

## “SEVEN ANGELS HAVING THE SEVEN LAST PLAGUES”

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There is a lot of interest in trying to understand what is meant by the pouring out of the seven vials of wrath as recorded in the 16th chapter of Revelation. The Book of Revelation is a fascinating book and is intended for the blessing of God’s people. It is prophecy in symbolic form and cannot be fully understood except one has an understanding of God’s plan and also a possession of the Spirit of God. Doubtless our Heavenly Father is very pleased to have us want to understand the Book of Revelation. Chapter One, Verse 3 pronounces a blessing upon those who are interested in the book. We read this verse from the Weymouth translation: “Blessed is he that readeth and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and lay to heart those things which are written therein: for the time is at hand.” We are particularly impressed with the phrase “lay to heart” for this means there are important lessons for us in the book.

Much has been said and much has been written on what causes the wrath or trouble; or to state the matter differently, what does each vial of wrath represent? Our treatment of the prophecy is going to be different, as it would seem to me that whatever means are used, the primary thought is that it is Truth that causes the trouble; and this is not merely religious Truth, but Truth along all lines. This is vividly brought to our attention in Rev. 19:15: “And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword, that with it he should smite the nations:...” So it is no mystery as to what is causing the trouble—it is the sword of Truth. It may be interesting and even fascinating to try to figure out all the ways used of the Lord to bring Truth to bear on the present order, especially the religious element. Actually it is retributive trouble: it is a reaping of a whirlwind because of sowing to the wind in the past twenty centuries. As Truth awakens the minds of men, it makes them aware of great injustices and the effect upon men is to fill their hearts with the spirit of vengeance. There is revolutionary trouble, finally ending in the fire of anarchy.

We said our treatment of the prophecy is going to be different. We shall attempt to make an interpretation of what is meant by the seven angels and what is meant by their pouring out of the seven vials of wrath. It is our intent to keep our thinking within the bounds of reason and facts; and even though we could not be successful in proving our particular interpretation as entirely correct, we hope that our reasoning will be seen to be logical and factual. We ask your patience to consider what we have to say, and ask that you do not pass judgment until you have heard us through.

We shall now start with Rev. 15:1: “And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvelous, seven angels having the seven last plagues, for in them is filled up the wrath of God.” We notice a very precise thought here: that before these angels are given vials of wrath to pour out, they have in their possession seven last plagues, and these last plagues are filled with the wrath of God. And immediately following this statement is a

vision concerning the Lord's people standing on a sea of glass mingled with fire, and they are singing that most wonderful song of Moses and the Lamb. (Rev. 15:2-4) We are blessed with an understanding of this vision: that it represents the Lord's people singing the wonderful song of Truth and we stand above the fiery troubles of earth as we watch the signs of the times with rapt attention, looking forward to the fruition of God's plan for the blessing of all the families of the earth. It is following all this that the seven angels are given vials of wrath to pour out one by one. (Rev. 15:7; 16:1 to 21)

As we mentioned—the seven angels were in possession of seven last plagues, and the plagues were filled with the wrath of God. This strongly suggests the idea of vengeance deferred or vengeance piled up for wrongs that had been committed by some in the past. If we will consider carefully Rev. 6:9 and 11, we will find that wrongs had been committed—very terrible wrongs; and these wrongs cried for vengeance. Let us read these verses: “And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: and they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.”

Now for our interpretation and we will carry it on through and see if it will work. We are going to interpret the seven angels as representing the Lord's people all down through the seven stages of the Christian church; and we are going to interpret the appearance of these seven angels in Rev. 15:1 (with “seven last plagues” “filled up with the wrath of God,”) as an extension of the loud voice of Rev. 6:9 and 11: “How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?” In other words, we interpret the symbolic vision of Rev. 15:1 as a manifestation that in the end of the age, vengeance is called for, to right the wrongs that had been committed against the Lord's people all down through the history of the Christian church in its seven stages. This is a time of the harvest of the vine of the earth when the grapes of wrath are trodden down by our Present Lord. (Rev. 14:18-20.)

Next we consider verse 1 of the next chapter—chapter 16: “And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of wrath of God upon the earth.” (Incidentally, does this make us think of Volume IV—as “a great voice out of the temple”—the church—“saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and pour out the vials of wrath of God upon the earth.” Is not the title of Volume IV very fitting—“The Day of Vengeance” or “The Battle of Armageddon.”) We interpret this as meaning that it is God's foreknowledge that is well aware of all the woes that are going to be experienced by Christendom and that these angels, as it were, are able to reveal the precise things that will take place in the end of the age. Let us note that it was John the

Revelator himself who saw in vision these vials of wrath poured out and he recorded these matters in the 16th chapter of Revelation. Each angel in turn poured out a vial of wrath and John recorded what he saw and we accept this as a revelation of what is to take place in our day—vengeance upon the nations for wrongs committed during the past twenty centuries.

Using our interpretation, let us see what each angel revealed as to what would take place in our day. So we address ourselves to the first angel, and ask, What do you prophesy as to vengeance that is to take place at the end of the age? And we find the reply in V. 2: “And the first went, and poured out his vial upon the earth; and there fell a noisome and grievous sore upon the men which had the mark of the beast, and upon them which worshipped his image.” We are greatly impressed with the interpretation of this symbolic prophecy given by our Pastor and found on Reprint page 498, under the subheading—The First Plague. This is dated June, 1883.

“These evils, called plagues or bowls of wrath, are designed to rid the world of every form of evil and wrong. The class symbolized by the land or earth, we understand to mean all people under religious restraint, of whatever name or order. *Land* or *earth* as a symbol represents settled organized religious society, as *sea* represents the restless, irreligious unsettled masses of humanity. Those having the *mark* (characteristics) of *the beast* (Papacy) and those worshipping his *image* (Protestantism), as hitherto shown, are the great mass of non-overcoming and nominal Christians.

“It is upon this class that the trouble first comes. While Roman Catholics constitute an important proportion of this *earth* class, yet the trouble does not affect them at first, as shown from the fact that the ulcer is not upon those *worshipping* the BEAST, but on those *worshipping* the IMAGE and having the marks or characteristics of the *Beast* (Papacy), which indicates clearly the various shades and degrees of *Protestantism*.

“Their trouble is compared to an *ulcer*—‘an evil and malignant ulcer.’ To appreciate the symbol let us consider the literal: An ulcer is a *running sore*; it is an evidence of *constitutional disorder*, and very painful. A CANCER in its worst stages becomes a *malignant ulcer*. An ulcer is a *cankerous* sore, that is, one which *eats, corrupts, and destroys*. Now carry the thought—what an ulcer or bad cancer is to a man will illustrate the character of the consuming, life-draining trouble coming upon the systems constituting Protestantism, so-called, which ultimately will destroy it. It arises from within itself; it is a constitutional disorder, caused by the errors inherited and retained from the ‘*Mother* of harlots and abominations.’ There is no cure for this evil—the blood is poisoned, it has permeated the entire body, and death must ensue.

“There was a time—in the days of Luther and the Reformation when the daughters might have been radically healed, but her false ministers ‘healed the hurt of the daughter of My

people slightly, saying Peace, peace; when there is no peace.’ (Jer. 8:11) Now there is no balm in Gilead, there is no physician there—therefore she is not healed. Her King is not in her, she is spewed out of His mouth. (Jer. 1:22, Young’s Trans. See also Rev. 3:16 and 18:23.) There is no remedy, these systems must die. The disorder comes from within. Already these disorders have broken out, and though the canker is carefully concealed, the bad odor and distress are noticeable.” (Reprint page 498)

We turn now to V. 3 and ask the second angel, What do you have to tell us in the way of vengeance upon Christendom for past misdeeds? And the second angel answers as follows: “And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea; and it became as the blood of a dead man: and every living soul died in the sea.” Again we turn to the Pastor for his interesting interpretation, and this is found on Reprint page 498 under the subheading—The Second Plague.

“Bear in mind that the sea symbolizes the irreligious masses of mankind—those not under religious restraint. To appreciate the trouble upon this class we must study the symbol. Blood in a living creature is full of vitality, but the blood of a dead person is the very reverse. After death, the blood rapidly begins to separate into two parts—a watery liquid called *serum* and a more solid substance termed *clot*. As soon as this separation has been accomplished the CLOT *begins to PUTREFY* or corrupt. Applying this, we understand it to teach that a great and thorough disintegration will occur in this large class of humanity, after which, one element will rapidly corrupt and putrefy. Among the irreligious masses have been numbered such noble specimens of humanity as Stephen Girard, Geo. Peabody, and Peter Cooper, besides many less notable, honestly skeptical souls. The result of the commingling of such with the masses imparted a life principle and vitality. But reading this plague, we realize that a *separation* of these two elements is due, the result of which will be decay and death to every principle of morality and virtue in this class—when every *living thing* (active element of virtue and benevolence) in this sea class will perish. In other words, remove the element which advises *prudence*, morality, and right-doing, from the counsels of the restless masses—from the Labor Leagues and other associations, and let the lower element control itself, and the result would quickly be the destruction of life, property, laws, and peace—a grand reign of anarchy in the name of *communism*.

“From other Scriptures we are taught to expect just such an uprising—which eventually shall overthrow the kingdoms of earth. But the beginning of this is all we must look for now—the separation of the *serum* from the *clot*—of the vital from the corrupting element. This seems to be now in progress. Men of noble minds who realized the oppression of the masses by money and governments and desired to assist in their amelioration, are forced to withdraw because of the spirit of recklessness which pervades the masses, leading to assassinations, in other countries and threats of the same in this land. In England, Mr. Gladstone; Mr. Parnell and others, have attempted to provide some

relief for Irish oppression but must disown all fellowship and sympathy with the dynamite and assassination policy of hot-headed leaders among the masses.

“But we should remember that the full results of this evil or plague will not be felt for many years; it has its beginning only now. It is well also to remember that one plague or evil goes on increasingly, after a second and third, etc., are added, until in the end the entire seven forms of evil will be operating simultaneously.” (Reprint page 498)

We address ourselves to the third angel: You also have a record of evil that is to be inflicted upon Christendom—how will your vial of wrath affect mankind? And we find the answer in Verses 4 to 7: “And the third angel poured out his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters; and they became blood. And I heard the angel of the waters say, Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, because you hast judged thus. For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets, and thou hast given them blood to drink; for they are worthy. And I heard the altar say, Even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.” Our Pastor’s interpretation of this vision is found on Reprint page 499 under the subheading of—The Third Plague.

“This third element of trouble results from the turning of the rivers and fountains of water into blood. Running waters symbolize truth. The *river channels* through which water (truth) has flowed, symbolize the various sects or denominations. The fountains symbolize the founders and schools of these various systems—the places or men in whom these channels had their start or beginning.

“For a long time, water—truly very muddy in some, but nevertheless a mixture of water—has flowed in these various systems, of which many have partaken and have been refreshed. But a change comes, and that which once refreshed, will (gradually) become loathsome as blood. (Blood has been advised as a medical remedy, but in such cases it is taken immediately on being drawn from the animal, else it would be poisonous for its change is rapid—hence a river of blood could symbolize only loathsomeness and death.)

“This we understand to be a picture of a change rapidly taking place in religious *channels*—their creeds, though containing as much truth and error as ever, they are coming to regard differently. General enlightenment is greater, and what was once received without question, is now becoming loathsome and death-like. As in a similar plague (literally) upon Egypt, the people digged wells for water because they could no longer drink of the bloody rivers, so here—independent thinkers are *digging* for themselves, for purer waters than the regular channels afford. Truly this turning of the waters of *their* channels into blood, is among the causes of anxiety and great annoyance to the *sectarian*, but only the few yet realize this trouble.

“The angel of the waters—or the *messenger of the REAL truth*—is able to see in this a

righteous judgment of God against those systems, as expressed in Vs. 5 and 6. The direct cause of this trouble is mentioned—they had poured out the blood of the saints and prophets. Is it inquired in what sense this was done? We answer that blood in a person is life, and to pour it out is to waste it. The life of the saints is truth—God’s Word—as it is written: ‘The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life,’ and ‘The testimony of Jesus is the spirit (vitality, life) of prophecy.’ Hence to have wasted the life-principle of saints and prophets, would be to have wasted the words and testimony of Jesus. This they did by neglecting his word, and receiving instead the traditions of men, which errors have corrupted and defiled the truths they possess to such an extent that the thinking ones are fast coming to that condition where they cannot drink from those channels.

“In these very *channels*, or systems, where the teaching of Satan has been preserved, viz.: that man has an existence which can never cease, and hence must *continue* forever (Gen. 3:4), nine-tenths of them in misery, in these same channels, the teachings of the Prophets, that the wages of sin is death, but that God has provided for ‘times of restitution of all things, spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began’ (Acts 3:21) is neglected, cast aside, WASTED. And hence it is that they will get blood to drink shortly. The creeds of these systems being so mixed with error by the retaining of Satan’s lie and the rejection of the Lord’s testimony, both through the words and example of prophets and saints, they will soon come to recognize them as too obnoxious and nauseating to be palatable to either themselves or the world.

“‘*And I heard the ALTAR saying, Yes, O Lord God, the omnipotent, true and righteous are thy JUDGMENTS.*’ V. 7. The *altar* represents the class of prophets and saints whose testimonies for truth were sealed with their lives, the testimony of whose lives had been *wasted*. These speak not audibly, but in that figurative way in which Abel’s blood is said to have cried out. The testimony of these condemns the present systems as worthy of having this trouble or plague; because of their previous disregard of truth. While *nominal* Church systems have become great and popular in worldly favor, both in the days of the prophets and ever since, in the days of the saints, yet now as ever, this success and popularity has been the result of an alliance with the world and a participation of its spirit. Since, as well as in the days of the prophets, to live separate from the world and to boldly advocate *the truth* in opposition to the worldly mixture of error, has cost persecution and either liberal or symbolic beheading—or cutting off. The testimony of every *sacrifice* for truth acceptable to God is here represented as condemning the course of these systems and justifying the retribution represented in this third plague—‘FOR THEY ARE WORTHY.’” (Reprint page 499)

Next we turn to the testimony of the fourth angel—what he has to reveal to us of God’s foreknowledge of wrath upon the nations. This is found in verses 8 and 9: “And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun; and power was given unto him to scorch

men with fire. And men were scorched with great heat, and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues: and they repented not to give him glory.” The interpretation of this thrilling prophecy is found on Reprint page 499, under the subheading of—The Fourth Plague.

“Here the misery of some is caused by an increase of *sunlight*. As the *moon* symbolized ‘THE LAW,’ so the *sun* symbolizes the GOSPEL LIGHT. The former was but a shadow or reflection of the latter, and the relationship of the two to the Church (the woman) is beautifully symbolized in Rev. 12:1. The increase of the sunlight means an increased brilliancy of Gospel light and knowledge.

“This increase of *light* is to affect *all* classes, as is indicated by its not being limited to a certain class as are the other plagues are limited; to ‘sea,’ ‘land,’ ‘rivers,’ etc. It comes upon men—mankind in general and upon *representative leaders* of men, in particular. It is the increase of light—knowledge—which is causing *independence* of thought and action among all classes of society. It causes differences between kings and subjects, between capital and labor, between clergy and laity; the increasing light is doing it all. It is *Gospel* light too; for no matter how Infidels may scoff at the Bible and affect to have superior liberty to that which it teaches, it nevertheless remains a fact, that the grandest liberty is that where Christ makes free; and the essence of Gospel light is in the Master’s words, ‘Ye shall know the TRUTH and the truth shall make you free.’ It is truth that is spreading—truth on every subject: *truth* relative to the rights and authority of kings; truth relative to the rights both of capital and labor; truth relative to the claimed superiority and lordship of a self-elevated class termed the clergy.

“The conflict is between truth and superstition—light and darkness; it will be a severe struggle, but TRUTH is mighty and shall prevail; debasing the proud and exalting the humble. Those whose deeds are evil—who are in the wrong,—hate the light, is the Master’s testimony. It would curtail their power and lower their position to elevate all others to equality. These are *scorched* or troubled by the increase of light, and none more so than religious lords, for it is the increase of light which doubtless helps to turn the waters of their cherished channels into blood—corruption—making their doctrines and creeds, which emanated from fountains of the sixteenth century, distasteful and obnoxious.

“After preaching for years doctrines which *called* God just and loving, but proved him to be worse than the gods of the heathen—after having defended for years their sectarian *isms*, some of which teach that God has foreordained *eternal misery* as the lot of the great mass of humanity and their offspring—thus teaching, that ‘there are infants in hell not a span long,’ etc.—no wonder that such who worship and honor their *sect* and such teachings, more than they do God and His Word, would feel scorched and annoyed with the great light and heat of truth, as it is now *beginning* to shine out and reach them.

“‘And they *blasphemed the name of that God.*’ Blasphemy, as the word is used in Scripture, does not signify profane swearing, but rather a misstatement of character. For instance Jesus was accused of ‘blasphemy’ because he said he was the Son of God (John 10:33). These zealous sectarians become so angry against present unfoldings of truth which prove the Love and Mercy of God as well as his Justice, that they go to the very extreme of opposition and grossly misstate God’s character and often wrest his Word from its true import to sustain their theories.

“This which is a *plague* to others, is a wondrous boon to those who are out of Babylon and humbly enjoying the leading of God’s Spirit from the one fountain direct—the Word of God. This increase of Gospel light, and consequent increased light thrown upon the Law shadows—showing the true teachings of the Tabernacle and its services and sacrifices, are pointedly foretold in symbol by the prophet (Isa. 30:26) who says: ‘The light of the Moon shall be as the light of the Sun, and the light of the Sun shall be *sevenfold*, as the light of seven days, in the day that the Lord bindeth up the breach of His *people*, and healeth the stroke of *their* wound.’ It is the same day (period) in which He assembles the *outcasts*, and makes up His *jewels.*” (Reprint page 499)

Angel Five, what do you reveal to us in the way of vengeance? The 10th and 11th verses have this to say: “And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast; and his kingdom was full of darkness; and they gnawed their tongues for pain, and blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and repented not.” We turn to the interpretation of this vision found on Reprint page 509 under the subheading—The Fifth Plague.

“This pictures to us trouble coming upon *Papacy* (the Beast); not so much upon the masses of Romanists as upon those in authority, its rulers—the *throne* power—their clergy. Papacy’s walls are higher, its claims are stronger, and its *claims* to divine authority and infallibility of longer standing than those of the Protestant system—her daughters; therefore she the longer escapes the increasing light of this ‘Day of the Lord,’ and hence the longer escapes the trouble consequent to her errors.

“But she shall not escape the trouble. It comes on the throne or ruling class, and their *kingdom* is filled with darkness—uncertainty—absence of former unity and harmony, and in their trouble the pain will be increased by tongue-biting. The tongues of Papacy are its decrees and utterances, past and future. To bite, then, in pain, implies *contradiction* and *denial* of former utterances. Whether this signifies a contradiction and reversal of previous utterances of the Papal hierarchy, or whether it means controversy and differences between the living rulers of the Church, we may not decide, but it will probably include both of these difficulties, and in their attempt to justify their contradictory teachings, God’s character will be further dishonored, misrepresented, or

blasphemed.

“As an illustration of this symbol, ‘biting their tongues,’ we note Papacy’s present humiliating concessions and contradiction of her former teachings, in her present recognition of the Protestant governments of Europe, which Papacy not only did not create, but actually *cursed*, and encouraged her faithful to use every means to destroy. This biting is occasioned by the pain and humbled condition in which Papacy finds herself. She has lost all *temporal* power, and to maintain long her spiritual influence, feels that she must not antagonize the governments which she can no longer claim the right to control. When we remember that it was this same Papal system which in its prosperity had ‘a mouth speaking *great* things’ (Dan. 7:8-25; Rev. 13:5), making boastful claims, it should not surprise us that God should ordain as part of its reward that it should *eat its own words*.” (Reprint page 509.)

The Sixth Angel has quite a lot to reveal to us, and this prophecy is found in Vs. 12 to 16: “And the sixth angel poured out his vial upon the great river Euphrates; and the water thereof was dried up, that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared. 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. Behold I come as a thief, Blessed is he that watcheth, and keepeth his garments, lest he walk naked, and they see his shame. and he gathered them together into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon.” The interpretation of the Pastor is found on Reprint page 509, starting at the bottom of the second column.

“Literal Babylon was built upon the river Euphrates. Its wealth, supplies and sustenance came large from this source. It had immense walls and strong gates over the river. Within the city, in bondage, were Israelites, God’s covenant people, and to overthrow Babylon and deliver these, God appointed Cyrus the Median General. (Isa. 45:1-5; Dan. 5:30, 31) He, coming to this strong city, did not attack it directly, but, by digging another channel for the waters of the river, he dried up the old channel, through which he marched his army under the gates and captured the city.

“That this historic fact is used as the basis of a *symbol* in Revelation, none can question. Babylon and her fall are frequently mentioned and here the drying up of the Euphrates adds to the correspondence. While ‘*Babylon*’ is used as a general name for the entire nominal Church, it is used and is specially applicable to that portion of it called ‘*the mother of HARLOTS*.’

“This sixth plague, or form of evil, is upon Babylon, the *mother*, and while other systems have channels, or *rivers*, her system is built upon the ‘*GREAT RIVER*.’ ‘And in her

forehead was the name written BABYLON THE GREAT, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.’ (Rev. 17:5) Following the literal, applying it to the symbol, we reason that the waters of the great river represent the people who, by their influence and money, *support* Papacy—from which Babylon the *great* draws her revenues. And to this agrees the explanation by the angel: ‘The waters which thou sawest where the harlot sitteth are peoples and multitudes and nations and tongues.’ (Rev. 17:15.)

“The millions of Papacy’s subjects are of every tongue and clime, and this symbol shows that a disaffection is to spring up between the subjects and the *church authorities* which will turn aside her *support* and ‘dry up’ her revenues, and thus speedily lead to Babylon’s complete destruction. ‘The drying up’ will probably require years for its accomplishment.

“The direct cause of the drying will be the relationship existing between Papacy and the kingdoms of earth. Papacy, under the claim it was Christ’s vicegerent—His representative—in the days of her prosperity claimed the right to appoint the kings of earth, and did so; and subjects had a *right TO REBEL* against any government or king not thus recognized by Papacy. Since she has lost her power over the kingdoms of earth, she does not press this old claim, but would rather conciliate all the kingdoms; both those which she appointed and those appointed and sanctioned by other daughter churches. In this she is arraying herself directly on the side of these kingdoms, and in opposition to the increasing desire and effort of the people for liberty.

“Therefore, when the present tendencies have produced a closer affiliation of religion and State than has existed for some time, it will result in leading the masses to throw off the yoke of the Church as well as the State, since both will be leagued against their cherished ideas of liberty and equality. The support of the people—the waters of the Euphrates—being thus withdrawn, the *Babylon Church* organization will become weak and helpless, by reason of the drying up of the waters from its channels.

“A hint in this direction is furnished in the history of the past month. Though the rulership of Great Britain is not of Papacy’s appointment, and in fact was created in violation of her laws and claims, yet the Pope has issued a ‘bull’ or *edict* to its faithful in Ireland commanding both priests and people to desist from hostility toward the laws and government of England. Not to speak of the merits of the question, this action is certainly *contrary* to the previous claims and theories of this Church; and from their words, it is evident that some of the Irish people are not slow to see this. At a public meeting held to consider the Pope’s edict, a famous orator among them (Charles O’Brien) said, ‘The Irish people will neither be ruled by Rome nor Westminster.’ [The *Protestant* Irish are mostly Presbyterian, ruled by the principles of the ‘*Westminster* Confession of Faith.’] And among the masses it was freely proposed to ‘Boycott the Pope,’ by refusing to pay ‘Peter’s pence’ (a regular collection among Romanists, the world over, for the

support of the Pope). Does not this look like a beginning of the turning away or drying up of one of the tributaries of that ‘*great river*’? As surely as God has given the symbol, so surely will it be fulfilled, and even now it hasteth greatly.

“The ‘drying up’ is ‘to prepare the way of the kings from the Sun rising.’ These kings we understand to be the saints—those who, with Christ, will be ‘kings and priests’ to reign over the earth. (Rev. 10:5) They come, not to the Sun-rising, but *from* the Sun-rising. They come *bringing light* with them. This is a beautiful symbol of how ‘the righteous shall shine forth as the Sun in the kingdom of their Father.’ They bring with them light, liberty and joy to the groaning creation, for ‘The Sun of *Righteousness* shall arise with *healing* in his wings.’ The object of all these changes is to prepare mankind for the rule of righteousness—the kingdom *really* of God’s appointment which is to take the place of these which Anti-Christ has attempted to authorize.

“‘*And I saw out of the MOUTH of the DRAGON, and out of the MOUTH of the BEAST, and out of the MOUTH of the FALSE PROPHET, three impure spirits like frogs*’ (V. 13). The DRAGON, as before explained, symbolizes *civil* government (especially that which once constituted civil Rome). The BEAST still and always, means Papacy. The FALSE PROPHET is a new symbol, and takes the place of both the ‘two-horned beast’ and ‘the image of the beast,’ and, we believe, is a still more comprehensive symbol, representing *all* systems teaching error—those called ‘orthodox’ as well as many considered heterodox. These three classes will all give forth one kind of teaching, called symbolically unclean spirits (impure, erroneous teaching), like *frogs*.

“This harmonious teaching in which these can all unite, we believe to be the dogmas of ‘the divine right of kings,’ the ‘authority of the clergy,’ and the claim that mankind is bound to submit to these and be controlled by them. Many of these —kings and clergy—and many of those who will recognize their claims, will doubtless be *honest*, but will be thus in opposition to God, because they know not that they are in the hour of his judgment and that the time for the displacement of these Anti-Christ and the governments of *their* appointment has come. It is a blessed fact that these beastly governments will eventually give place to the kingdom of God; that the time of the Gentiles *will* END by being FULL-filled; and while this is now due to be understood and appreciated by the saints—those entirely consecrated to God’s word and will—yet ‘none of the wicked shall understand’: hence they will be found fighting against God and his arrangements.

“*Frogs* have a very wise look, large mouths, are much puffed up, and utter only croakings. These doctrines, called spirits in symbol, which are to be common to these three classes frog-like—much puffed up—are proclaimed with great swelling words, with a show of superior wisdom—wise look—and with much croaking.

“In brief, this indicates that when these systems give forth these unclean spirits or doctrines of the divine right of kings and clergy and submission of the people as to God, it will be with boastfulness, an attempt to overawe with dignity, superior wisdom and ability, and with continual allusion to the disasters which must attend any change of present arrangements. This croaking, already beginning, as this darkness of trouble draws on, will increase with it. It will be heard from every mouthpiece, large and small, religious and political, officers and press. In fear they will be uttering warnings and threats, and few will be the independents to plead the cause of *right*, or to show that the time for the reign of righteousness has come, and hence the conflict.

“These are the ‘spirits of demons, working signs,’ *i.e.* doctrines of devils—the devils’ theory relative to *present* evil governments, indirectly of Satan’s appointment, through his agencies. These doctrines show *signs* in proof of their authority. They will give evidences and seemingly plausible reasons for the rights of kings and clergy; chief among these will doubtless be God’s appointment of kings and priests over fleshly Israel—which, however, was typical of the church and not of worldly systems (1 Peter 2:9).

“These unclean spirits, erroneous doctrines, ‘go forth to the kings of the whole habitable earth, to gather them together for the war (*conflict* between right and wrong) of the great day of the omnipotent God.’ (V. 14) The kings of the whole world may properly be supposed, in symbol, to include not only *kings*, but princes, generals, also those termed financial kings and merchant princes, and the GREAT ONES among religious teachers. These classes influence and encourage each other with this *impure doctrine* of Satan—hence they gather or unite them all together on the one side of the conflict already drawing nigh. Were it not for this *harmony* and unity inspired by this teaching, each of these classes of kings and rulers would have felt the weakness and erroneousness of their claims, and truth might have prevailed more easily against them; but in their union they find strength and hope for success in retaining their hold upon the people.

“‘*And THEY gathered them together into THAT PLACE which is called in Hebrew ARMAGEDDON*’ (V. 16). *Armageddon means mount of DESTRUCTION*; and this describes what will be the result of this doctrine. It will unite all these systems in one cause as against the masses of the people and their liberties, and the result will be the total destruction of all those erroneous systems of Church and State. They shall fall.

“The fifteenth verse is abruptly thrown in as a parenthesis. It reads literally thus: ‘*Lo, I come AS A THIEF! Blessed the one WATCHING and keeping himself; so that not naked HE may walk, and they see the shame of HIM.*’ This is very significant. It declares that at the time when this evil doctrine will be *apparently* uniting all upon the side of law and order—upon the side of kings and clergy—our Lord will then be PRESENT, but secretly and unknown except to the *watching ones*. Only those who are truly his and *watching* in the light of his Word will not be deceived by this impure teaching, but will realize his

*presence* and the necessity of the foretold fall of all these things, because the rightful king *is* present to remove these out of the way of his kingdom. The position of this declaration—thrown in disconnectedly—is significant. It teaches that our Lord will be present before the impure teaching *begins* to GATHER them to their destruction.” (Reprint page 510.)

The Seventh Angel’s prophetic message is found in Vs. 17 to 21. V. 17 reads as follows: “And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air; and there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, saying, It is done.” If this prophecy is concerning vengeance that affects the air, and the phrase “It is done” is used, would this not suggest that, as Satan is the prince of the power of air—his kingdom would be completely disorganized and displaced by the kingdom of God? Let us note what the prophecy has to say and note the finality of it all: “And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings; and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great. And the great city was divided into three parts, and the cities of the nations fell: and great Babylon came in remembrance before God, to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath.” Now let us note the 20th verse in particular: “And every island fled away, the mountains were not found.” That is pretty final isn’t it? V. 21: “And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven, every stone about the weight of a talent: and men blasphemed God because of the plague of hail; for the plague thereof was exceeding great.” Are we not witnessing a tremendous storm of hail today?—hard distressing truths that are crushing everything that is evil and unjust? The Pastor’s interpretation is found on Reprint page 511, under the subheading of—The Seventh Plague. We keep in mind that our Pastor’s interpretations of these visions were written very early in his ministry (in June and July, 1883) and we can supplement what he has written by studying carefully his later writings, such as the 1912 Foreword of Volume IV, the 1916 Forewords of the Volumes, and of course the very latest articles found in the Reprints. A complete review of all this material would be too lengthy for this present discourse.

“‘*And the seventh poured out his bowl on the AIR; and there came forth a LOUD VOICE from the TEMPLE OF GOD [Sinaitic MS.] saying, IT IS DONE.*’” Seven is often used as the symbol of *completeness*; so this seventh plague completes the trouble coming, and will result in the complete unveiling of Satan’s deceptions and the binding or destruction of his power and influence. The result of this trouble brings conviction to some. This is shown by the great voice from the Temple, saying, ‘*It HAS been done!*’ (Literal translation) When last we saw the temple, or the nominal church, it was filling with *smoke* and casting out the faithful messengers of truth, saying ‘Go your ways; pour out the plagues; do all you can’ (Rev. 15:8; 16:1), boastfully relying on internal strength. But now, when the seventh has been poured out, we hear this nominal temple, saying, ‘*It has been done*’; we are now convinced of the truths uttered by the faithful messengers whom, in our ignorance and pride, we cast out from us: Who told us that we were in darkness

and great distress was coming upon us, and that our *systems*, which we so fondly cherished, were to crumble into dust. It has been done even as they declared; Babylon is utterly destroyed; as a great millstone cast into the sea, she shall rise no more.

“This *temple* class, which finally recognizes God’s dealings when these systems are entirely destroyed, is the same which we have found elsewhere mentioned in Scripture, and which we have designated the *second company*, who, though losing the prize promised to overcomers of the Beast, etc. (Rev. 20:4), are ‘saved so as by *fire* [these severe judgments] in the day of the Lord Jesus.’ This blessed result upon this second company gives us an intense interest in and longing for the *destruction* of the enslaving systems mentioned in succeeding verses as the result of this seventh trouble.

“‘And there were lightnings and thunders and voices.’ This describes the general effect on mankind; lightnings signifies diffusion of *knowledge*. ‘His lightnings *enlightened* the world’ (Psa. 97:4). Voices signify proclamations and general discussion of subjects by those being enlightened. Thunderings signify tumults accompanying the increased enlightenment.

“‘*And there was a great EARTH-QUAKE; such as was not since a man was on THE EARTH, SUCH AN EARTHQUAKE—so great. And the GREAT CITY became three parts, and the city [Sinaitic reading] of the nations fell down*’ (V. 18).

“An earthquake would symbolize a *revolution*, and here brings to our attention the greatest revolution which ever has or ever will take place on earth. This is the great revolution mentioned by the Prophet, in which every mountain and hill (the high ones) should be brought low, and the valleys (humble ones) be exalted, bringing all humanity to a common level as a preparation for the righteous reign of the Lord’s Anointed. Each of the previous plagues has tended toward this end, and this last results in the utter overthrow of the triple alliance or association between the Beast (Papacy), the False Prophet (other religious systems teaching error), and the Dragon (civil power), shown under the sixth plague.

“The *Great City* here evidently represents these united three elements which attempted in union to rule over or control the world. This union and power will continue for awhile, but, as here shown, they will again separate—be divided into three parts. Seeing that their alliance and mutual support has failed to control and keep subject the restless and turbulent masses, each will attempt to adopt an individual policy in their effort to adjust and settle society: but their efforts will be fruitless, and will only hasten the crisis of the hour; as a consequence, we read, ‘The city of the nations fell down.’ [Comment: there are *three* divisions of society today —the far right, the far left and the democracies in between—all three are attempting to rule and guide. Question: is this significant?]

“But though the kingdoms shall fall, the religious element of the union shall not escape. Under the name of *Babylon* they all seem to be included (as elsewhere), saying, ‘Babylon the great was remembered before God, to have given her the cup of the wine of the indignation of the wrath’ (V. 19). This signifies that the *fiercest* of the trouble—the wine or extract of the wrath—will be upon the Babylon systems more than upon the political division.

“‘*And every ISLAND fled and no MOUNTAINS WERE FOUND.*’ (V. 20) (Islands seem to symbolize Republican governments—organizations of people slightly above the ‘*sea*’ level.) This would be the natural result of the overthrow of monarchies or kingdoms, symbolically called *mountains*, as indicated in Psa. 97:5. ‘The hills [literal, mountains] *melted* and flowed down like wax at the PRESENCE OF THE LORD, at the presence of the Lord of the whole earth. ‘This is a grandly expressive illustration of the passing away of earth’s dominion. In this day of the Lord—the day of His presence, the day of the establishment of his kingdom in the earth—some of the mountains (kingdoms) will melt, or gradually come down to the level of the people, by the fire and great heat, caused by increase of truth and knowledge, while others remaining firm will be overwhelmed—by the ‘*sea*’—in revolutions. This last form is described in Psalm 46, which seems to give a complete picture of this seventh plague. It reads thus: ‘God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble; therefore will we not fear though the earth [society] be removed, and though the mountains [*kingdoms*] be carried into the midst of the sea [overthrown by the *ungovernable masses*]: Though the waters thereof roar and be troubled [*in great commotion*], though the mountains shake with the *swelling* thereof.’

“While the kingdoms [*mountains*] shall give place to republics, [*islands*] so the islands in due time shall also *flee away*, as we find it here recorded. (Rev. 16:20) That is, the spirit of liberty will overleap all bounds and order, and end in *anarchy*. But notice that when the republics are swept away, it will be *after* kingdoms have all been overturned, as indicated by the expression—‘NO mountains were found.’

“It is in a similar manner that the Master speaks of the ‘sea and waves roaring’ as the beginning of trouble and cause of fear. And Peter refers to this time of trouble, which shall burn as an oven, as the time when the *earth* and all earthly elements shall be consumed and give place to a new earth (society) and new heavens (government), then there shall be no more sea (people not religiously restrained).

“‘*And a great HAIL, as if weighing a talent, comes down from heaven on men; and men blasphemed God on account of the plague of hail, because the plague of it is exceedingly great.*’ (V. 21.) Hail is solidified water. If water or rain, causing fruitfulness and refreshing to earth, be a symbol of truth, refreshing and causing gracious fruits in humanity, then hail must signify truth delivered in such a way as to be dangerously *destructive* to things with which it comes in conflict. These will be heavy—a talent each

—about the weight of a man—sufficient to break down everything before it. This recalls the symbolic use of this same word by Isaiah ‘And the hail shall sweep away the *refuge* of *lies* and the waters [truth] shall overflow the hiding place.’ (Isa. 28:17). Untruth—error—falsity, is the bane of the world, and the time of trouble would be incomplete, and the world still unprepared for the reign of righteousness, were it not for this hail. Recalling a similar plague which came literally upon Egypt, we find that it injured only those Egyptians who had not respect to the words of Jehovah (See Exod. 9:19-21); and we may safely reckon the same of this symbolic hail; it will smite down and subdue only those who are in opposition to it, and that for *their* good.

“We need not suppose that this hail comes last, for in giving an account, something must be mentioned last if all occurred simultaneously. These various things described will occur, or be in process at once—voices, thunderings, hail and lightning among the people, causing the earthquake, fall of Babylon, and mountains, etc. This is more than hinted at, in the fact that these *same events*, mentioned under the seventh seal and seventh trumpet, are mentioned indiscriminately as one event.

“The hail, be it remembered, ‘*comes down from heaven*’; heaven, as already defined, symbolizes *spiritual powers*, but not any longer *corrupt* and vitiated spiritual powers, for these have passed away. Babylon has been cast as a millstone into the ‘sea’ to rise no more. This is the new ‘heavens’ which shall gradually take the place of the *old*, which is to ‘pass away with a great noise’ or tumult—voices, thunderings, etc. Yes, thank God, he that in—V. 15 announces his presence as a thief will have not only broken down the kingdoms of the present, but will also have set up that kingdom for which our Lord taught us to pray: Thy kingdom come; thy will be done on earth as in heaven. “Sing unto the Lord, O ye saints of his, and give thanks at the remembrance of his holiness; for his anger endureth but a moment; in his favor is life; weeping may endure for a night but joy cometh in the morning.’ (Psa. 30:4, 5).

“Blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen and Amen.” (Reprint page 511)

We can test the possible correctness of our interpretation of the identity of the seven angels by considering Rev. 17:1; 17:7 and 21:9. Rev. 17:1 reads as follows: “And there came one of the seven angels which had the seven vials, and talked with me, saying unto me, Come hither; I will shew unto thee the judgment of the great whore that sitteth upon many waters.” Here is how we handle our interpretation and the verse just quoted: If the seventh angel represents the Lord’s people of the seventh stage of the Christian church, is it not true that from the 7th stage we do have an explanation or outline of the “judgment of the great whore, that sitteth upon many waters?” The *individual* who gave us this explanation and outline was none other than the Pastor himself—and he was from the 7th stage.

And take the 7th verse: “And the angel said unto me, Wherefore didst thou marvel? I will tell thee the mystery of the woman, and of the beast that carrieth her, which hath the seven heads and ten horns.” Would not the same be true—did not the Pastor, who belonged to the 7th stage of the church make clear to us the identity of the woman and the beast, the seven heads and the ten horns? This was a voice from the 7th stage of the church.

We think the same principle is true of Rev. 21:9: “And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb’s wife.” Which angel could this be? Would it not be the 7th Angel, the final stage of the Christian church; and did not we hear the Pastor giving us a full explanation concerning the bride, the Lamb’s wife? This, again, was a voice from the 7th stage of the church. However, each one must make his own decision, and no attempt to urge a particular interpretation of a Revelation vision would be proper, and none is attempted now.