the wilderness with the great Whore.

The servants of God being therefore sealed in the day of expiation, we may conceive that this sealing is synchronal to the visions which appear upon opening the seventh seal; and that when the Lamb had opened six of the seals and seen the visions relating to the inside of the sixth, he looked on the backside of the seventh leaf, and then saw the four Angels holding the four winds of heaven, and another Angel ascending from the East with the seal of God. Conceive also, that the Angels which held the four winds were the first four of the seven Angels, who upon opening the seventh seal were seen standing before God; and that upon their holding the winds, there was silence in heaven for half an hour; and that while the servants of God were sealing, the Angel with the golden Censer offered their prayers with incense upon the golden Altar, and read the Law: and that so soon as they were sealed, the winds hurt the earth at the sounding of the first trumpet, and the sea at the sounding of the second; these winds signifying the wars, to which the first four trumpets sounded. For as the first four seals are distinguished from the three last by the appearance of four horsemen towards the four winds of heaven; so the wars of the first four trumpets are distinguished from those of the three last, by representing these by four winds, and the others by three great woes.

In one of Ezekiel's visions, when the Babylonian captivity was at hand, six men appeared with slaughterweapons; and a seventh, who [5] appeared among them clothed in white linen and a writer's inkhorn by his side, is commanded to go thro' the midst of Jerusalem, and set a mark upon the foreheads of the men that sigh and cry for all the abominations done in the midst thereof: and then the six men, like the Angels of the first six trumpets, are commanded to slay those men who are not marked. Conceive therefore that the hundred forty and four thousand are sealed, to preserve them from the plagues of the first six trumpets; and that at length by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, they grow into a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues: and at the sounding of the seventh trumpet come out of the great tribulation with Palms in their hands: the kingdoms of this world, by the war to which that trumpet sounds, becoming the kingdoms of God and his Christ. For the solemnity of the great Hosannah was kept by the Jews upon the seventh or last day of the feast of tabernacles; the Jews upon that day carrying Palms in their hands, and crying Hosannah.

After six of the Angels, answering to the six men with slaughter-weapons, had sounded their trumpets, the Lamb in the form of a mighty Angel came down from heaven clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow was upon his head, and his face was as it were the Sun, and his feet as pillars of fire, the shape in which Christ appeared in the beginning of this Prophecy; and he had in his hand a little book open, the book which he had newly opened; for he received but one book from him that sitteth upon the throne, and he alone was worthy to open and look on this book. And he set his right foot upon the sea and his left foot on the earth, and cried with a loud voice, as when a lion roareth. It

was the custom for the High Priest on the day of expiation, to stand in an elevated place in the people's court, at the Eastern gate of the Priests court, and read the Law to the people, while the Heifer and the Goat which was the Lord's lot, were burning without the Temple. We may therefore suppose him standing in such a manner, that his right foot might appear to John as it were standing on the sea of glass, and his left foot on the ground of the house; and that he cried with a loud voice, in reading the Law on the day of expiation. And when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices. Thunders are the voice of a cloud, and a cloud signifies a multitude; and this multitude may be the Levites, who sang with thundering voices, and played with musical instruments at the great sacrifices, on the seven days of the feast of Tabernacles: at which times the trumpets also sounded. For the trumpets sounded, and the Levites sang alternately, three times at every sacrifice. The Prophecy therefore of the seven thunders is nothing else than a repetition of the Prophecy of the seven trumpets in another form. And the Angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth, lifted up his hand to heaven, and swore by him that liveth for ever and ever, that after the seven thunders there should be time no longer; 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. The voices of the thunders therefore last to the end of this world, and so do those of the trumpets.

And the voice which I heard from heaven, saith John, spake unto me again and said, Go and take the little book, &c. 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. And he said unto me, Thou must prophesy again before many peoples, and nations, and tongues, and kings. This is an introduction to a new Prophecy, to a repetition of the Prophecy of the whole book; and alludes to Ezekiel's eating a roll or book spread open before him, and written within and without, full of lamentations and mourning and woe, but sweet in his mouth. Eating and drinking signify acquiring and possessing; and eating the book is becoming inspired with the Prophecy contained in it. It implies being inspired in a vigorous and extraordinary manner with the Prophecy of the whole book, and therefore signifies a lively repetition of the whole Prophecy by way of interpretation, and begins not till the first Prophecy, that of the seals and trumpets, is ended. It was sweet in John's mouth, and therefore begins not with the bitter Prophecy of the Babylonian captivity, and the Gentiles being in the outward court of the Temple, and treading the holy city under foot; and the prophesying of the two Witnesses in sackcloth, and their smiting the earth with all plagues, and being killed by the Beast; but so soon as the Prophecy of the trumpets is ended, it begins with the sweet Prophecy of the glorious Woman in heaven, and the victory of Michael over the Dragon; and after that, it is bitter in John's belly, by a large description of the times of the great Apostacy.

And the Angel stood, upon the earth and sea, saying, Rise and measure the Temple of God and the Altar, and them that worship therein, that is, their courts with the buildings thereon, viz. the square court of the Temple called the separate place, and the square court of the Altar called the Priests court, and the court of them that worship in the Temple called the new court:

but the great court which is without the Temple, leave out, and measure it not, for it is given to the Gentiles, and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty and two months. This measuring hath reference to Ezekiel's measuring the Temple of Solomon: there the whole Temple, including the outward court, was measured, to signify that it should be rebuilt in the latter days. Here the courts of the Temple and Altar, and they who worship therein, are only measured, to signify the building of a second Temple, for those that are sealed out of all the twelve tribes of Israel, and worship in the inward court of sincerity and truth: but John is commanded to leave out the outward court, or outward form of religion and Churchgovernment, because it is given to the Babylonian Gentiles. For the glorious woman in heaven, the remnant of whole seed kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus, continued the same woman in outward form after her flight into the wilderness, whereby she quitted her former sincerity and piety, and became the great Whore. She lost her chastity, but kept her outward form and shape. And while the Gentiles tread the holy city underfoot, and worship in the outward court, the two witnesses, represented perhaps by the two feet of the Angel standing on the sea and earth, prophesied against them, and had power, like Elijah and Moses, to consume their enemies with fire proceeding out of their mouth, and to shut heaven that it rain not in the days of their Prophecy, and to turn the waters into blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will, that is, with the plagues of the trumpets and vials of wrath; and at length they are slain, rise again from the dead, and ascend up to heaven in a cloud; and then the seventh trumpet sounds to the day of judgment.

The Prophecy being finished, John is inspired anew by the eaten book, and begins the Interpretation thereof with these words, And the Temple of God was opened in heaven, and there was seen in his Temple the Ark of the Testament. By the Ark, we may know that this was the first Temple; for the second Temple had no Ark. And there were lightnings, and voices, and thundrings, and an earthquake, and great hail. These answer to the wars in the Roman Empire, during the reign of the four horsemen, who appeared upon opening the first four seals. And there appeared a great wonder in heaven, a woman clothed with the Sun. In the Prophecy, the affairs of the Church begin to be considered at the opening of the fifth seal; and in the Interpretation, they begin at the same time with the vision of the Church in the form of a woman in heaven: there she is persecuted, and here she is pained in travail. The Interpretation proceeds down first to the sealing of the servants of God, and marking the rest with the mark of the Beast; and then to the day of judgment, represented by a harvest and vintage. Then it returns back to the times of opening the seventh seal, and interprets the Prophecy of the seven trumpets by the pouring out of seven vials of wrath. The Angels who pour them out, come out of the Temple of the Tabernacle; that is, out of the second Temple, for the Tabernacle had no outward court. Then it returns back again to the times of measuring the Temple and Altar, and of the Gentiles worshiping in the outward court, and of the Beast killing the witnesses in the streets of the great city; and interprets these things by the vision of a woman sitting on the Beast, drunken with the blood of the Saints; and proceeds in the interpretation downwards to the fall of the great city and the day of judgment.

The whole Prophecy of the book, represented by the book of the Law, is therefore repeated, and interpreted in the visions which follow those of sounding the seventh trumpet, and begin with that of the Temple of God opened in heaven. Only the things, which the seven thunders uttered, were not written down, and therefore not interpreted.

Notes to Chap. II.

[1] Isa. vi.

[2] Apoc. v.

[3] Apoc. vii

[4] Buxtorf in Synogoga Judaica, c. 18, 21.

[5] Ezek. ix.

The whole scene of sacred Prophecy is composed of three principal parts: the regions beyond Euphrates, represented by the two first Beasts of Daniel; the Empire of the Greeks on this side of Euphrates, represented by the Leopard and by the HeGoat; and the Empire of the Latins on this side of Greece, represented by the Beast with ten horns. And to these three parts, the phrases of the third part of the earth, sea, rivers, trees, ships, stars, sun, and moon, relate. I place the body of the fourth Beast on this side of Greece, because the three first of the four Beasts had their lives prolonged after their dominion was taken away, and therefore belong not to the body of the fourth. He only stamped them with his feet.

By the earth, the Jews understood the great continent of all Asia and Africa, to which they had access by land: and by the Isles of the sea, they understood the places to which they sailed by sea, particularly all Europe: and hence in this Prophecy, the earth and sea are put for the nations of the Greek and Latin Empires.

The third and fourth Beasts of Daniel are the same with the Dragon and tenhorned Beast of John, but with this difference: John puts the Dragon for the whole Roman Empire while it continued entire, because it was entire when that Prophecy was given; and the Beast he considers not till the Empire became divided: and then he puts the Dragon for the Empire of the Greeks, and the Beast for the Empire of the Latins. Hence it is that the Dragon and Beast have common heads and common horns: but the Dragon hath crowns only upon his heads, and the Beast only upon his horns; because the Beast and his horns reigned not before they were divided from the Dragon: and when the Dragon gave the Beast his throne, the ten horns received power as Kings, the same hour with the Beast. The heads are seven successive Kings. Four of them were the four horsemen which appeared at the opening of the first four seals. In the latter end of the sixth head, or seal, considered as present in the visions, it is said, five of the seven Kings are fallen, and one is, and another is not yet come; and the Beast that was and is not, being wounded to death with a sword, he is the eighth, and of the seven: he was therefore a collateral part of the seventh. The horns are the same with those of Daniel's fourth Beast, described above.

The four horsemen which appear at the opening of the first four seals, have been well explained by Mr. Mede; excepting that I had rather continue the

third to the end of the reign of the three Gordians and Philip the Arabian, those being Kings from the South, and begin the fourth with the reign of Decius, and continue it till the reign of Dioclesian. For the fourth horseman sat upon a pale horse, and his name was Death; and hell followed with him; and power was given them to kill unto the fourth part of the earth, with the sword, and with famine, and with the plague, and with the Beasts of the earth, or armies of invaders and rebels: and as such were the times during all this interval. Hitherto the Roman Empire continued in an undivided monarchical form, except rebellions; and such it is represented by the four horsemen. But Dioclesian divided it between himself and Maximianus, A.C. 285; and it continued in that divided state, till the victory of Constantine the great over Licinius, A.C. 323, which put an end to the heathen persecutions set on foot by Dioclesian and Maximianus, and described at the opening of the fifth seal. But this division of the Empire was imperfect, the whole being still under one and the same Senate. The same victory of Constantine over Licinius a heathen persecutor, began the fall of the heathen Empire, described at the opening of the sixth seal: and the visions of this seal continue till after the reign of Julian the Apostate, he being a heathen Emperor, and reigning over the whole Roman Empire.

The affairs of the Church begin to be considered at the opening of the fifth seal, as was said above. Then she is represented by a woman in the Temple of heaven, clothed with the sun of righteousness, and the moon of Jewish ceremonies under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars relating to the twelve Apostles and to the twelve tribes of Israel. When she fled from the Temple into the wilderness, she left in the Temple a remnant of her seed, who kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus Christ; and therefore before her flight she represented the true primitive Church of God, tho afterwards she degenerated like Aholah and Aholibah. In Dioclesian's persecution she cried, travelling in birth, and pained to be delivered. And in the end of that persecution, by the victory of Constantine over Maxentius A.C. 312, she brought forth a manchild, such a child as was to rule all nations with a rod of iron, a Christian Empire. And her child, by the victory of Constantine over Licinius, A.C. 323, was caught up unto God and to his throne. And the woman, by the division of the Roman Empire into the Greek and Latin Empires, fled from the first Temple into the wilderness, or spiritually barren Empire of the Latins, where she is found afterwards sitting upon the Beast and upon the seven mountains; and is called the great city which reigneth over the Kings of the earth, that is, over the ten Kings who give their kingdom to her Beast.

But before her flight there was war in heaven between Michael and the Dragon, the Christian and the heathen religions; and the Dragon, that old serpent, called the Devil and Satan, who deceiveth the whole world, was cast out to the earth, and his Angels were cast out with him. And John heard a voice in heaven, saying, 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. 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. Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe be to the inhabitants of the earth and sea, or people of the Greek and Latin Empires, for the devil is

come down amongst you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time.

And when the Dragon saw that he was cast down from the Roman throne, and the manchild caught up thither, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the manchild; and to her, by the division of the Roman Empire between the cities of Rome and Constantinople A.C. 330, were given two wings of a great eagle, the symbol of the Roman Empire, that she might flee from the first Temple into the wilderness of Arabia, to her place at Babylon mystically so called. And the serpent, by the division of the same Empire between the sons of Constantine the great, A.C. 337, cast out of his mouth water as a flood, the Western Empire, after the woman; that he might cause her to be carried away by the flood. And the earth, or Greek Empire, helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood, by the victory of Constantius over Magnentius, A.C. 353, and thus the Beast was wounded to death with a sword. And the Dragon was wroth with the woman, in the reign of Julian the Apostate A.C. 361, and, by a new division of the Empire between Valentinian and Valens, A.C. 364, went from her into the Eastern Empire to make war with the remnant of her seed, which she left behind her when she fled: and thus the Beast revived. By the next division of the Empire, which was between Gratian and Theodosius A.C. 379, the Beast with ten horns rose out of the sea, and the Beast with two horns out of the earth: and by the last division thereof, which was between the sons of Theodosius, A.C. 395, the Dragon gave the Beast his power and throne, and great authority. And the ten horns received power as Kings, the same hour with the Beast.

At length the woman arrived at her place of temporal as well as spiritual dominion upon the back of the Beast, where she is nourished a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent; not in his kingdom, but at a distance from him. She is nourished by the merchants of the earth, three times or years and an half, or 42 months, or 1260 days: and in these Prophecies days are put for years. During all this time the Beast acted, and she sat upon him, that is, reigned over him, and over the ten Kings who gave their power and strength, that is, their kingdom to the Beast; and she was drunken with the blood of the Saints. By all these circumstances she is the eleventh horn of Daniel's fourth Beast, who reigned with a look more stout than his fellows, and was of a different kind from the rest, and had eyes and a mouth like the woman; and made war with the saints, and prevailed against them, and wore them out, and thought to change times and laws, and had them given into his hand, until a time, and times, and half a time. These characters of the woman, and little horn of the Beast, agree perfectly: in respect of her temporal dominion, she was a horn of the Beast; in respect of her spiritual dominion, she rode upon him in the form of a woman, and was his Church, and committed fornication with the ten Kings.

The second Beast, which rose up out of the earth, was the Church of the Greek Empire: for it had two horns like those of the Lamb, and therefore was a Church; and it spake as the Dragon, and therefore was of his religion; and it came up out of the earth, and by consequence in his kingdom. It is called also the false Prophet who wrought miracles before the first Beast, by which he deceived them that received his mark, and worshiped his image. When the

Dragon went from the woman to make war with the remnant of her seed, this Beast arising out of the earth assisted in that war, and caused the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the authority of the first Beast, whose mortal wound was healed, and to make an Image to him, that is, to assemble a body of men like him in point of religion. He had also power to give life and authority to the Image, so that it could both speak, and by dictating cause that all religious bodies of men, who would not worship the authority of the Image, should be mystically killed. And he causeth all men to receive a mark in their right hand or in their forehead, 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; all the rest being excommunicated by the Beast with two horns. His mark is (picture of three Roman crosses), and his name ΛΑΤΕΙΝΟΣ, and the number of his name 666.

Thus the Beast, after he was wounded to death with a sword and revived, was deified, as the heathens used to deify their Kings after death, and had an Image erected to him; and his worshipers were initiated in this new religion, by receiving the mark or name of this new God, or the number of his name. By killing all that will not worship him and his Image, the first Temple, illuminated by the lamps of the seven Churches, is demolished, and a new Temple built for them who will not worship him; and the outward court of this new Temple, or outward form of a Church, is given to the Gentiles, who worship the Beast and his Image: while they who will not worship him, are sealed with the name of God in their foreheads, and retire into the inward court of this new Temple. These are the 144000 sealed out of all the twelve tribes of Israel, and called the two Witnesses, as being derived from the two wings of the woman while she was flying into the wilderness, and represented by two of the seven candlesticks. These appear to John in the inward court of the second Temple, standing on mount Sion with the Lamb, and as it were on the sea of glass. These are the Saints of the most High, and the host of heaven, and the holy people spoken of by Daniel, as worn out and trampled under foot, and destroyed in the latter times by the little horns of his fourth Beast and HeGoat.

While the Gentiles tread the holy city under foot, God gives power to his two Witnesses, and they prophesy a thousand two hundred and threescore days clothed in sackcloth. They are called the two Olive trees, with relation to the two Olivetrees, which in Zechary's vision, chap. iv. stand on either side of the golden candlestick to supply the lamps with oil: and Olivetrees, according to the Apostle Paul, represent Churches, Rom. xi. They supply the lamps with oil, by maintaining teachers. They are also called the two candlesticks; which in this Prophecy signify Churches, the seven Churches of Asia being represented by seven candlesticks. Five of these Churches were found faulty, and threatned if they did not repent; the other two were without fault, and so their candlesticks were fit to be placed in the second Temple. These were the Churches in Smyrna and Philadelphia. They were in a state of tribulation and persecution, and the only two of the seven in such a state: and so their candlesticks were fit to represent the Churches in affliction in the times of the second Temple, and the only two of the seven that were fit. The two Witnesses are not new Churches: they are the posterity of the primitive Church, the posterity of the two wings of the woman, and so

are fitly represented by two of the primitive candlesticks. We may conceive therefore, that when the first Temple was destroyed, and a new one built for them who worship in the inward court, two of the seven candlesticks were placed in this new Temple.

The affairs of the Church are not considered during the opening of the first four seals. They begin to be consider'd at the opening of the fifth seal, as was said above; and are further considered at the opening of the sixth seal; and the seventh seal contains the times of the great Apostacy. And therefore I refer the Epistles to the seven Churches unto the times of the fifth and sixth seals: for they relate to the Church when she began to decline, and contain admonitions against the great Apostacy then approaching.

When Eusebius had brought down his Ecclesiastical History to the reign of Dioclesian, he thus describes the state of the Church: *Qualem quantamque gloriam simul ac libertatem doctrina veræ erga supremum Deum pietatis à Christo primùm hominibus annunciata, apud omnes Græcos pariter & barbaros ante persecutionem nostrâ memoriâ excitatam, consecuta sit, nos certè pro merito explicare non possumus. Argumento esse possit Imperatorum benignitas erga nostros: quibus regendas etiam provincias committebant, omni sacrificandi metu eos liberantes ob singularem, qua in religionem nostram affecti erant, benevolentiam.* And a little after: *Jam vero quis innumerabilem hominum quotidie ad fidem Christi confugientium turbam, quis numerum ecclesiarum in singulis urbibus, quis illustres populorum concursus in ædibus sacris, cumulatè possit describere? Quo factum est, ut priscis ædificiis jam non contenti, in singulis urbibus spatiosas ab ipsis fundamentis extruerent ecclesias. Atque hæc progressii temporis increscentia, & quotidie in majus & melius proficiscentia, nec livor ullus atterere, nec malignitas dæmonis fascinare, nec hominum insidiæ prohibere unquam potuerunt, quamdiu omnipotentis Dei dextra populum suum, utpote tali dignum præsidio, texit atque custodit. Sed cum ex nimia libertate in negligentiam ac desidiam prolapsi essemus; cum alter alteri invidere atque obtrectare cæpisset; cum inter nos quasi bella intestina gereremus, verbis, tanquam armis quibusdam hastisque, nos mutuò vulnerantes; cum Antistites adversus Antistites, populi in populos collisi, jurgia ac tumultus agitent; denique cum fraus & simulatio ad summum malitiæ culmen adolevisset: tum divina ultio, levi brachio ut solet, integro adhuc ecclesiæ statu, & fidelium turbis liberè convenientibus, sensim ac moderatè in nos cæpit animadvertere; orsà primùm persecutione ab iis qui militabant. Cum verò sensu omni destituti de placando Dei numine ne cogitarem quidem; quin potius instar impiorum quorundam res humanas nullâ providentiâ gubernari rati, alia quotidie crimina aliis adjiceremus: cum Pastores nostri spretâ religionis regulâ, mutuis inter se contentionibus decertarent, nihil aliud quam jurgia, minas, æmulationem, odia, ac mutuas inimicitias amplificare studentes; principatum quasi tyrannidem quandam contentissimè sibi vindicantes: tunc demùm juxta dictum Hieremiæ, obscuravit Dominus in ira sua filiam Sion, & dejecit de cælo gloriam Israël,—per Ecclesiarum scilicet subversionem, &c.* This was the state of the Church just before the subversion of the Churches in the beginning of Dioclesian's persecution: and to this state of the Church agrees the first of the seven Epistles to the Angel of the seven Churches, [1] that to the Church in Ephesus. I have something against thee, saith Christ to the Angel of that

Church, because thou hast left thy first love. 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 its place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. The Nicolaitans are the Continentes above described, who placed religion in abstinence from marriage, abandoning their wives if they had any. They are here called Nicolaitans, from Nicolas one of the seven deacons of the primitive Church of Jerusalem; who having a beautiful wife, and being taxed with uxoriousness, abandoned her, and permitted her to marry whom she pleased, saying that we must disuse the flesh; and thenceforward lived a single life in continency, as his children also. The Continentes afterwards embraced the doctrine of Æons and Ghosts male and female, and were avoided by the Churches till the fourth century; and the Church of Ephesus is here commended for hating their deeds.

The persecution of Dioclesian began in the year of Christ 302, and lasted ten years in the Eastern Empire and two years in the Western. To this state of the Church the second Epistle, to the Church of Smyrna, agrees. I know, saith [2] Christ, 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. Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: Behold, the Devil shall call some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life. The tribulation of ten days can agree to no other persecution than that of Dioclesian, it being the only persecution which lasted ten years. By the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan, I understand the Idolatry of the Nicolaitans, who falsly said they were Christians.

The Nicolaitans are complained of also in [3] the third Epistle, as men that held the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to Idols, and [4] to commit spiritual fornication. For Balaam taught the Moabites and Midianites to tempt and invite Israel by their women to commit fornication, and to feast with them at the sacrifices of their Gods. The Dragon therefore began now to come down among the inhabitants of the earth and sea.

The Nicolaitans are also complained of in the fourth Epistle, under the name of the woman Jezabel, who calleth herself a Prophetess, to teach and to seduce the servants of Christ to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to Idols. The woman therefore began now to fly into the wilderness.

The reign of Constantine the great from the time of his conquering Licinius, was monarchical over the whole Roman Empire. Then the Empire became divided between the sons of Constantine: and afterwards it was again united under Constantius, by his victory over Magnentius. To the affairs of the Church in these three successive periods of time, the third, fourth, and fifth Epistles, that is, those to the Angels of the Churches in Pergamus, Thyatira, and Sardis, seem to relate. The next Emperor was Julian the Apostate.

In the sixth Epistle, [5] to the Angel of the Church in Philadelphia, Christ

saith: Because in the reign of the heathen Emperor Julian, thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which by the woman's flying into the wilderness, and the Dragon's making war with the remnant of her seed, and the killing of all who will not worship the Image of the Beast, shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth, and to distinguish them by sealing the one with the name of God in their foreheads, and marking the other with the mark of the Beast. Him that overcometh, I will make a pillar in the Temple of my God; and he shall go no more out of it. And I will write upon him the name of my God in his forehead. So the Christians of the Church of Philadelphia, as many of them as overcome, are sealed with the seal of God, and placed in the second Temple, and go no more out. The same is to be understood of the Church in Smyrna, which also kept the word of God's patience, and was without fault. These two Churches, with their posterity, are therefore the two Pillars, and the two Candlesticks, and the two Witnesses in the second Temple.

After the reign of the Emperor Julian, and his successor Jovian who reigned but five months, the Empire became again divided between Valentinian and Valens. Then the Church Catholick, in the Epistle to the Angel of the Church of Laodicea, is reprehended as lukewarm, and [6] threatned to be spewed out of Christ's mouth. She said, that she was rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing, being in outward prosperity; and knew not that she was inwardly wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked. She is therefore spewed out of Christ's mouth at the opening of the seventh seal: and this puts an end to the times of the first Temple.

About one half of the Roman Empire turned Christians in the time of Constantine the great and his sons. After Julian had opened the Temples, and restored the worship of the heathens, the Emperors Valentinian and Valens tolerated it all their reign; and therefore the Prophecy of the sixth seal was not fully accomplished before the reign of their successor Gratian. It was the custom of the heathen Priests, in the beginning of the reign of every sovereign Emperor, to offer him the dignity and habit of the Pontifex Maximus. This dignity all Emperors had hitherto accepted: but Gratian rejected it, threw down the idols, interdicted the sacrifices, and took away their revenues with the salaries and authority of the Priests. Theodosius the great followed his example; and heathenism afterwards recovered itself no more, but decreased so fast, that Prudentius, about ten years after the death of Theodosius, called the heathens, *vix pauca ingenia & pars hominum rarissima*. Whence the affairs of the sixth seal ended with the reign of Valens, or rather with the beginning of the reign of Theodosius, when he, like his predecessor Gratian, rejected the dignity of Pontifex Maximus. For the Romans were very much infested by the invasions of foreign nations in the reign of Valentinian and Valens: *Hoc tempore, saith Ammianus, velut per universum orbem Romanum bellicum canentibus buccinis, excitæ gentes sævissimæ limites sibi proximos persultabant: Gallias Rhætiasque simul Alemanni populabantur: Sarmatæ Pannonias & Quadi: Picti, Saxones, & Scoti & Attacotti Britannos ærumnis vexavere continuis: Austoriani, Mauricæque aliæ gentes Africam solito acrius incursabant: Thracias diripiebant prædatorii globi Gotthorum: Persarum Rex manus Armeniis injectabat*. And whilst the Emperors were busy in repelling these enemies, the Hunns and Alans and Goths came over

the Danube in two bodies, overcame and slew Valens, and made so great a slaughter of the Roman army, that Ammianus saith: *Nec ulla Annalibus præter Cannensem ita ad internecionem res legitur gesta.* These wars were not fully stopt on all sides till the beginning of the reign of Theodosius, A.C. 379 & 380: but thenceforward the Empire remained quiet from foreign armies, till his death, A.C. 395. So long the four winds were held: and so long there was silence in heaven. And the seventh seal was opened when this silence began.

Mr. Mede hath explained the Prophecy of the first six trumpets not much amiss: but if he had observed, that the Prophecy of pouring out the vials of wrath is synchronal to that of sounding the trumpets, his explanation would have been yet more complete.

The name of Woes is given to the wars to which the three last trumpets sound, to distinguish them from the wars of the four first. The sacrifices on the first four days of the feast of Tabernacles, at which the first four trumpets sound, and the first four vials of wrath are poured out, are slaughters in four great wars; and these wars are represented by four winds from the four corners of the earth. The first was an east wind, the second a west wind, the third a south wind, and the fourth a north wind, with respect to the city of Rome, the metropolis of the old Roman Empire. These four plagues fell upon the third part of the Earth, Sea, Rivers, Sun, Moon and Stars; that is, upon the Earth, Sea, Rivers, Sun, Moon and Stars of the third part of the whole scene of these Prophecies of Daniel and John.

The plague of the eastern wind [7] at the sounding of the first trumpet, was to fall upon the Earth, that is, upon the nations of the Greek Empire. Accordingly, after the death of Theodosius the great, the Goths, Sarmatians, Hunns, Isaurians, and Austorian Moors invaded and miserably wasted Greece, Thrace, Asia minor, Armenia, Syria, Egypt, Lybia, and Illyricum, for ten or twelve years together.

The plague of the western wind at the sounding of the second trumpet, was to fall upon the Sea, or Western Empire, by means of a great mountain burning with fire cast into it, and turning it to blood. Accordingly in the year 407, that Empire began to be invaded by the Visigoths, Vandals, Alans, Sueves, Burgundians, Ostrogoths, Heruli, Quadi, Gepides; and by these wars it was broken into ten kingdoms, and miserably wasted: and Rome itself, the burning mountain, was besieged and taken by the Ostrogoths, in the beginning of these miseries.

The plague of the southern wind at the sounding of the third trumpet, was to cause a great star, burning as it were a lamp, to fall from heaven upon the rivers and fountains of waters, the Western Empire now divided into many kingdoms, and to turn them to wormwood and blood, and make them bitter. Accordingly Genseric, the King of the Vandals and Alans in Spain, A.C. 427, enter'd Africa with an army of eighty thousand men; where he invaded the Moors, and made war upon the Romans, both there and on the seacoasts of Europe, for fifty years together, almost without intermission, taking Hippo A.C. 431, and Carthage the capital of Africa A.C. 439. In A.C. 455, with a numerous fleet and an army of three hundred thousand Vandals and Moors, he invaded Italy, took and plundered Rome, Naples, Capua, and many other cities;

carrying thence their wealth with the flower of the people into Africa: and the next year, A.C. 456, he rent all Africa from the Empire, totally expelling the Romans. Then the Vandals invaded and took the Islands of the Mediterranean, Sicily, Sardinia, Corsica, Ebusus, Majorca, Minorca, &c. and Ricimer besieged the Emperor Anthemius in Rome, took the city, and gave his soldiers the plunder, A.C. 472. The Visigoths about the same time drove the Romans out of Spain: and now the Western Emperor, the great star which fell from heaven, burning as it were a lamp, having by all these wars gradually lost almost all his dominions, was invaded, and conquered in one year by Odoacer King of the Heruli, A.C. 476. After this the Moors revolted A.C. 477, and weakened the Vandals by several wars, and took Mauritania from them. These wars continued till the Vandals were conquered by Belisarius, A.C. 534. and by all these wars Africa was almost depopulated, according to Procopius, who reckons that above five millions of men perished in them. When the Vandals first invaded Africa, that country was very populous, consisting of about 700 bishopricks, more than were in all France, Spain and Italy together: but by the wars between the Vandals, Romans and Moors, it was depopulated to that degree, that Procopius tells us, it was next to a miracle for a traveller to see a man.

In pouring out the third vial it is [8] said: Thou art righteous, O Lord,—because thou hast judged thus: for they have shed the blood of thy Saints and Prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink, for they are worthy. How they shed the blood of Saints, may be understood by the following Edict of the Emperor Honorius, procured by four Bishops sent to him by a Council of African Bishops, who met at Carthage 14 June, A.C. 410.

Imp. Honor. & Theod. AA. Heracliano Com. Afric.

Oraculo penitus remoto, quo ad ritus suos hæreticæ superstitionis abrepserant, sciant omnes sanctæ legis inimici, plectendos se poena & proscriptionis & sanguinis, si ultra convenire per publicum, execrandâ sceleris sui temeritate temptaverint. Dat. viii. Kal. Sept. Varano V.C. Cons. A.C. 410.

Which Edict was five years after fortified by the following.

Imp. Honor. & Theod. AA. Heracliano Com. Afric.

Sciant cuncti qui ad ritus suos hæresis superstitionibus obrepserant sacrosanctæ legis inimici, plectendos se poenâ & proscriptionis & sanguinis, si ultra convenire per publicum exercendi sceleris sui temeritate temptaverint: ne quâ vera divinaque reverentia contagione temeretur. Dat. viii. Kal. Sept. Honorio x. & Theod. vi. AA. Coss. A.C. 415.

These Edicts being directed to the governor of Africa, extended only to the Africans. Before these there were many severe ones against the Donatists, but they did not extend to blood. These two were the first which made their meetings, and the meetings of all dissenters, capital: for by hereticks in these Edicts are meant all dissenters, as is manifest by the following against Euresius a Luciferan Bishop.

Imp. Arcad. & Honor. AA. Aureliano Proc. Africa.

Hæreticorum vocabulo continentur, & latis adversus eos sanctionibus debent succumbere, qui vel levi argumento à judicio Catholicæ religionis & tramite detecti fuerint deviare: ideoque experientia tua Euresium hæreticum esse cognoscat. Dat. iii. Non. Sept. Constantinop. Olybrio & Probino Coss. A.C. 395.

The Greek Emperor Zeno adopted Theoderic King of the Ostrogoths to be his son, made him master of the horse and Patricius, and Consul of Constantinople; and recommending to him the Roman people and Senate, gave him the Western Empire, and sent him into Italy against Odoacer King of the Heruli. Theoderic thereupon led his nation into Italy, conquered Odoacer, and reigned over Italy, Sicily, Rhætia, Noricum, Dalmatia, Liburnia, Istria, and part of Suevia, Pannonia and Gallia. Whence Ennodius said, in a Panegyric to Theoderic: Ad limitem suum Romana regna remeâsse. Theoderic reigned with great prudence, moderation and felicity; treated the Romans with singular benevolence, governed them by their own laws, and restored their government under their Senate and Consuls, he himself supplying the place of Emperor, without assuming the title. Ita sibi parentibus præfuit, saith Procopius, ut vere Imperatori conveniens decus nullum ipsi abesset: Justitiæ magnus ei cultus, legumque diligens custodia: terras à vicinis barbaris servavit intactas, &c. Whence I do not reckon the reign of this King, amongst the plagues of the four winds.

The plague of the northern wind, at the sounding of the fourth trumpet, was to cause the Sun, Moon and Stars, that is, the King, kingdom and Princes of the Western Empire, to be darkned, and to continue some time in darkness. Accordingly Belisarius, having conquered the Vandals, invaded Italy A.C. 535, and made war upon the Ostrogoths in Dalmatia, Liburnia, Venetia, Lombardy, Tuscany, and other regions northward from Rome, twenty years together. In this war many cities were taken and retaken. In retaking Millain from the Romans, the Ostrogoths slew all the males young and old, amounting, as Procopius reckons, to three hundred thousand, and sent the women captives to their allies the Burgundians. Rome itself was taken and retaken several times, and thereby the people were thinned; the old government by a Senate ceased, the nobles were ruined, and all the glory of the city was extinguish'd: and A.C. 552, after a war of seventeen years, the kingdom of the Ostrogoths fell; yet the remainder of the Ostrogoths, and an army of Germans called in to their assistance, continued the war three or four years longer. Then ensued the war of the Heruli, who, as Anastasius tells us, perimebant cunctam Italiam, slew all Italy. This was followed by the war of the Lombards, the fiercest of all the Barbarians, which began A.C. 568, and lasted for thirty eight years together; factâ tali clade, saith Anastasius, qualem à sæculo nullus meminit; ending at last in the Papacy of Sabinian, A.C. 605, by a peace then made with the Lombards. Three years before this war ended, Gregory the great, then Bishop of Rome, thus speaks of it: Qualiter enim & quotidianis gladiis & quantis Longobardorum incursionibus, ecce jam per triginta quinque annorum longitudinem premimur, nullis explere vocibus suggestionis valemus: and in one of his Sermons to the people, he thus expresses the great consumption of the Romans by these wars: Ex illa plebe

innumerabili quanti remanseritis aspicitis, & tamen adhuc quotidiè flagella urgent, repentini casus opprimunt, novæ res & improvisæ clades affligunt. In another Sermon he thus describes the desolations: Destructæ urbes, eversa sunt castra, depopulati agri, in solitudinem terra redacta est. Nullus in agris incola, penè nullus in urbibus habitator remansit. Et tamen ipsæ parvæ generis humani reliquiæ adhuc quotidiè & sine cessatione feriuntur, & finem non habent flagella coelestis justitiæ. Ipsa autem quæ aliquando mundi Domina esse videbatur, qualis remansit Roma conspicimus innumeris doloribus multipliciter attrita, defolatione civium, impressione hostium, frequentia ruinarum.—Ecce jam de illa omnes hujus fæculi potentes ablati sunt.—Ecce populi defecerunt.—Ubi enim Senatus? Ubi jam populus? Contabuerunt ossa, consumptæ sunt carnes. Omnis enim sæcularium dignitatum ordo extinctus est, & tamen ipsos vos paucos qui remansimus, adhuc quotidiè gladii, adhuc quotidiè innumeræ tribulationes premunt.—Vacua jam ardet Roma. Quid autem ista de hominibus dicimus? Cum ruinis crebrescentibus ipsa quoque destrui ædificia videmus. Postquam defecerunt homines etiam parietes cadunt. Jam ecce desolata, ecce contrita, ecce gemitibus oppressa est, &c. All this was spoken by Gregory to the people of Rome, who were witnesses of the truth of it. Thus by the plagues of the four winds, the Empire of the Greeks was shaken, and the Empire of the Latins fell; and Rome remained nothing more than the capital of a poor dukedom, subordinate to Ravenna, the seat of the Exarchs.

The fifth trumpet sounded to the wars, which the King of the South, as he is called by Daniel, made in the time of the end, in pushing at the King who did according to his will. This plague began with the opening of the bottomless pit, which denotes the letting out of a false religion: the smoke which came out of the pit, signifying the multitude which embraced that religion; and the locusts which came out of the smoke, the armies which came out of that multitude. This pit was opened, to let out smoke and locusts into the regions of the four monarchies, or some of them. The King of these locusts was the Angel of the bottomless pit, being chief governor as well in religious as civil affairs, such as was the Caliph of the Saracens. Swarms of locusts often arise in Arabia fælix, and from thence infest the neighbouring nations: and so are a very fit type of the numerous armies of Arabians invading the Romans. They began to invade them A.C. 634, and to reign at Damascus A.C. 637. They built Bagdad A.C. 766, and reigned over Persia, Syria, Arabia, Egypt, Africa and Spain. They afterwards lost Africa to Mahades, A.C. 910; Media, Hircania, Chorasán, and all Persia, to the Dailamites, between the years 927 and 935; Mesopotamia and Miafarekin to Nasiruddaulas, A.C. 930; Syria and Egypt to Achsjid, A.C. 935, and now being in great distress, the Caliph of Bagdad, A.C. 936, surrendered all the rest of his temporal power to Mahomet the son of Rajici, King of Wasit in Chaldea, and made him Emperor of Emperors. But Mahomet within two years lost Bagdad to the Turks; and thenceforward Bagdad was sometimes in the hands of the Turks, and sometimes in the hands of the Saracens, till Togrulbeig, called also Togra, Dogrissa, Tangrolipix, and Sadoc, conquered Chorasán and Persia; and A.C. 1055, added Bagdad to his Empire, making it the seat thereof. His successors Olubarflan and Melechsah, conquered the regions upon Euphrates; and these conquests, after the death of Melechsah, brake into the kingdoms of Armenia, Mesopotamia, Syria, and Cappadocia. The whole time that the Caliphs of the Saracens reigned with a temporal dominion at Damascus and Bagdad together,

was 300 years, viz. from the year 637 to the year 936 inclusive. Now locusts live but five months; and therefore, for the decorum of the type, these locusts are said to hurt men five months and five months, as if they had lived about five months at Damascus, and again about five months at Bagdad; in all ten months, or 300 prophetic days, which are years.

The sixth trumpet sounded to the wars, which Daniel's King of the North made against the King abovementioned, who did according to his will. In these wars the King of the North, according to Daniel, conquered the Empire of the Greeks, and also Judea, Egypt, Lybia, and Ethiopia: and by these conquests the Empire of the Turks was set up, as may be known by the extent thereof. These wars commenced A.C. 1258, when the four kingdoms of the Turks seated upon Euphrates, that of Armenia major seated at Miyapharekin, Megarkin or Martyropolis, that of Mesopotamia seated at Mosul, that of all Syria seated at Aleppo, and that of Cappadocia seated at Iconium, were invaded by the Tartars under Hulacu, and driven into the western parts of Asia minor, where they made war upon the Greeks, and began to erect the present Empire of the Turks. Upon the sounding of the sixth trumpet, [9] John heard a voice from the four horns of the golden Altar which is before God, saying to the sixth Angel which had the trumpet, Loose the four Angels which are bound at the great river Euphrates. 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. By the four horns of the golden Altar, is signified the situation of the head cities of the said four kingdoms, Miyapharekin, Mosul, Aleppo, and Iconium, which were in a quadrangle. They slew the third part of men, when they conquered the Greek Empire, and took Constantinople, A.C. 1453. and they began to be prepared for this purpose, when OlubArslan began to conquer the nations upon Euphrates, A.C. 1063. The interval is called an hour and a day, and a month and a year, or 391 prophetic days, which are years. In the first thirty years, OlubArslan and Melechsah conquered the nations upon Euphrates, and reigned over the whole. Melechsah died A.C. 1092, and was succeeded by a little child; and then this kingdom broke into the four kingdoms abovementioned.

Notes to Chap. III.

[1] Apoc. ii. 4, &c.

[2] Apoc. ii. 9, 10.

[3] Ver. 14.

[4] Numb. xxv. 1, 2, 18, & xxi. 16.

[5] Apoc. iii. 10, 12.

[6] Apoc. iii. 16, 17.

[7] Apoc. viii. 7, &c.

[8] Apoc. xvi. 5, 6.

[9] Apoc. ix. 13, &c.

THE

[You Have Been Robbed!](#)



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Paul A. Soukup, S.J.
a professor at the Jesuit Santa Clara University, sits on the governing board of the American Bible Society and advises ABS on scripture research. For more information on the Jesuit influence on your modern bibles, read the book, *Why They Changed the Bible* by David W. Daniels.

Protestant churches have been weakened through Jesuit infiltration, false doctrines, compromise with the world, and rejection of true Bible doctrines.

[The 13 Obelisks of Rome](#)



Did you know there are exactly 13 obelisks in Rome? Eight are from ancient Egypt and five are from ancient Rome. An obelisk has to do with Egyptian sun worship. See <http://www.granddesignexposed.com/obelisk/meaning.html>

The first time the number 13 appears in the Bible is in Genesis 14:4 and it signified rebellion!

Twelve years they served Chedorlaomer, and in the **thirteenth** year they **rebelled**. – Genesis 14:4

Thirteen obelisks in Rome is yet another sign that the center of Satan's power is centered in Rome. The fourth Kingdom of Daniel 2 which is represented by legs and feet is Rome. Jesus is the Stone of Daniel 2:34 that smote the feet of the image and broke it to pieces. This indicates that **Rome continues to the very end up until the return of Jesus Christ!**



From Daniel chapter 2:

31 ¶Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible.

32 This image's head was of fine gold (Babylon), his breast and his arms of silver (Medo-Persia, his belly and his thighs of brass (Greece),

33 His legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay. (Rome)

34 Thou sawest till that a stone (Jesus Christ) was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces.

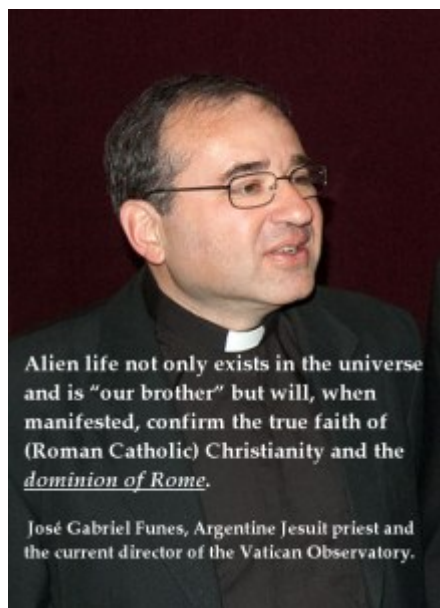
35 Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

The Washington Monument in Washington DC is an obelisk. There are ancient

Egyptian obelisks which are called, "Cleopatra's Needle" in London, Paris and New York City. These are cities of finance and power.

Also see: <http://zaverenik.blogspot.jp/2011/12/papal-bloodlines.html>

[The "Alien" / Fallen Angels Connection to the Vatican Conspiracy](#)



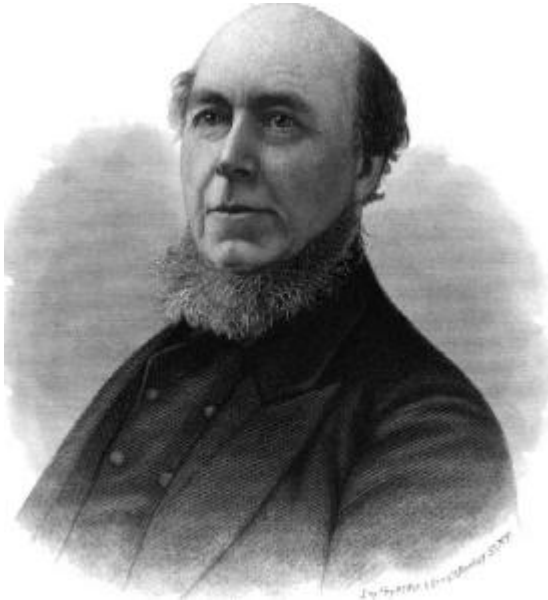
Be warned that the Devil is going to use all he can to lead people astray, even so-called "scientific" information about aliens from other planets. They are aliens, yes, however, they are not from other planets but from *another dimension* – the spirit world!

But I do not agree with what Bob Trefz is saying toward the end about the "sons of God" of Genesis chapter 6 not having sex with human women and producing mixed DNA seed. This is purely his interpretation, not what the Bible actually says!

Genesis 6:4 ¶There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the **sons of God came in unto the daughters of men**, and they **bare children** to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.



[A Sincere Roman Catholic Priest Finds Contradictions in the Teachings of the Holy Fathers](#)



This is from chapter 46 of Charles Chiniquy's book, "Fifty Years in the Church of Rome". If you are a Roman Catholic or was raised a Roman Catholic like I was, I dare say you will find this interesting.



Saint Augustine

The most desolate work of a sincere Catholic priest is the study of the Holy Fathers. He does not make a step in the labyrinth of their discussions and controversies without seeing the dreams of his theological studies and religious views disappear as the thick morning mist, when the sun rises above the horizon. Bound as he is, by a solemn oath, to interpret the Holy Scriptures only according to the unanimous consent of the Holy Fathers, the first thing which puzzles and distresses him is their absolute want of unanimity on the greater part of the subjects which they discuss. The fact is, that **more than two-thirds of what one Father has written is to prove that what some other Holy Father has written is wrong and heretical.**

The student of the Fathers not only detects that they do not agree with one another, but finds that **many of them do not even agree with themselves.** Very often they confess that they were mistaken when they said this or that; that

they have lately changed their minds; that they now hold for saving truth what they formerly condemned as a damning error!

What becomes of the solemn oath of every priest in presence of this undeniable fact? How can he make an act of faith when he feels that its foundation is nothing but falsehood?

No words can give an idea of the mental tortures I felt when I saw positively that I could not, any longer, **preach on the eternity of the suffering of the damned**, nor believe in the real presence of the body, soul, and divinity of Christ in the sacrament of communion; nor in the supremacy of the sovereign Pontiff of Rome, nor in any of the other dogmas of my church, without perjuring myself! For **there was not one of those dogmas which had not been flatly and directly denied by some Holy Fathers.**

It is true, that in my Roman Catholic theological books I had long extracts of Holy Fathers, very clearly supporting and confirming my faith in those dogmas. For instance, I had the apostolic liturgies of St. Peter, St. Mark, and St. James, to prove that the sacrifice of the mass, purgatory, prayers for the dead, transubstantiation, were believed and taught from the very days of the apostles. But what was my dismay when I discovered that those liturgies were nothing else than **vile and audacious forgeries presented to the world, by my Popes and my church, as gospel truths.** I could not find words to express my sense of shame and consternation, when I became sure that the same church which had invented those apostolical liturgies, had accepted and circulated the false decretals of Isidore, and forged innumerable additions and interpolations to the writings of the Holy Fathers, in order to make them say the very contrary of what they intended.

How many times, when alone, studying the history of the shameless fabrications, I said to myself: **“Does the man whose treasury is filled with pure gold, forge false coins, or spurious pieces of money? No! How, then, is it possible that my church possess the pure truth, when she has been at work during so many centuries, to forge such egregious lies, under the names of liturgies and decretals, about the holy mass, purgatory, the supremacy of the Pope, ect. If those dogmas could have been proved by the gospel and the true writings of the Fathers, where was the necessity of forging lying documents? Would the Popes and councils have treasuries with spurious bank bills, if they had had exhaustless mines of pure gold in hand? What right has my church to be called holy and infallible, when she is publicly guilty of such impostures.”**

From my infancy I had been taught, with all the Roman Catholics, that Mary is the mother of God, and many times, every day, when praying to her, **I used to say, “Holy Mary, mother of God, pray for me.”** But what was my distress when I read in the **“Treatise on Faith and Creed,” by Augustine, Chapter iv. 9,** these very words: **“When the Lord said, ‘Woman, what have I to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come’ (John ii. 4), He rather admonishes us to understand that, in respect of His being God, there was no mother for Him.”**

This was so completely demolishing the teachings of my church, and **telling me that it was blasphemy to call Mary mother of God,** that I felt as if struck

with a thunderbolt.

Read read of the chapter

http://www.biblebelievers.com/chiniquy/cc50_ch46.html

Should a Christian observe the Sabbath?



Colossians 2:16 ¶**Let no man therefore judge you** in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the **sabbath days**:

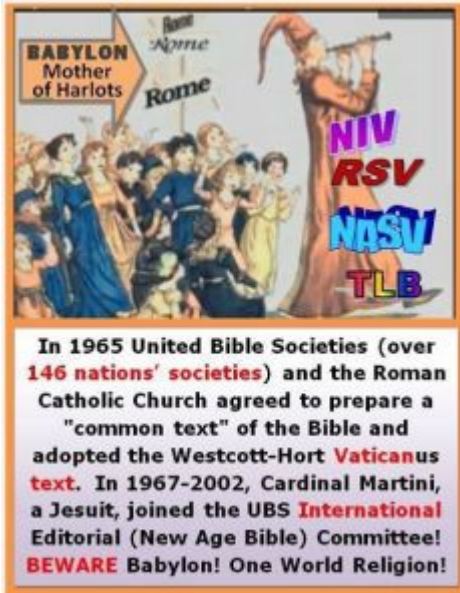
I admire my Seventh Day Adventist friends for their love for God's Word and obedience to what they believe God's Word is telling them to do, but as far as Sabbath day observance goes, the bottom line for me is the New Testament does not teach it! In Acts chapter 15 when the Apostles disputed whether the Gentiles need to keep the Laws of Moses or not, the conclusion was they need to keep only 4 precepts:

Acts 15:20 But that we write unto them, that they abstain from
(1) pollutions of idols,
(2) and from fornication,
(3) and from things strangled,
(4) and from blood.

Notice Sabbath day observance is *not* one of them!

I don't judge my SDA friends for feeling it necessary to observe the Sabbath, and I do think it is important to take at least one day a week off to rest, pray, and have more time study God's Word, but the New Testament does not tell me that day of rest must Saturday.

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