

Chapter VII

WAR WITH DRAGON AND BEASTS

(Rev. 12 to 20:15)

We shall study now the Fourth Division of the Revelation and view Satan's war with Christ, the apostles and christians between 33 and 70 A. D. and notice the outcome. Prior to the establishment of the kingdom of Christ at Pentecost, we viewed the Woes and events primarily affecting Palestine which now lead on to a full-scale spiritual warfare having repercussions in a fight to the finish between Jews and Romans. And while the Jews will use carnal weapons with which to crush Christ and the church, the disciples will refrain from such retaliation in the belief that "vengeance belongs to God" and that He by the Roman armies will execute retributive judgments upon the Jewish persecutors. He will be merciful even now although His longsuffering has been strained by their misdeeds and is almost at an end.¹ In the clear effulgent sunlight of His Gospel, which will make plain and unmistakable every judgment uttered previously by the prophets against the Jews and Jerusalem, Jehovah will strive to save every one He can. Those only who resist Him and persecute His apostles and Christians must fall under His wrath and fiery indignation.

And it will not be difficult for the Jews, who are rebellious, to align if possible the Romans against the Christians although a keener sense of justice will be displayed in the treatment of Christians by these pagan Gentiles.² Satan or the Dragon will be a suitable synonym for the Jews and the beasts, (beasts are civil rulers of both Jews and Romans), although in a strict legal sense the power of "life and death" will be reserved to the Romans exclusively. Hence any stonings or deaths by the sword meted out to Christians by the Jews will be illegal and regarded as murder by Jehovah, although He upheld such a civil right formerly by the Jews under the law of Moses. But that law is now dead and all men, their rulers, and their courts have been brought under the jurisdiction of Christ and the New Covenant.³ In the broader sense Christ's jurisdiction is universal but when we consider the church or his kingdom and Christians this jurisdiction is specific and limited. The former is applied to the world and its rulers; the latter to all

1. Rom. 2:4-9; 12:19-21; 13:1-7; I Pet. 2:13-17.

2. Acts 16:35-40; 19:26-41.

3. F. W. Farrar, *Op. Cit.*, p. 624; Jno. 18:31.

Christians in whom he will justify in no sense the use of carnal weapons in their defense. His church or kingdom has no Holy State, no standing army, no "abiding city here." It is a New Order in contrast to age-old civil governments and he commands that Christians keep church and state affairs separate while they "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's".⁴ Hence the mind of Jews and Romans was diametrically opposed by deep-seated traditions and their historical background to such a Church polity as Christ established.

Our founding fathers in America saw clearly this contrast and made every provision for it in the basic laws of our land. Every student of the New Testament should study carefully Bancroft's History of the American Constitution. It will familiarize him with the earnest efforts of Jefferson, Randolph, Franklin, Washington and others too numerous to mention to restrain the efforts of the Church of England to tax our colonies to perpetuate that church especially in Virginia. We see also their determination to keep church and state completely separate by the adoption of the first of the original ten amendments to our Constitution. Despite their efforts, however, most Americans are drifting back to the spirit of the Jews and Romans of the first century due to our ever increasing Military aristocracy and the greed of our mighty rich industrialists. Washington's fear of a military aristocracy was clearly stated in his last farewell address. It is transcendantly more important to be more patriotic for the things of God rather than those of Caesar, for Caesar and Satan by the ever increasing burdens of taxation can demoralize, enslave, and crush the church or any free people. Wars and oppression stalk a land hand in hand and corrupt the future of a nation by corrupting the youthful home-makers. Such things led on to Israel's weakness and final overthrow. The Barrels Emperors with their ever increasing demands for more taxes brought on the downfall of their universal Roman Empire in 476 A. D. With this introduction to the Dragon-Beast war of the Revelation, let us return now to our study of the ensuing events of the Fourth Division.

The time is A. D. 33 to 70 and the opposing forces are God, Christ and Christians on the one side and the Romans and Jews on the other. So John sees, after the ascension of the Woman's child and the two witnesses, a great and terrible conflict which must end in the defeat of the latter and the triumph of the former. For Eve's seed will smite the Dragon's head, for God rules in the affairs of all Civil Governments and will be the judge of their rise

4. Matt. 22:21; Rom. 13:7.

and fall. It is wholly possible, as in America originally, for any State or Kingdom to *BECOME* the "universal jurisdiction" of Christ's kingdom without usurping its functions or interfering with the affairs of the church. Good will, peace, and prosperity are possible for all men "in whom God is well pleased," if all by their New Testaments will seek FIRST God, His righteousness and kingdom and never restrict by legislation the free exercise of His worship by Christians. This the Jews of this period refused to do and aligned the Romans against the Christians. Our students should study the Acts of the apostles in this connection.

Moreover, within the Roman Empire is co-mingled all the idolatry and war-like spirit of the previous universal powers she conquered as well as the bitter, fatuous religious spirit of the Jews. However, the Roman Gentiles will be more receptive of the things of the Gospel than the Jews and "the little Stone" of Nebuchadnezzar's dream will strike the BASE of the image instead of the head now symbolized by Jewish Babylon. The base of the image will be more vulnerable to the attack by God's forces due to its more benign sense of justice, lack of religious prejudices and because of its debased, empty pagan spirit.⁵ Daniel's visions will now be seen symbolized by a lion which previously was the insignia of Babylon but at this time representing the Jews who are under "the roaring lion's" control, ready to devour the church. The Dragon is wrathful, for he has been cast down and knows that his time is short. He knows also that God's vengeance is ready to fall upon the usurped dominion which he claimed while tempting Jesus and that his powers to deceive the nations are now restricted by the binding of the Spirit which this "strong angel" is accomplishing by the preaching of the apostles.⁶ And during the "times of the Gentiles" it will be a bitter fight with the Jews until Jerusalem is destroyed.

There has been much speculation as to who the Anti-Christ was of John's day and from what we have previously written one answer only is apparent. "Anti" means against and "Anti-Christ" simply means one or more persons opposing Christ, or banded together for the purpose of blaspheming his holy name in order to defeat Christ and his apostles. More explicitly, the term applies to the sects of the Jews who denied his birth by a virgin. John makes no explicit application of this epithet since any of the Jewish rulers

5. Dan. 2:43; 7:15-28; Phillip Schaff, *History of the Apostolic Church*, (Chas. Scribner's Sons, New York, 1853), pp. 170-188.

6. Dan. 7:1-12; Rev. 13:1-3; Lu. 4:5-8; 21:20-24; I Thess. 2:16.

7. I Jno. 2:18; 4:1-5; II Jno. 7; Matt. 24:24; Rev. 13:5-6; Matt. 12:22-32; Lu. 12:1,

could qualify as the "Anti-Christ."⁷ The Herods and the High Priests opposed and threatened constantly the apostles and they are marked with many blasphemies of things divine.⁸ This sort of a beast or ruler has a number which most certainly applies to those of the Jews after the Cross. Any Christian who had understanding could ascertain the number of the beast, for this beast is the only one who has had an opportunity to serve God aright but has sunk to the low level of a beast in his deliberate determination to deny God and His son. The digit 6 is one less than 7 a number which symbolized perfection and one less than seven with the Jew denoted only the basest sort of imperfection. It was a cutting stroke by the sword of the Spirit, for to triple imperfection was to cast the Jewish rulers in a most despicable light before the Christian Jews of Palestine. If any did not worship the image of this beast, who in the name of a defunct religion performed many deceptive arts, he was killed or denied the right of free trade among orthodox Jews. It was imperative, therefore, that the adherent of the beast carry his badge in his hand or display it upon his forehead.⁹

This language that once applied to Babylon, "Every man is brutish by his knowledge; every founder is confounded by the graven images: for his molten image is falsehood, and there is no breath in them," applies with equal force to the Jews and their rulers.¹⁰ The Herods who now direct the affairs of the Jews are themselves of Jewish extraction from Alexandria, Egypt, but originally from Idumea. Herod, the great, had an illegitimate son by Cleopatra as well as wicked ties with Rome and Athens. He built a Temple to Caesar and another to Appolo, a god of the Athenians, in the land of Palestine and over the Temple door in Jerusalem at the east entrance he placed the god of War. His grandson was no different, for when Pilate and Caius Caesar (Caligula) insisted after the Cross that the Jews worship the ensigns of the Romans, this Herod thought it meet that the Jews worship him and his image instead.¹¹ But in either case it should be admitted that these beasts have ten horns and seven heads indicating supreme command over Jerusalem and the Jews, for such rulers "do also according to the expectation of the Jews."

"The man of sin now sitting in the temple of God and setting himself forth as God" is Herod who the Lord will slay with the

8. Acts 4:5-31; 18:5-6; Acts 4:25-28; 12:20-24.

9. Wm. Milligan, *The Book of Revelation*, (A. C. Armstrong & Son, 1897), p. 235.

10. See Clarke's comment on Jer. 51:17.

11. F. Josephus, *Op. Cit.* Bk. VII, Ch. VI, p. 19; Clarke, Vol. V, p. 94.

"breath of his mouth" as the Gospel is preached by the apostles of Christ. The place, persons, and the times are very propitious for the occasion, for confronting this beast in Chapter 14 is seen a Lamb standing on Mount Zion and the apostles and converted Jews do battle in His behalf. No one knows how many Jews, influenced by the preaching of the Immerser, Jesus and his disciples before the Cross, became Christians later, but we assume the number was so great and so indefinite that it could only be brought to the conscience by a symbolical number such as 144,000 or 12 representing the number of the tribes of Israel under the law of Moses multiplied by itself and 1,000 (10 x 10). These converted Jews bear the name of Christ and are "the first fruits" of the Gospel; they are without blemish; speak no lies; and are virgins in the sense that they have not defiled themselves with false doctrines (lewd women) and the idolatrous worship of the Jews or Gentiles.¹² They are exhorted to steadfastness by "an angel flying in mid-heaven" who has the Gospel to preach unto them. This angel symbolizes the haste with which Paul and the messengers of Christ by the Spirit attempted to save every honest Jew and Gentile they could before Jerusalem was destroyed and the Jews scattered.¹⁴ We noticed in Rev. 13:1, 11 there are two beasts, one coming "out of the sea," the other from "the earth." The former has the adoration of Jews and Gentiles and exercises more civil and religious influence than the latter because "sea" symbolizes universal dominion of all nations. "The earth" signifies the civil and religious dominion of Palestine only at this time. Both beasts oppose the initial advance of the kingdom of Christ. "The man of sin," however, is held accountable for the trespasses of all peoples whom the beasts control.¹⁵

Another angel follows saying, "Fallen, fallen is Babylon the great, that hath made all the nations to drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." This wine is symbolic of the illicit religion to which the orthodox Jews held. Another angel follows with a warning saying, "If any man worshippeth the beast and his image (his graven image or his example), and receiveth a mark on his forehead, or upon his hand, he also must drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is prepared unmixed (without discrimination) in the cup of his anger: and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone, etc." The angel flying in mid heaven said, "Fear God, and give him glory: for the hour of his judgment is come: and wor-

13. II Thess. 2:3-8; Rev. 13:11-18; Rev. 1-5.

14. Rev. 14:6-7; II Thess. 2:1-2.

15. Rom. 2:24; I Thess. 2:14-16.

ship him that made the heaven and the earth and sea and fountains of waters." For the beast and his subjects to refuse to do this would invite God's judgment to fall upon them and so the beast would "bring down fire from God" which is one of the great signs he unwittingly accomplishes. Thus the wrath of men work the praise of God.¹⁶ Another sign for all unto the ages of ages which the beast effects is smoke, a symbol of darkness and religious confusion. (See Rev. 13:13-14). All of these things try the stedfastness of the saints.¹⁷ Christians should not be deceived by the deceptive arts of "faith healers and miracle-mongers" of the present.

Antithesis and double allegory are the principal rhetorical means used by the Holy Spirit in the development of the Revelation and the student should notice such constructions very carefully. At Rev. 14:14-20, one is seen "sitting on a white cloud like unto a son of man, having on his head a golden crown, and in his hand a sharp sickle." Jesus said "He that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; and the field is the world; and the good seed, these are the sons of the kingdom; and the tares are the sons of the evil one; and the enemy that sowed them is the devil: and the harvest is the end of the world; and **THE REAPERS ARE ANGELS**. As therefore the tares are gathered up and burned with fire; so shall it be in the 'consummation of the age (Jewish age)'. The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that cause stumbling, and them that do iniquity."¹⁸ This one sitting on the white cloud has a sickle which means he is a reaper and an angel but our Lord will prompt his action although Jesus is now in heaven when the sowing, reaping, or gathering out the tares is done. It is common knowledge that God raised up certain kings or rulers to punish the Jews and this reaper of the land of Israel is no exception.

As Jesus comes "with the clouds" to render vengeance at the last day, so this one sits on a "white cloud," which signifies dryness, no rain, only desolation and famine.¹⁹ Yes, there is a crown on his head and he is like unto a son of man which means he will act by the authority of Christ as he executes his judgments against Palestine which is the land to be reaped. According to the announcement of John the immerser, Jesus' fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly cleanse his threshing-floor; and he will gather his

16. Rev. 14:8; 14:9-12; 14:7; 13:13-14.

17. Rev. 14:11; 4:8.

18. Matt. 3:12; Jer. 31:10-12.

19. Isa. 44:28; Rom. 9:17-18.

wheat into the garner, but the chaff he will burn up with unquenchable fire.²⁰ This reaper that sits on the white cloud is Vespasian.

The hour of God's judgment, since the Jews put His son to death on the Cross, is now come. So another angel cries with a great voice to the "one" on the white cloud, "Send forth thy sickle, and reap: for the hour to reap is come; for the harvest is ripe."²¹ "And he that sat on the cloud cast his sickle upon the earth; and the earth was reaped." Can anyone see anything distant to John's day in this? This appeal came from an angel out of the Temple in Jerusalem, for by personification Jerusalem is devoted now to destruction. Another angel having a sharp sickle comes from the Temple in heaven together with another angel who had power over fire from God's altar and the latter said to the former, "Send forth thy sharp sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth; for her grapes are fully ripe." The agency of vengeance will work as the judgments of God by the former prophets are pronounced by Christ's apostles. Vespasian, who is soon to become Emperor of Rome, will serve as the "one" like unto a son of man as the agent of destruction and desolation and he will answer the call of the Temple angel while the apostles will respond to the call of the angels from God's Temple and His altar from which his fiery judgments will proceed. The siege by the Romans will begin in Galilee as Christ's sufferings were accomplished by "treading the winepress, the great winepress, of the wrath of God without the city (Jerusalem)," but the mission of the apostles will begin within that city. And as the Jews reject the life-blood of Jesus in the New Covenant that blood will "be upon them and their children" as their blood will be required for their blasphemies against the Spirit and their opposition to the Gospel. The profusion of blood shed by the Romans and by their own seditions will be as universal for Palestine as the blood of the New Covenant is universal for all mankind.²²

20. Matt. 3:12.

21. Rev. 14:15.

22. Rev. 14:16; 14:17-20; Josephus, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 303-342; also p. 300; Heb. 13:12.

Chapter VIII

EVENTS PELIMINARY TO THE FALL OF JERUSALEM

(Rev. 15 to 17)

“And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous, SEVEN ANGELS having SEVEN PLAGUES, which are THE LAST, for in them is FINISHED THE WRATH OF GOD.” When the canon of the New Covenant is completed by the Revelation in 67 A. D. then is finished all the judgements God shall visit upon Palestine. It cannot be otherwise if the prophecies of the Old Testament have any definite application. When God delivered Israel from Egyptian bondage He poured out ten plagues upon Pharaoh’s land. During the ministries of John the immerser and of Jesus God poured out three of His plagues upon Palestine but now seven of the ten remain. This happens in fulfillment of all things prophecied by Moses concerning the Jews should they turn from God and the law which He gave them.¹ Fifteen hundred years later, the signs which befell Egypt which the fathers of the Jews feared so much are now falling upon them until they perish even as God ended the bondage in Egypt. These last plagues will be the worst in their breadth and intensity. The destruction of Jerusalem and the desolation of Palestine is imminent and God will “gather His elect,” the Christians, to a place of safety even as He did Israel in the land of Goshen while sore plagues fell upon Egypt. Adam Clarke states that it is miraculous that not a Christian perished during all the wars in Palestine at this time.²

“And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that come off VICTORIOUS from the beast, and from his image, standing by the sea of glass, having harps of God. And they sing (as Miriam did) the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying,

“Great and marvellous are thy works, O Lord God, the Almighty; righteous and true are thy ways, thou King of the ages. Who shall not fear, O Lord, and glorify thy name? For thou only art holy; for all the nations shall come and worship before thee; for thy righteous acts have been made manifest.”

The “remnant of Israel” have now passed through the protective waters of their baptism unto Christ and are seen standing before the Lamb. They occupy Mount Zion, a position before his throne. The sea before the throne is mingled with fire which differs

1. Rev. 15:1; Deut. 28-29; 28:27, 58-60; Ex. 9:4-7; 8:22; 9:26.

2. Clarke, *Op. Cit.* See comment on Rev. 7:3.

in this respect from the one we beheld at Rev. 4:6. The "fire" symbolizes the New Covenant which is God's consuming fire of Heb. 12:28-29, the essential element of Christ's kingdom.³ This interlude of Rev. 15:1-8 introduces seven angels who hold seven bowls of the wrath of God, visions more terrible now than the judgments that fell upon Egypt, for God is speaking in these "last days" through his son "to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile".⁴ His sons have learned "a new song" and are singing it in triumph before the throne and their enemies, for "they have been purchased out of the earth" by the blood of our Lord's covenant. The disobedient Jews and their rulers have stoned Stephen, put James to death with the sword, killed many disciples of Christ, imprisoned others, and scattered the church which was in Jerusalem. But Saul of Tarsus, the ring-leader of all such persecutions, has fallen a victim to the Lord's sword and many, many Jews, their priests and noble people have laid down their arms of rebellion against heaven's Prince who stands on mount Zion. The trumpet sounds of the seven angels previously seen have been heard now throughout the land of Palestine and the martial tread of those who proclaim the Gospel has shaken the entire Roman Empire.⁵ Surely all is a sea mingled with God's holy fire from off His altar and coming from His Temple now opened in heaven since 33 A. D. Out of this tabernacle of the testimony in heaven come the angels with the bowls of God's wrath.⁶

The mission of these angels of vengeance is in rapport with the many trials and labors of Christ's apostles and all others who preach the Gospel during these days of "the last plagues" to fall upon the Jews. Hence they are "arrayed with precious stone, pure and bright, and gird about their breasts with golden girdles." They take their bowls from one of the four living creatures and because of the "blood, and fire, and vapor of smoke" from the glory of God, and from His power, *none was able to enter the Temple* (church or kingdom of Christ), till the seven plagues of the seven angels should be finished.⁷ I believe the poor, timid Jews are under consideration here, for many of them who were unable to enter into the kingdom because of the severe trials, deceptions, threatenings, and confusion, brought upon them by their rulers before the de-

3. Rom. 9:27-29; Rev. 14:1-3; Heb. 12:18-29.

4. Ex. 19:7-25; Heb. 1:1-4; II Cor. 3:7-14.

5. Rev. 14:3; Deut. 31:21-22, 30; Psa. 2:1-9; Acts 13:32-40.

6. Rev. 15:5; Acts 2:14-21; Psa. 2:6-9; Acts 13:32-40.

struction of Jerusalem and the desolation of Palestine, were able to come freely without fear into the light of the Gospel of the glory of Christ afterward. All stumbling blocks will have then been removed.⁸ This may mean, too, that no one completely understood all that the presence of Christ and God within the New Covenant signified while the apostles were in the process of revealing it to Jews and Gentiles of the first century.⁹

However, Jerusalem and the Jews of Palestine who hinder the Gospel at this time must be removed. These angels that receive the bowls of wrath are synonymous in their missions with Christ's High Priesthood and wear a vesture similar to his shown at Rev. 1:13-16 and if any shall hurt those priests under Christ who offer their bodies a living sacrifice to Christ's cause at this time they shall in like manner be tormented and killed by the angels. And these angels receive their power to pour out such judgments upon the rebellious, persecuting Jews from one of the four living creatures, undoubtedly meaning the Romans.¹⁰ "The moment is one of terror, and it is fitting that even all outward things shall correspond," says W. Milligan.

The "smoke" that filled the Temple is reminiscent of the glory of the Lord which filled the Jewish tabernacle in the beginning of Israel's history, for "Moses was not able to enter into the tent of meeting" when Jehovah's presence filled it. Neither Solomon nor any priest was able to enter the Temple at its dedication when the glory of the Lord came down into the Most Holy place. Isaiah beheld the glory of the Lord in His temple, and heard the cry of the Seraphim, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory. And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house was filled *with smoke*." He, like the other prophets, is a man of "unclean lips," for he is uttering judgments against his people. When and under what conditions will these be fulfilled? Then as if he were occupying the position of Christ and the apostles after Jesus' ascension, Isaiah asks to be sent as a spokesman to the Jews and the Lord tells him to go and tell 'this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and

8. Rev. 13:14; II Thess. 2:6-7; I Cor. 13:12; II Cor. 3:18.

9. Jas. 1:23-25; Acts 10:28-29.

10. Rev. 11:5-7; Rom. 12:1-2; Matt. 10:16-19; Acts 9:15; 14:22.

turn again, and be healed." Then Isaiah said, "How long, Lord, and he answered, "UNTIL CITIES BE WASTE WITHOUT INHABITANT, AND HOUSES WITHOUT MAN, AND THE LAND BE UTTERLY WASTE, AND JEHOVAH HAVE REMOVED MEN FAR AWAY, AND THE FORSAKEN PLACES BE MANY IN THE MIDST OF THE LAND. And if there be yet a tenth in it, it also shall in turn be eaten up: as a terebinth, and as an oak, whose stock remaineth, when they are felled; SO THE HOLY SEED IS THE STOCK THEREOF." This holy seed is the risen Redeemer of the Jew first and also of the Gentile." (See Romans 11:15-22).

If under the preparatory mission of the Immerser, Jesus, the twelve and the seventy, the plagues, the woes, and the judgments were only incomplete, now since the advent of the New Covenant into the world they will be finished. The student will clearly perceive this by contrasting the events symbolized by the soundings of the seven angels with the trumpets with those that occur as each of the seven angels pours out his bowl upon Palestine. It must be observed, however, that when the seventh angel sounded, we see in the crucifixion all things finished or fulfilled but the student must realize also that the death of the testator had to occur before the New Covenant under the preaching of the apostles would come into full force and effect from 33 A. D. to 70 A. D.¹² For example, when the first Trumpeter sounded only a third part "of the trees was burnt up, and all green grass was burnt up."¹³ And now when the first angel went, and poured out his bowl into the earth, "there came a noisome and grievous sore upon the men that had the mark of the beast, and that worshipped his image."¹⁴ This indicates the manner in which the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles affected the disobedient Jews, their rulers, and their evil magicians and soothsayers.

However, it is not incumbent upon any writer dealing with this section of the Revelation to point out explicitly the outward manifestations of the plagues now falling upon Palestine by pinpointing each tragic event as each bowl is poured out. What the "noisome and grievous sore" was that affected generally the disobedient Jews between 33 A. D. and 70 A. D., is therefore only a conjecture. This first distressing affliction may be considered the

11. Rev. 15:8; Ex. 40:35; I Kgs. 8:8-11; Isa. 6.
12. Rev. 8:7; Rev. 16:2; Heb. 9:8-24.
13. Rev. 8:7.
14. Rev. 16:2.

anti-type of the sixth Egyptian plague which was poured out upon the false prophets, magicians, soothsayers, etc., of the Jews as the "boils and blains" fell upon Pharaoh's magicians.¹⁵ God no longer rules the Jews under the law of Moses since Christ's death nullified that law. The Herods rule now and these signs accompanying the pouring out of the bowls fall upon Palestine subsequently to the Cross and ascension of Jesus. They will increase with intensity as the tempo of the Jewish rebellion and their persecution of the church is stepped up.

As the second angel poured out his bowl "into the sea," a more widespread affliction turns "the sea" into blood as of a dead man". The "dead man" was Christ and all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, became responsible before God for it as they are unto this day. In that Christ died for all, all men became dead before God.¹⁶ This was first announced at Pentecost after the ascension of Jesus and was oft repeated during the ministry of the apostles before 70 A. D. The outward manifestations of this affliction can be seen in the "wars and rumors of war" now arising all over the Roman Empire and within Palestine which is rent by civil and religious discord and their own bloody seditions.¹⁷

The third angel poured out his bowl into the rivers and the fountains of waters; and it became blood. These rivers and fountains of waters are sources of blessings due to "the fountain" God has opened "to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness". The Gospel of the crucified and risen Redeemer, sealed and sanctified by his blood, is now in view. It is totally covered by the blood of Christ from which it draws its healing powers. However, for any Jew who did not understand its meaning or intent, it was merely a nauseating spiritual drink. However, the angel presiding over the waters of eternal life (the Holy Spirit) proclaimed, "Righteous are thou, who art and who wast, thou HOLY ONE, because thou didst thus judge: for they (the Jews) poured out the blood of saints and prophets, and blood hast thou given them to drink: they are worthy." And the altar upon which the great sacrifice of Christ lay also proclaimed the blessings of these waters by saying, "Yea, O Lord God, the Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments (of apostles and prophets)."¹⁸ "The Lord is now no longer He that shall come, for He has come

7. Rev. 15:7-8; Acts 2:19.
15. Ex. 9:8-12; Deut. 28:27-35.
16. Rev. 16:3; Acts 2:34-36; Rom. 3:19-20; 11:32; II Cor. 5:14-15.
17. Matt. 24:3-6; Acts 5:34-39.
18. Rev. 16:4; Zech. 13:1; Jno. 19:31-37; Zech. 12:10; Jno. 6:52-68.

in vengeance; and, therefore, the third of the three clauses in Ch. 1:4-8; and Ch. 4:8, is here, and in Ch. 11:17, omitted."¹⁹

When the fourth bowl was poured out "the sun" symbolizing the "sun of righteousness" was made more brilliant and penetrating than the prophets depicted him and by the fire of his mighty New Testament the Jews were blistered; and they blasphemed the name of God who hath power over these plagues; and they repented not to give him glory.²⁰ Again, this is reminiscent of the plagues of lightning or fire that fell upon Egypt which also may be seen in the fires all over Palestine when the Roman armies under Vespasian began the siege of that land.²¹ And after God destroyed Egypt's firstborn and Pharaoh's armies at the Red Sea, that nation lay an inviting prey to her enemies. So, when the sixth angel poured out his bowl upon Palestine, symbolically the river Euphrates was dried up as the Red Sea was made passable for Israel's flight to safety under Moses. This is also the signal for the Roman armies to start marching upon Palestine and Jerusalem which is now Egypt in reverse. The year is A. D. 63 and all things Jewish will soon be at an end by A. D. 70. Paul, the great apostle to the Gentiles, has reached Rome with his party and is now a prisoner under Nero, the Emperor; John, the last of the apostles who once resided in Jerusalem, is now an exile on Patmos; and most all christians have fled or are fleeing the land of Palestine for Pella in Arabia.

At this time, Vespasian had struck with the fifth and tenth legions of the Romans in Galilee to subdue the seditions which have reached their climax under opposing Jewish forces of Simon and John. Josephus has now surrendered to the Romans his Jewish garrison and has become their scribe while many of his adherents had either been killed, taken prisoners, or were fleeing Palestine. Many would join the Jews in their retreat to Jerusalem to defend that city as they would stubbornly continue the bitter rivalry between the seditious factions of John and Simon. When Simon's forces first reached Jerusalem they obtained control of the Temple and its buildings where the Jews had cached gold, food, and arms with which to defend the city against the Romans. John's faction attempted to seize this military advantage from Simon as great multitudes of Jews rushed out of Palestine into Jerusalem to align themselves with one seditious group or the other. The priests and

19. Jamieson, Fausset & Brown, Bible Commentary (Jerome B. Names), Vol. IV, p. 606.

20. Rev. 16:8; Mal. 4:1-2; Ex. 9:22-26.

21. F. Josephus, *Op. Cit.* Vol. II, p. 300.

rulers of the Jews found no middle grounds for peace and bitter political intrigues and many cunning religious arts were resorted to which spread among the millions of starving people within the city's walls.²² And how does the Revelator on Patmos depict all of this? Let us see.

As Cyrus' armies diverted the waters of the river Euphrates in order to pass suddenly under the walls of Babylon and seize that kingdom from Belshazzar even so with the flight of all christians from Palestine the rivers and fountains of Christ's spiritual waters have been dried up and Jerusalem now stands as a "dry tree" ready to be hewn down by the Romans and their own seditions and by the famine, confusion and the unmitigated bloody treachery within the walls of Jerusalem. Vespasian and his son Titus who succeeds him as head of the Roman armies were called kings and are now seen as Cyrus and Darius coming "from the sunrising" to assault the walls of Jerusalem, the Babylon of the Revelator's day. When the attack falls upon Idumea, the very place from which the Dragon and the Herods receive their power and support, the Dragon sends forth out of his mouth and from the mouths of the beast and the false prophets, unclean spirits, as it were frogs: for they are spirits of demons, working signs; which go forth unto the kings (of all Jews) of the whole world (Roman Empire), to gather them together unto the war OF THE GREAT DAY OF GOD, the Almighty.²³ This is the manner by which the rulers of the Jews will gather military support for the defense of Jerusalem. We call it in these days of world wars "propaganda of lies" which an enemy uses to gain sympathy and universal support for his cause. Frogs are reminiscent of Egypt and Pharaoh's magicians when God delivered Israel out of their bondage.²⁴ "And they gathered them together into the place which is called in Hebrew Har-Magedon." In this connection, it is noteworthy that Vespasian recalled the Tenth Legion from the Euphrates river with which to strike Galilee in the beginning of the siege.²⁵ What war besides this one can any student of the Revelation call "the war of the great day of God"? When Palestine is desolated and Jerusalem is destroyed "the times of the Gentiles" and "the battle of Har-Magedon" will have ended.²⁶ In a decisive battle at the Red Sea God terminated His war with

22. F. Josephus, *Op. Cit.*, Vol. II, pp. 303-406.

23. Rev. 16:12-16; Dan. 5:17-30.

24. Rev. 16:13-14; Ex. 8:1-15; See Clarke, Comment on Ex. 8:9.

25. Rev. 16:12-16; Josephus, *Op. Cit.*, pp. 457-458; p. 468; p. 340.

26. Rev. 16:14-16; Lu. 21:20-28; II Kgs. 17:1 to 23:29.

Pharaoh and now He will likewise complete this one with the Jews in the destruction of Jerusalem in 70 A. D.

"And the great city was divided (by three seditious factions at first) into three parts, and the cities of the nations (Greeks) fell; and BABYLON the great was REMEMBERED in the sight of God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath." Later in this study we shall point out why Jerusalem causes Jehovah to remember Babylon. Due to the influence and purposes of Alexander the Great, Palestine was filled with Greek villages and they mingled freely with the Jews in every city of Palestine. M'Ilvaine states, "In the times of the apostles, Greek was almost a universal language. It was spread over all Palestine. The Jewish coast, on the Mediterranean, was occupied by cities, either wholly, or half Greek. On the eastern border of the land, from the Arnon upwards, towards the north, the cities were Greek; and, towards the south, in possession of the Greeks."²⁷ So the cities of the nations (Greeks) fell as did the cities of the Jews as the siege by the Romans spread over Palestine.

The Babylon of Nebuchadnezzar's day passed away in 538 B. C. Surely it could not be the recipient of God's wrath now. Hence it must be its anti-type which is Judah and Jerusalem, who were very familiar with their experience of seventy years of captivity within that city (See I Pet. 5:13). Will God's memory help the Jews now to know just how wicked they are? The Jews of Samaria went into that captivity before Judah and Jerusalem were desolated. Now the cities of northern Palestine are falling under the siege of the Romans and Jerusalem will follow in the wake of their doom. Ancient Babylon had three WOES visited by Jehovah upon her before that wicked city was destroyed or had learned that God rules in the affairs of nations. This is now the third WOE of complete desolation to come swiftly upon the Jewish nation and their capital. The "wilderness wanderings" was the first, Babylonian captivity was the second WOE of complete desolation and now will they remember these things? There are religious groups of the present who believe they cannot fall from God's grace. Perhaps that is what these Jews of John's day thought and failed to receive this warning, "Behold, I come as a thief. Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame."²⁸ In their obstinacy, Jerusalem will "blaspheme God because of the plague of the hail; for the plague thereof is exceeding great," but not as

27. Rev. 16:17-19; Matt. 4:15 ("Galilee of the Gentiles").

28. Rev. 16:15; Matt. 24:23-28.

severe as the final judgment which will come upon men at the end of these days in which we live.

I repeat now for emphasis: the apostles and early Christians have done all they can do to save the Jewish people of Palestine; the "firm covenant" has been fully revealed by the capstone the Revelator is laying upon our New Testament; and when the seventh angel pours out his bowl upon the air nothing has been accomplished to cause the Jews and their rulers to repent. So "there came forth a great voice out of the temple, from the throne, saying, "It is done."²⁹ "The judgment of the Great Harlot that sitteth upon many waters," is come and it remains only for the final curtain in this tragedy to fall upon the history of the Jews and Jerusalem. The apostles under the guidance of the Holy Spirit were given the mission of "convicting the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me; of righteousness, because I go to the Father, and ye behold me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world (the Dragon) hath been judged." Adam Clarke says, "It is said (Ch. 10:7) that in the days of the seventh trumpet the mystery of God should be finished; so here we find it completed."³⁰ The crisis is passed; all is over. The desolation of Palestine and the last punishment of the Jews as a nation for their sins will now remain an ominous testimony for the ages to come that God will not tolerate rebellion against His merciful mandates.

29. Rev. 16:21; II Thess. 1:7-12; Rev. 16:17.

30. Clarke's Comment on Rev. 16:17.