

## THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH

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In Vol. III of Studies in the Scriptures is a chapter entitled “The Deliverance and Exaltation of the Church.” Today, this chapter is of timely importance to the saints yet in the flesh who “groan within ourselves, waiting for sonship—the deliverance of our body.” (Rom. 8:23) This particular chapter is a summary of our Pastor’s expectations regarding the time, manner and accompanying events of the exaltation of the feet members of Christ. It is with great care and joy that we should consider these thoughts knowing that our deliverance draweth nigh.

Perhaps the best way to sum up the information given in this chapter is to cite some thoughts from the 1916 Foreword to the Volume, page v, which reads as follows: “For a little while there will be a great triumph of Churchianity after the war. Both Catholics and Protestants will share in this triumph and both political and financial princes will encourage it, hoping for the prolongation of their own power. At that time we may expect strong opposition from Churchianity upon the true, faithful followers of Jesus, resulting in serious persecutions—perhaps unto death. But the triumph of Babylon will be short. Soon the sentence, already pronounced, will be executed and she shall fall like a great millstone into the sea—into anarchy—into destruction, never to rise again.” From this quote we can see that the Pastor’s expectations were that there would be a general persecution of the true Church by the false church as it makes its last stand to retain any influence it has left. Then it would fall into oblivion with a rushing destruction.

These expectations of our Pastor are echoed elsewhere. In Vol. II (The Time Is At Hand), page 361, he writes these words: “Evidently in the near future... there will be a severe hour of trial and testing of the truly consecrated Church, much as it was in the days of Papacy’s triumph; only now the methods of persecution... will have more the form of sarcasm and denunciations, restrictions of liberties, and social, financial, and political boycotting.”

While this quote does not directly mention the deliverance of the last members of the Church, it does show what is to precede that deliverance. It shows clearly that churchianity will have sufficient sway to restrict our liberties and to make us unable to witness freely as we are now able. This is in harmony with our Pastor’s words (John 9:4) that “the night cometh wherein no man can work.” Other texts and Pastor Russell’s writings have continuously brought this prophetic matter before our minds. And now we see the political climate tending toward such a repressive and suppressive attitude. A recent newspaper article quotes Representative Wm. S. Moorhead (D-PA) as reporting, “... that he has uncovered a secret contingency plan for national censorship.” This plan is called a “National Watchlist,” and Moorhead said, “... the list would include information the censors will look for as they open letters, monitor broadcasts, and

question travelers. . . Moorhead said in a prepared statement, ‘I have no doubt that the official National Watchlist will pinpoint individuals slated for political reprisal!’” Does this not show the beginnings of the fulfillment of the Pastor’s expectations as just quoted? This quote is only a sampling of the myriads of articles now coming into the news which display the trend toward suppression of individual liberty. Is it not an excellent example of the Pastor’s foresight based on the “sure word of prophecy”? 2 Pet. 1:19.

In the chapter on “The Deliverance and Exaltation of the Church,” which we are discussing, our Pastor writes these words (Vol. III, page 231): The fate of the Church, then, so far as her human career is concerned, seems outlined in the closing pages of the lives of Elijah and John the Baptist. . . [It] indicate[s] violence to the last members of the body of Christ. . . The Elijah class, persisting in declaring the truth to the last, will suffer violence. We know that we must die in the flesh (Psalm 82:6, 7), but it cannot be from old age for all of us! And if our deaths are to be “accidental” it would be of little witness to the world, as well as be out of harmony with the Pastor’s expectations as just stated. He expected the Church to suffer violence much as John the Baptist who was our type. [Comment: the Pastor was not dogmatic on this point—see Reprint page 5569, last paragraph.]

The promises to each of the periods of the Church were that BY OVERCOMING they would enter their reward with their Lord. This overcoming, however, was not to be overcoming the various brethren as they present errors! No, it was an overcoming of the world, the flesh, and the ADVERSARY. The adversary is PERSONIFIED in his masterpiece, Babylon. Thus it is written that the overcoming saints of our day would have their victory over the beast and his image. (Rev. 15:2) It is in the beast and his image that Satan is represented. It is against this spiritual wickedness in high places that the Apostle warns us when he admonishes that we wear all the armour of God. Eph. 6:10-18.

It is, therefore, the Pastor’s consistent testimony that the deliverance of the Church’s last members will come as the result of persecution by the influence of a proud and desperate churchianity—the tool of Satan. Those who are not thus delivered will fall at the hands of those raging masses whose indignation will be kindled against ALL THINGS CHRISTIAN (TRUE or false), when these masses finally see Babylon’s true character. [Comment: see Reprint page 5845 last paragraph.]

The Pastor’s expectations regarding Babylon’s final stand are well confirmed in the prophecy of Nahum 1:7-11. We will use Rotherham’s translation which seems clearest: V. 7: “Good is Yahweh, as a protection in the days of distress—And one who acknowledgeth them who seek refuge in him.” This is a beautiful assurance of the Lord’s goodness to us even while we endure the experiences in our “day of distress.” The

prophet continues, however, to sum up Babylon's experiences:

V. 8: “But with an overflow rolling on, a FULL END will he make of them who rise up against him—And his foes will he pursue into darkness.” Here we have important information. We are told that someone would RISE UP against the Lord. This was the Pastor’s understanding. Churchianity will RISE UP in a last effort to preserve itself. But when it does so, the Lord’s fury will be poured out and he will make a FULL END (oblivion) of her. (Compare Rev. 18:21 where it states that Babylon “shall be found no more at all.”) And this verse demonstrates that all of God’s enemies will be unable to understand the matter:—He chases them into darkness, or as Paul states (2 Thess. 2:11) “... God shall send them strong delusion that they should believe a lie.”

V. 9: “What can ye devise against Yahweh? A FULL END is He making—Distress shall not rise up twice.” We see here that as Churchianity rises up for its fall, it schemes against the Lord’s plans in that it is attempting to hold together an order of things which the Lord is in process of destroying. To this agree the words of Psalm 2:2 and Rev. 16:13 and 14: “The kings of the earth RAISE themselves UP, and rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his anointed.” (Leeser) “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the beast, and out of the mouth of the false prophet. For they are the spirits of devils, working miracles, which go forth unto the kings of the earth and of the whole world, to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty.” (See the Pastor’s explanation in the 1912 Foreword to Vol. IV, page x.) But even though Babylon “devises against Yahweh” with grossly deceptive schemes, it will be utterly destroyed. A FULL END will God make of it right at its moment of seeming victory!

Nahum promises that distress will “not rise up twice.” This is a valuable statement. First it confirms V. 8 that it will, indeed, RISE UP ONCE! But it shall not rise up TWICE because when it rises up the first time it will be utterly consumed! It is manifest from this prophecy that these events are yet ahead of us. Babylon is still in our midst. She has not as yet received her “FULL END.” When she does rise up and receive her “FULL END,” she shall be found no more at all!

V. 10: “Though they were like thorns intertwined, and as drunkards drenched with their drink; yet have they been devoured, like stubble fully dry.” The Lord here explains what they have done in their efforts to preserve the old order: (1) They have intertwined for strength through the means of ecumenism, merger, federation and confederacy. (2) They have devised a doctrine (drink: unclean spirits of Rev. 16) of supremacy of their ideas. But even with these efforts which make them confident of their continuing position in earth’s affairs, the Lord declares, “Yet have they been devoured, like stubble fully dry.” The Lord does not exaggerate. His illustration here is very meaningful. Upon his command that they have reached their “FULL END,” they will disappear as quickly and

as violently as an ignited pile of fully dry stubble. There is nothing gradual or gentle in this picture. It will be an awesome spectacle. In the words of Rev. 18:21, “Thus with violence shall that great city Babylon be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all.” Dr. Young defines “violence” as a “rushing, impetuosity.”

V. 11: “Out of thee hath one come forth, plotting against Yahweh wickedness, a counselor of the Abandoned One [Belial].” This final verse of our consideration of Nahum shows us the reason for Babylon’s last rising up. It is Satan’s last maneuver to bruise the Christ. When the Psalmist (Psa. 2) said they would “take counsel together against the Lord,” he was stating earlier what Nahum was later to write. But Nahum makes the matter clearer regarding the instigator of this RISING UP. It is in Satan’s direction—“A counselor of the Abandoned One.”

In this one prophecy of Nahum we have only one example of the kind of Scripture that enlightened Bro. Russell in his understanding of events future from his day as related to our experiences and the manner of our deliverance as the last members of the Body of Christ. We can rejoice that we see in our day the evidences not only that our Pastor was right, but also that the time of our deliverance is at hand. “Look up, and lift up your heads, for your deliverance draweth nigh.” Luke 21:28.

It is important now to consider how these expectations related to other prophecies which the Pastor understood. For instance, how does this final rise and fall of Babylon relate to the rise and fall of Gentile power? We ask this particular question for an important reason, the reason being that the end of Gentile dominion and Babylon’s fall are NOT THE SAME. The Gentile lease of power began in 606 B.C. and extended to 1914 A.D.

This was pictured by Nebuchadnezzar’s vision of the image of four metals. (The Vision is found in the second chapter of Daniel.) Daniel saw another vision representing the same matter from God’s viewpoint as the rise of four beasts. (This is found in Dan. 7) But each of these visions was about civil power. The rise of ecclesiastical power was shown in the last stage (Rome) of each vision. In Dan. 2 we have the iron mixed with clay; in Dan. 7 we have the appearance of a “little horn.” The clay and the little horn show that the last stage of Gentile dominion (Rome) would amalgamate itself with religious powers. Each (civil and religious) factor retains its identity, but they rule as a unit. But the separation of the civil from the ecclesiastical power in 1914 does not result in the total or immediate destruction of either. Church-state union is basically past history. The Pastor did not expect their reuniting in the manner they were formerly united. But he did expect their mutual cooperation in the end in order to bolster their tottering system.

This understanding is extremely important. Let there be no misunderstanding: Church and state will fall separately—not together. (Rev. 18:9-11) Therefore we cannot examine

the details of the fall of either by considering Dan. 2 and 7. Those visions were general descriptions of history. We must consult other prophecies to find the final demise of both Babylon and the nations, as these details are not shown in these two visions of Daniel. When the stone struck the image in 1914, it marked the end of a lease and the end of Church-state union. It did not, however preclude a future church-state cooperation in the final struggle. Indeed, we have just learned from Nahum that (even though the stone struck the Gentile image), a distress WILL RISE UP! And Rev. 16:13 showed that this distress will involve civil power (dragon) as well as ecclesiastical (beast and false prophet).

Brother Russell expected the United States to be as much involved in this RISING UP of Babylon as the old nations of the Gentile image. To demonstrate this we will quote only a few of his references to the matter: From Vol. IV, page 36: “Let it be borne in mind, then, that in the great politico-ecclesiastical systems which men call Christendom, but which God calls Babylon, we have not only the foundation but also the superstructure and the crowning pinnacle of the present social order. This is implied in the generally accepted term Christendom, which of late is applied not only to those nations which support Christian sects by legislation and taxation, but ALSO to all nations which show tolerance to Christianity without in any definite manner favoring or supporting it; as for instance, these United States.”

Note also the sub-heading on page 143 of Vol. IV: “The United States Unique in Her Position, Yet Threatened with Even Greater Evils Than the Old World.” Following this sub-heading are 7½ pages on the subject.

From Vol. II, pages 360, 361: “Laws may be expected soon through which, gradually, personal liberty will be curtailed under the plea of necessity and the public welfare; until, one step after another being taken, it will finally be necessary to formulate some ‘simple law of religion,’ and thus church and state may be in a measure united in governing the United States of America.”

The overtures of the state toward the church is suggested by this quote are already beginning. A recent news article quoted President Nixon as saying “that he was ‘irrevocably committed’ to seeking tax credit legislation for parents of nonpublic school children in the next Congress. ‘In my judgment,’ he added, ‘the Constitution does not prohibit tax inducement to encourage and maintain diversity in American education—and we are prepared to fight to guarantee that that diversity remains!’” “Irrevocably committed” means there is NO WAY TO CHANGE IT.

From Vol. 11, page 263: “It would not be surprising if a ‘strong government,’ a monarchy, would someday replace this present Great Republic; and it is entirely probable that one common standard of religious belief would be deemed expedient.”

Most of us have probably read the following news item from Oct. 4, 1972: “‘The White House and the president are emerging in the United States as a new kind of monarchy,’

said Ralph Nader.” How the Pastor’s expectations were so exact! “Monarchy” comes from the Greek words “*monos*” (meaning “alone”) and “*archein*” (meaning “to rule”) We are on our way toward a monarchy just as Bro. Russell expected—the “rule by one.” A dictatorship would just as well fulfill his expectations. We can see from these excerpts from the Harvest Message a consistent testimony that ALL CHRISTENDOM (including the United States) will be under the high hand of the unclean spirits—the desires and attempts to hold together the social order which God has decreed must come to a FULL END.

As we study a topic such as the deliverance of the Church, we must keep in mind the dependence of one doctrine upon another. This is a concept all good Bible Students should realize by now. We cannot isolate our interpretations, but must integrate them with the other features of doctrine which all together form the Harvest Message as we know it. Because of this necessity of comparison and amalgamation of doctrines, we will now consider the question of the deliverance of the last members of the church as it relates to other aspects of the truth. We will consider its relationship to: (1) The Ecumenical Movement. (2) The Permission of Evil. (3) The Binding of Satan. And (4) Spiritism.

## THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT

Nahum promised one rising up and folding together. Similar testimony, but in different terms, is given in many other places. Just to name a few, we might cite: (1.) The rulers take counsel together in Psalm 2. (2.) The three unclean spirits collaborate in the working of miracles. (Rev. 16) (3.) Isaiah 8 tells us that “this people shall say a confederacy.” (4.) Our Lord explains that part of the work of the harvest would be the bundling of the tares. (Matt. 13:30)

We do not normally associate the parable of the wheat and the tares with the ecumenical movement. Nevertheless, a careful study of the matter will show that the Pastor apparently did see this union movement reflected in our Lord’s words of this parable. Bro. Russell treats this parable in great detail in Vol. III beginning with page 138 and continuing for nearly 20 pages. We would like to quote here from page 142:

“Really, it is not a union as one church, but a combination of separate and distinct organizations, each as anxious as ever to retain its own organization as a sect or bundle, but each willing to combine with others to make a larger and more imposing appearance before the world. It is like the piling of sheaves together in a shock. Each sheaf retains its own bondage or organization, and becomes bound yet more tightly by being wedged and fastened in with other bundles, in a large and imposing stack.”

This is, of course, only a hint of the multitude of words Bro. Russell wrote regarding the ecumenical movement which he knew must come before the deliverance of the Church.

A study of his writings will make it clear to all that his expectations were that this “folding together as thorns” would come just prior to the rising up of Babylon for its “FULL END.” It is this very element of outward union that will give Babylon its false front of solidarity and power by which it will momentarily deceive the nations of “Christendom.” Reprint 2004 states: “Christendom is preparing for the union or federation which the Scriptures foreshow will be THE FINAL PHASE OF CHRISTIANITY.”

We can readily see from the Pastor’s clear presentations where we now stand on the Lord’s timetable. Ecumenism is just now becoming a living force. Combining this with our observations of present day directions in the political world toward the suppression of liberties, we see that Babylon’s final hour is, indeed, near at hand. Praise God! Stop and consider what this means to us all who have waited for these events! Lift up thy head, Zion! Kindle thy zeal!

Our deliverance is inseparably linked to these events fulfilling before our eyes today. Note the Pastor’s words as found in the 1916 Foreword, page iii, to Vol. IV: “The churches will be ready and glad for such an opportunity. Already, they are rolling together as a scroll—the one side, Catholic, the other, Protestant, opposed and yet connected—each side united and federated to the best of its ability. But the Bible declares that this reign ‘as a queen’ will be a short one, and that the fall of Babylon will be tremendous—like a great millstone cast into the sea. It will be during the power of this so-called ‘queen’ for a little season, that the world will be under a great strain as respects any presentation of the truth. And those found loyal to God and to principle will doubtless suffer therefor.”

In harmony with this are these words found on page 261 of Vol. II: “The true Church, like its type, John the Baptist, will be unpopular and restrained of liberty because of faithfulness in opposing and condemning error.”

How will Babylon, even with union, get sufficient power to accomplish these things? The Pastor suggests two answers to this question. One is that society, in its desperate efforts to prevent its own downfall, will resort to almost anything. (See the first and second paragraphs of page 262 of Vol. II on this matter.) The second answer we will discuss shortly when we consider Spiritism.

### **THE PERMISSION OF EVIL**

We have seen how our time and manner of deliverance are linked to the ecumenical movement. But we have not seen just why God planned the matter this way. God’s wisdom pervades all of His plans and, by His grace, we are permitted to catch glimpses of the workings of His character as we consider His doctrine. Just so it is in this matter.

The final rise and fall of Babylon resulting in the deliverance of the true church is directly linked to the philosophy behind God's reason for permitting evil.

God permits evil for the learning and benefit of His creatures. The severity of the experience deepens the lesson. We all know how the flesh tends to forget even great events. Just witness how Israel forgot the Lord so soon after walking through the Red Sea! In the evil yet before us, God intends a lasting lesson, an age-lasting remembrance, for the whole world regarding Babylon. Rev. 14:11; 19:2, 3.

How has God reacted to evil? Has He immediately destroyed transgressors when He has noticed their iniquity? The answer, of course, is No. God moves against the transgressor ONLY AFTER THE DISLOYALTY AND WICKEDNESS HAVE BEEN AMPLY DEMONSTRATED FOR THE BENEFIT OF HIS CREATURES.

We have an example of this in Scripture. When Lucifer was plotting in his heart, the Lord took no action. He could have. It would have been just. But in God's wisdom He knew that such an action would have a demoralizing effect on all the spirit realm. The other angels, not knowing of Lucifer's meditations, would not understand God's action and would then have reason to distrust God feeling that He might also destroy them for no cause. But once Lucifer became Satan by openly manifesting his opposition to God, he was then condemned and all the spirit realm benefited by the example. Luke 10:18

The world, however, has never seen Satan. Since he is a spirit being, the world can never literally see him. Generally, the world (even churchianity) doubts that such a personality exists! This presents a problem. God intends for the world to be enlightened about the powers of evil, but this cannot be done by actually making Satan visible. God will, however, expose Satan to mankind by exposing Satan's works. This, then, is the crux of the matter under consideration. Satan's works are visible. He is represented in the earth by his systems of false Christianity. This is so much the case that the Bible symbolically refers to Satan's systems (such as Babylon) as Satan himself. See Vol. VI, pp. 617, 118.

What is needed now, according to the Divine arrangement, is a full display—a demonstration—of the powers of evil (churchianity) so that man might profit from the exposure. The exposure of Babylon will be a “discovery” to man. In Eph. 5:13 (margin) we read, “all things that are DISCOVERED are made manifest by the light.” Satan and his works will be ‘discovered’ by light. Thus it is that Bro. Russell interprets the chain which binds Satan (Rev. 20:1, 2) as a chain of light. Light is truth and understanding. As yet, however, the world does not have the truth and understanding regarding the true character of churchianity. The world still views churchianity as a “basically good” influence. The truth (light) is that churchianity is Satan himself; and it is this fact which God proposes to expose. Once Satan is really exposed, the nations will no longer tolerate his deceptions; they will worship God instead. This thought is beautifully explained in

Rev. 15:4 where it is stated that “all nations shall come and worship before thee, for (BECAUSE) thy judgments are made manifest!” Note here the importance of this matter: the nations cannot worship God until God’s judgment of Babylon is clear (manifest) to them. They must respect God for destroying Babylon! From this point of view we can clearly discern God’s wisdom in permitting Babylon to RISE UP. It is for the benefit and instruction of man. It is not for the instruction of the true Church. The true Church already sees and appreciates God’s judgment of the nominal heavens. The world, however, has not learned of the utter wickedness of Babylon. Even though many no longer “go to church,” is not due to a knowledge and appreciation of the evil of Babylon. If Babylon were to be threatened with taxation, or restriction, or destruction today, the world would be INDIGNANT! They yet view the system as being “basically good.” Thus we can see that the permission of evil has not as yet fulfilled its purpose, which is making manifest the true character of Satan’s visible representatives.

How will God accomplish this manifestation? We can learn the answer from a Scriptural principle: In John 14:19 we read, “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” Why did Jesus say this? What thought is behind this statement? Jesus meant that if we could discern Jesus’ true character, then we would be able better to understand God’s character which is the epitome of everything good. But how is it that we “see Jesus”? We who live today have not seen him with our eyes; but we have read the record of his life—his actions. This record does not describe Jesus’ body, or voice or mannerisms; but it does describe his actions and principles under stress. This is the principle we want to note. The actions of an individual under stress show us his true character. It is this Principle which God will utilize in the permission of evil when Babylon RISES UP.

We might apply the principle which Jesus stated in John 14:19 to Satan. We could then say: “He that hath seen Babylon hath seen Babylon’s father (Satan).” But again, we must realize the meaning behind the statement. When we see Babylon UNDER STRESS, then we see its true character.

Now it becomes clear that the deliverance of the church, the ecumenical movement, and the permission of evil all relate as one large doctrine. God will permit Babylon in its final stress to rise up. This unifying attempt will result in two things: (1.) The persecution and deliverance of the feet members of Christ, and (2.) The exposure of the true character of Satan’s evil system. This exposure will turn man against Babylon with a vehemence and they will tear her down and burn her in a rage. The permission of evil will have accomplished its desired effect! The remembrance (smoke) of her evil will rise up for ever and ever! Rev. 19:3.

## **THE BINDING OF SATAN**

We have already noticed that Satan is to be bound by exposure (truth and understanding

about his character and the nature of his earthly representatives). It seems clear, then, that Satan is not yet bound.

We have seen that Babylon is Satan personified and that it will persecute the true Church when it can. Therefore, the matter of Satan's binding, which is the same as Babylon's FULL END, is directly related to the time and manner of our deliverance. Bro. Russell links the Binding of Satan with the FULL END of Babylon very clearly. Note his words from the Question Book article which begins on page 625: "The collapse of Babylon will indicate that Satan has been quite fully bound. He is working very hard with ecclesiastical systems and false doctrines. Their collapse will mean his binding."

In this same article, we find a beautiful summary of the chronological order of events before us. In respective order, Bro. Russell predicts: (1.) The Division of the People in their sentiments. (This results in the three unclean spirits attempting to keep the division from actually causing a revolution.) (2.) The Persecution of the Church. (3.) The Fall of Babylon (also the full binding of Satan). (4.) The Great Anarchy.

The binding of Satan (the FULL END of Babylon) by exposure is so "that he should deceive the nations no more." (Rev. 20:3) Satan (and Babylon) will have lost all power of deception, and the anarchistic masses will destroy every vestige of so-called "Christianity" because they will finally see that it was an evil deception. It is then that we have the "FULL END" which Nahum prophesied. It is then that we will have the long awaited voice, "Be still, and know that I am God!" (Psalm 46:10) But today we have not yet reached that point. Babylon has not yet fallen. The nations are still deceived. Satan is not yet fully bound. Therefore, we may yet expect DECEPTIONS—"insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect." (Matt. 24:24)

The Lord has prophetically singled out Satan for binding. He has, likewise, singled out Babylon for destruction. They are almost one and the same. And because God wants Babylon as an example, for man's learning, its destruction will not be linked with the general destruction of the rest of the social order. Babylon will fall and disappear from existence before the nations and other institutions fall. This is clear from our Lord's words through the Revelator that "the kings... shall bewail her and lament for her... and the merchants... shall weep and mourn over her." (Rev. 13:9-11) Note that it is only those in positions of power (kings and merchants) who mourn her. The common people will not mourn, for it is they who shall have ruined her with a vengeance. Thus our Pastor saw far ahead that the people would be divided into two camps: the haves and the have-nots. It is the situation which will result in our deliverance. It is for this demonstration of evil before Satan's binding that God permits the RISING UP of Babylon.

On page 37 of Vol. IV Bro. Russell helps us understand the two phases of the fall of

Babylon. He explains that it falls gradually and yet has a final, sudden, and momentous plunge! But between the two points (the beginning of destruction and the point of final fall), AFFLICTION WILL RISE UP—but ONLY ONCE. Note these words from this page:

“First, however, she must attain more of her old-time prestige, which will be shared with a confederated association of her daughters. Together they will be lifted up, that together they may be violently thrown down.”

It is difficult to speak of any of these doctrines we are considering without mentioning the others. It should be becoming clear to us that: THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT, THE DELIVERANCE OF THE CHURCH, THE BINDING OF SATAN, THE FALL OF BABYLON, and THE PERMISSION OF EVIL PHILOSOPHY are all one large subject. They are so interdependent that a study of our deliverance cannot be satisfactory without the consideration of all of these factors. We have yet to mention our final consideration—SPIRITISM. To bring us to this part let us examine one final text regarding Babylon’s fall. It is Rev. 19:20. Here we find “the beast was taken and with him the false prophet that wrought miracles... These both were cast alive into a lake of fire.”

This text is another description of the FULL END of Babylon. We see from it that at its destruction Babylon is still very much “alive.” That is, it is exercising its powers. Bro. Russell expected this. He expected a last spurt of life to be put into the systems when confederated. He expected them to receive apostolic succession from the Church of England thus giving them a special sort of recognized authority. This may yet happen. But apostolic succession is only a word. What will make it work? This brings us to our final link in this discussion:

## **SPIRITISM**

At the end of our discussion under the heading of THE ECUMENICAL MOVEMENT, we asked a question: “How will Babylon, even with union, get sufficient power to accomplish these things?” We then mentioned one of two answers, saying that the second answer would be given later. Now is the appropriate time. Satan (and Babylon) will not just give up from frustration. In his last moments he will use the last, and most devilish, devices at his command for self-preservation. This will be “miracles and lying wonders! This is within Satan’s power, and it will, therefore, be within Babylon’s power. These deceptions of supernatural acts will be able to give authority to Satan’s lying apostles in a way that no mere words like “apostolic succession” could do. Yet in the world’s eyes it will prove that Babylon’s denominations are, indeed, the successors to Jesus’ apostles. Note 2 Thess. 2:8-12 as translated in Vol. II, page 359: “Whose presence is with [accompanied by or during] an energetic operation of Satan [Satanic energy and action] with all power, and signs and lying delusions, and with every iniquitous deception for those perishing; because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be

preserved. And for this reason God will send to them a deluding power, that they might believe the error; so that all not believing the truth, but taking pleasure in iniquity may be judged.” Consider in your study the accompanying paragraph to this quote.

Jesus foresaw these miracles and lying wonders and warned us that they would not represent him. His words are found in Matt. 7:22, 23: “Many will say in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.” The message is clear; Babylon’s final power will come from Satan’s only remaining way of deceiving “scientific” men who believe only that which their eyes can see. This deception will be wholesale healing, prophesying, and perhaps even pseudo-resurrection of the dead! Then where do we stand? We shall look like fools!

Note the Pastor’s words from Reprint 267: “As in type Jannes and Jambres, and the other magicians under Satanic power, opposed and hindered for a time the effect of the wonderful powers wrought through Aaron, so we anticipate that in the antitype, when the living church is used as the Lord’s mouthpiece, they will be withstood and their teachings controverted by the same spiritual wickedness—‘spiritualism’—which will seek to do the same things and partly be able.”

Note also this from Reprint 2189: “The words of inspiration give us to understand that Satan’s struggles to retain control of mankind will be specially desperate at its close—before he is ‘bound’ for the thousand years that he may deceive the nations no more. (Rev. 20:1) Here will be one of the strong delusions mentioned by the Apostle Paul, to cope with which God’s people will have need of the ‘whole armor of God’ that they may be able to stand in this evil day. We are now in the period of which he cautions us to be specially on guard against ‘seducing spirits and doctrines of devils.’ The Apostle Peter tells us to ‘beware lest ye also being led away [seduced] by the error of the wicked [one] fall from your own steadfastness.’ Hence the Lord tells us to watch and pray to escape the delusions which will be so strong as to ‘deceive if it were possible the very elect.’ Shall we, in view of these warnings, expect no ‘strong delusions,’ deceptions, from the wicked spirits? Nay; we expect far more during the next few years than even Spiritists have dreamed of!”

Satan is reserving this display of spirit power for when it is needed. But the outcome will be the opposite of his intention. The final plague (Rev. 16) is poured out ON THE AIR (the powers of spiritual control). Something will go very wrong, and Babylon will be torn apart with a great explosion. She shall have reached her full end, and all the world shall have benefited eternally because of this awe-full experience. Praise God!

## IN CONCLUSION

We have hardly begun to skim the evidence from the Pastor's writings that these monumental events are just before us. We encourage your consideration of the matter in depth. Perhaps no subject is more timely to Zion yet in the flesh.

Knowing what to expect and the sequence in which to expect it is a powerful protection against the deceptions of the adversary. But our God will not leave us in the dark concerning what he is doing. He has fed us with this meat in due season just so that we can be kept from the snares of the adversary. "The Lord said, shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do?" (Gen. 18:17) Likewise, shall he hide from His beloved sons the events which shall involve them so soon? No. God forbid! But he has not hidden these things from us. He has given us the touchstones we need for judging the events about us.

Let us then press on. There is only a little way to go yet. Our death will be our deliverance, and our deliverance is the hope of the world.

Our prayer is this, "Take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

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### COMMENT

(by Br. Ted Smith)

There are many prophecies of the Scriptures that apply to the end of the age, the time in which we are living. Our Pastor studied these prophecies and gave us valuable hints as to their meaning, their application and their relationship to the Divine Plan. We believe all this was from our present Lord.

Now our Pastor is gone, and we have his writings to consult and the events of the world to study, including history. A number of brethren are deeply interested in prophecy and are endeavoring to understand it more fully, and are trying to properly interpret the events since World War I to the present. Some of these studies naturally delve into the future concerning the end of the present order, both civil and ecclesiastical and also concerning the final experiences of the church.

The presentations that appeal to the writer most, are those that endeavor to stick closely to the facts and that are stated in a moderate manner, with no sign of dogmatism, no sign of contempt for the views of others who are likewise studying prophecy. We are in serious trouble, or the church is in serious trouble, if we are unduly stirred up by these studies and presentations. We think brethren should be extremely careful as to how they state themselves on prophecy, so they will not stir up the emotions, but rather appeal to the facts that are evident to all of us; and where there may seem to be a reasonable uncertainty, each one can then say, "I will wait and see."

We are not serving the Lord's people acceptably if we place too much emphasis upon a presentation on prophecy, especially when prophecy can be very involved. (It takes hours of time to study some of these matters thoroughly.) It seems to the writer that all should be satisfied to say, "this is how I view the matter," and then let each brother decide for himself. It is a tragedy if we create dissention over a prophetic viewpoint. (Please read the first three sentences of par. 5, on Reprint page 5374. The first two words are "This vision" and the last three words are "not by sight".)

We think Brother David Doran's manuscript is worthy of careful study.