



THE BIBLE ADVOCATE

AND HERALD OF THE COMING KINGDOM

THY WORD IS TRUTH

"THY WORD IS A LAMP UNTO MY FEET, AND A LIGHT UNTO MY PATH."

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Seven Churches Of Revelation

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Revelation is something revealed, not concealed. Jesus Christ is the revelator Who reveals, from God unto His servants, things to come, and promises a blessing for those who read, or hear the words of this prophecy. Rev. 1: 1-3. John who wrote this prophecy was banished to the Isle of Patmos in the Mediterranean Sea, by the Roman government; and as long as this prophecy relates to this great power and its horrifying oppression, it is given in symbols.

The servants (church) to whom this prophecy is addressed, Rev. 1: 1, symbolized by a "woman" in 12th chapter never goes out of existence, even during the 1260 years of papal (pope) supremacy, though compelled to worship in secret under God's protection. Rev. 12: 6, 14, 17. Therefore, to properly describe the conditions of this church, from Christ's first advent until His second coming, this entire period of time is subdivided into seven periods as seven seems to suggest completeness. God divided the weekly cycle into SEVEN days; seven of every clean beast were taken into Noah's ark. Gen. 7: 2. God said, "for yet SEVEN days will I cause it to rain upon the earth." V. 4. Why did Noah wait seven days after the dove returned? Gen. 8: 10. Then after land was viewed he waited just seven days more? V. 12. Why did Abraham set seven ewe lambs by themselves as witness to Abimelech concerning the well? Gen. 21: 30. Why did God instruct Joshua to select just seven priests to compass the city of Jericho with seven trumpets for seven days? and on the seventh day blow the blasts seven times? Josh. 6: 4. Why did God require just seven dips in Jordan to cure Naaman's leprosy? 2 Kings 5: 10. Seven years was Jacob compelled to serve Laban for each of his wives. Gen. 29: 20, 28. Again we may ask, Why did God alternately bless the land with plenty for seven

years; then a seven year famine? and symbolized these periods of time by seven kine and seven ears of corn? Gen. 41: 26, 27. Likewise Rev. 1: 20 explains that the seven golden candlesticks, symbolize the seven churches. In other words, the "Church of God" in each of these seven periods of time, like a lamp or candlestick illuminates the life of Christ (light to the world) also "the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches." Had the translators used the word agent, minister, or messenger instead of angel, it would perhaps be more easily comprehended.

I have before me a Bible Encyclopedia which says "The word angel imports something empowered or commissioned to execute His (God's) will." And as the symbol is a star, which is to reflect light; so we observe that in each of these seven periods of time there were individuals who had the oversight of the church as a comforting angel.

The first period or apostolic age is called, "Church of Ephesus," not because of its location, but because of its Etymology. Ephesus means desirable. And certainly it would be the most desirable period of the church when Christ and the apostles were in it. Its early purity is shown in chapter 2: 2, 3. "I know thy works and thy labor, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil; and hath tried them which say they are apostles and are not, and hath found them liars; and hath borne, and hath patience, and for My name's sake hath labored and hath not fainted."

The deeds of the Nicolaitanes which Christ says He hates, which also they hate (V 6), is said to refer to a sedition among professors of christianity, led by one Nicolas who maintained that meats offered in sacrifice unto idols were just as nourishing and palatable as any meat, and that ceremonies

dedicating these meats in idol worship could not desecrate the meat, so making them unfit for christians' use.

Dear reader, this should teach us that similar dedication of the measure of time (Sunday), to the worship of the sun, ought not to be honored by christian people, which Christ says "I also hate.

Verse 8 introduces the second church or the Church of God in the second period, called "Smyrna" because Smyrna means myrrh, a pleasant odor, and odor in prophecy signifies the prayer of the saints. Rev. 5: 8. And certainly this period represents a time when their prayers were fragrant because of their fervency and earnestness; for he says, "I know thy works, and tribulations and poverty, (but thou art rich)". Rev. 2: 9. Then in verse 10 He tells of their extreme persecution. "Fear none of these things which thou shalt suffer. Behold the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days. Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." All acknowledge the fact that a day is the symbol of a year in prophecy. Num. 14: 34; Ezek. 4: 6. Then let us appeal to history and see if there were just ten years of extreme persecution at this time. I quote Myers' General History, pages 330, 331. "The persecution of the church took place by an imperial decree. The churches of the christians were ordered torn down, and they themselves were outlawed. For ten years the fugitives were hunted in forest and cave. The victims were burned, were cast to the wild beasts of the amphitheater, were put to death by every torture and in every mode that ingenious cruelty could devise but nothing could shake the constancy of their faith." This was under the reign of the Roman Emperor Diocletian, ending A. D. 304.

Verse 12 introduces the third period called Pergamos which signifies, height, or elevation. Now it can be clearly seen how such fervency of devotion and constancy of efforts as characterized by the church during the 10 years, which marked the close of the preceding period could elevate the standard of christianity to its height, and history shows that it was maintained in this third period, notwithstanding wolves got among the flock. Emperor Constantine professed christianity "not entirely from conviction, but partly from political motives." Myers' General History, page 333.

Hodgkin's history says, "He was half convinced of the truth of christianity and wholly convinced of the policy of embracing it." This shows that the extreme persecution greatly affected public sentiment. Gibbons says, "He artfully balanced the hopes and fears of his subjects by publishing in the same year two edicts: The first of which enjoined the solemn observance of Sunday." Decline and

Fall of Rome, Vol. 2, Page 161. The decline of this false doctrine is shown in Rev. 2: 15. doctrine of the Nicolaitanes and of Balaam.

This period continues till the pope is enthroned shown in verse 13. "Thou holdest fast my name and hath not denied my faith, even in the day wherein Antipas was my faithful martyr, who was slain among you where Satan dwelleth." The cause of this martyrdom is shown by the word "antipas". Anti means against; pas equa's pope. They were martyred because they were against the pope. The expression "where Satan dwelleth," also shows that the martyrdom was committed in the realm of the pope. See Rev. 12: 9-13. This dragon is the leopard beast his power and his seat. Rev. 13: 2.

Verse 18 introduces the period of the church called "Thyatira," signifying "sacrifice of contention." He says, "I know thy works, and charity and service and faith, and thy patience; and thy works; Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee, because thou suffered that woman Jezebel, which called herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce my servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed unto idols." Rev. 2: 20.

Note, a woman in prophecy is a symbol of a church. Note also that she does not represent her servants, that she pretends to be, and seduces her servants teaching "my servants. Yes, her great seductive power is shown in the 17th chapter. Christ first fault for suffering her to mislead His servants. Let us put on the armor named in Eph. 6: 10-17, and guard the flock against the seduction of Jezebel's churches who do not discriminate against those dedicated to worship of idols.

Rev. 3: 1 introduces the fifth period of the church called Sardis which signifies "that which remains" indicating the remains of the reformation or the concluding period of papal supremacy ending in 1798. Indicated also in verse 2, "Be watchful and strengthen the things which remain that are ready to die."

The seventh verse introduces the sixth period Philadelphia (brotherly love) since the pope was taken captive by General Berthier in 1798 the door has been opened to public worship which was closed for 1260 years. He exclaimed, "I know thy work behold I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it; for thou hast a little strength, and hath kept my word, and hath not denied my name." V. 8.

The seventh and last period, in which we now live is introduced in verse 14 called Laodicean to signify "judgment of the people." The third angel's message is being heralded. The call is, "Come out of her (mystery Babylon) my people, that ye be not



FROM CALIFORNIA

partakers of her sins." Rev. 18: 4. "For strong is the Lord God who judgeth her." V. 8. This truly is the period which ends in judgment and he asked, "When the Son of man cometh shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18: 8. We realize there is a proneness to apply the sad condition of the Laodicean church to nominal professors; but brethren, this is addressed to the Church of God in this period. Are we lukewarm? Do we say we are rich and have need of nothing? and are ignorant of the fact that we are wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked? I believe this condition has existed in the immediate past; and many of us today need our eyes anointed with eyesalve that we may see. Many of us have a charge and are failing to do our duty because of lukewarmness; living at ease. Possibly we will not awaken to the sense of our duty without being chastened. This is what we may expect, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten; be zealous therefore and repent." Verse 19.

The wicked are punished after Christ comes, so are the righteous to be rewarded then. But this scripture warns the church, the ones He loves, that rebuke and chastening are due them for neglect of duty. Let us hear Paul concerning this, "My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of Him. For whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth. If ye endure chastening God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of Spirits and live? For they verily for a few days chasten us after their own pleasure; but He for our profit, that we might be partakers of His holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless, afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." Heb. 12: 5-11. Yes, He purgeth the tree that it may bring forth more fruit. John 15: 2.

Appleton City, Mo.

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To the Readers of the Advocate:—In sending the following letter, I will only say it is with much hesitation that I do so, for I always shrink from telling the personal experiences of my own life to other unless I feel or know there is something in that experience of my life that can help them in their own experience. Then I am only too glad that I can pass my experience on to others. That is my only reason for sending to the Advocate this letter that was read at the Ordinance Meeting held last spring in Pasadena, California.

Letter Read At Ordinance Meeting

Though I cannot be with you tonight I can join in giving thanks to God for the blessed privilege you have, for I can hardly express my joy at knowing there is a little company of the Church of God gathered together for this sacred annual occasion far out here in California where for so many years mother and I have lived almost alone, longing for yet without this privilege. But with each recurring year as this sacred season has approached, no matter where or what our condition, our prayers have always ascended to God on this evening in recognition of that sacred event, as we bowed alone in prayer at our family altar, and asked God's blessings on those assembled.

Many times as I remember, it has been while lying upon a bed of sickness, and often far away in the mountains in search of health, and at other times amid more pleasant conditions and surroundings. Yet I believe its sacred hours have scarcely ever been forgotten or intruded upon.

One bright spot stands out in these years, when in our little apartment in East Los Angeles, where we had spent the winter, Sister Templeton, Sister Parkinson and Sister Sherill met with us on this occasion. We all decided that it was only appropriate that we should meet together as opportunity had offered. This, I believe is the first and last time the occasion has been observed here by the Church of God until last year.

So in my heart and mind are mingled tonight many reminiscences and emotions, some of sadness some of joy. For this commemoration of the death of our Savior, and the ransom He paid that we might have life, has always been one of the most sacred occasions, both in my life and in our home since my earliest remembrance.

A most sacred impression was left on my mind with my first remembrance of this occasion, when as a child of five years I was present when it was