

Study for the Month June 2012

THE THYATIRA STAGE OF THE CHURCH *The Church in the Dark Ages, or the Age of Adversity.*

Time Period: 538 A.D. to 1978 A.D. Total of 1260 Years

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And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write: These things says the Son of God who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: I know your works, love, service, faith and your patience; and as your works, the last are more than the first. Rev. 2: 18, 19 (see verses 20-29)

Thomas Jefferson, author of the Declaration of Independence, penned these lines in 1916: "If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be." Dr. Benjamin Franklin, sage of the Continental Congress, one with Jefferson in thought on this vital subject, wrote in the *Historical Review of Pennsylvania*: "They that can give up essential liberty for temporary safety deserve neither."

How true were the deep and Spirit-guided concerns of the founding fathers. The Christian world-at-large, America in particular, is rapidly losing their civil liberties--the last step to finally losing the most fundamental and precious liberty God gave to man--the freedom to worship according to the dictates of conscience, and yet few realize what is happening and where all this will end up. They will wake too late to escape the snare because they failed to keep God first and last in their goals and aspirations.

This particular aspect of the church during the Thyatira stage was designed by the Faithful and True Witness, the Author and Finisher of our faith, to be a textbook to educate the mind of anyone desirous of knowing the truth as to why the two powers of the church and state should forever remain separate. Both were ordained of God to serve specific yet separate and independent needs of and welfare of human society without a single instance of the need to overlap. They belong to entirely different realms.

Before, and particularly after this period of 1,260 years beginning in 538 and ending in 1798 A.D., known in history as the true Dark Ages, the principles that underwrote the framing of the U.S. Constitution, particularly the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights, were already expressed and prophesied in the two major prophetic books of the Bible, Daniel and Revelation, the latter being the supplement of the former.

Brief Historical Background

While it may be true that Thyatira was less notable than the other six cities, the message and the period of church history it represents is by *no* means insignificant! It is a strange and suspicious assessment that "Thyatira played no significant part in the *later history* of the church," according to *Halley's Bible Handbook*, (Zondervan), a handbook of mainstream theologians, ministers and Bible students. It says (emphasis mine):

“Thyatira was perhaps the least illustrious of the seven cities of Revelation. *Its history was uneventful, and it is scarcely mentioned by ancient writers.* Coinage suggests that, lying as it did on a great highway linking two river valleys, Thyatira was garrison town for many centuries. The city was a center of commerce, and the records preserve references to more trade guilds than those listed for any other Asian city, Lydia, whom Paul met in Philippi, was a Thyatiran seller of ‘turkey red,’ a purple dye for which Thyatira was famous (Acts 6:14). Necessity for guild membership in a trading community must have strengthened the temptation to compromise. Thus it is appropriate to find a woman, named or (nicknamed?) after Jezebel, the princess who by marrying Ahab sealed his trading partnership which the Phoenicians, leading a party of compromise in the Thyatiran church (Revelation 2: 20-21). *Thyatira played no significant part in the later history of the church.*” – p. 921.

How, one may ask, can highly-respected Bible scholars whose works are cited as official references, be so off-base regarding true church history and Bible prophecy? The answer may be partially found in the following references (note the dates):--

“Revising Books of Reference. The next step in the papal plan [to make America Catholic] was to revise all books of reference, such as encyclopedias, dictionaries, and larger historical works, so as to mold the minds of pupils but also of teachers and of preachers. An example of this is seen in the revision of the New International Encyclopedia. The editor of the *Catholic Mirror* (at that time the official organ of Cardinal Gibbons), in a lengthy editorial, dated October 28, 1905, tells of how the publishers of that Encyclopedia cooperated with the Jesuits in reversing it. He quoted the following letter from the Rev. Thomas J. Campbell, S.J., which he had just received:

“Dodd, Mead and Co. sent their representatives to us, and not only expressed a desire to avoid misstatements in their encyclopedia, but asked for someone to exercise whatever might be offensive. . . .Mr. Conde B. Pallen took the matter in hand, and was afforded full liberty to revise and correct not only the topics which dealt professedly with the Catholic subjects but those also which might have even an indirect bearing on them. . . . The firm [Dodd, Mead and Co.] has done all in its power to make it acceptable to Catholics.”- *Quoted in “Liberty,” Vol. V, No. 3, pp. 34, 35. Washington, D.C., 1910, quoted by Christian Edwardson, in “Facts of Faith,” p. 247-8.*

This fearful general ignorance of who and what brought on the Dark Ages is manifested everywhere and in all levels of society. Politicians, scientists, news pundits, and the general public do not know who and what was truly responsible for the collapse of Communism in the Soviet Union and elsewhere, attributing it to the success of “democracy and a true multi-national coalition,” rather than the fulfillment of Daniel’s prophecy. After the “healing of its wound as to death,” the papacy would return back to power symbolized as “the king of the north” and would destroy Communism--modern-day atheism—as “king of the south.” See Dan. 11: 40-45.

As applied to the history of the Christian church, the messages to the church in Thyatira are particularly appropriate to the experience of exceeding difficulty suffered by those who loved the truth with their lives and may well be called the **Age of Adversity**. Because of the bitter persecution that raged against the Sabbath-keeping Christians in the cruel hands of the Caesars and emperors of imperial, pagan Rome, the flame of truth flickered and almost died.

“*Trends that began in earlier [church] periods became dominant during the Dark Ages.* The Scriptures not being made available to the ordinary Christian, tradition was exalted in its place. Works came to be considered as a means of attaining salvation. A false and human priesthood obscured the true and divine priesthood of Jesus Christ. The Reformation consisted essentially in a revival and restoration of the great truths of the Gospel. It proclaimed that men are only saved by faith in Christ, that their only standard of faith and practice is Scripture, and that every man

may appear on his own behalf before the great High priest, Jesus Christ, without a human intercessor.” –Footnotes, *An Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation, Vol. 2, p.554-5.*

The Transition from Pagan Rome to Papal Rome

“In the *sixth century* the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. **Paganism had given place to the papacy.** The dragon [pagan, imperial Rome] had given to the beast ‘his power, and his seat, and great authority.’ Rev. 13:2. *And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Dan. 7:25; Rev. 13:5-7.* Christians were forced either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or suffer death by the wrack, the fagot, or the headsman’s ax. Now were fulfilled the words of Jesus: ‘Ye shall be betrayed both by parents, and brethren, and kinsfolks, and friends; and some of you shall they cause to be put to death. And ye shall be hated of all men for My name’s sake. Luke 21: 16, 17. Persecution opened upon the faithful with greater fury than ever before, and the world became a vast battlefield. For hundreds of years the church of Christ found refuge in seclusion and obscurity.” - E. G. White, *Great Controversy*, 1911 edition, pp. 54-5.

From “the Daily” to the “Abomination that Maketh Desolate”

In His condensed version, or mini-apocalypse of the combined prophecies of Daniel and Revelation, Jesus warned His disciples: “*Therefore when you see the “abomination of desolation” spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy place spoken (whosoever reads, let him understand).*” Matt. 24:15, NKJV. What or who is “the abomination of desolation” (“abomination that maketh desolate”-KJV) that Jesus said the prophet Daniel spoke of? See Dan. 9:17, 27; 1:31; 12:11. This question must be answered according “to the law and testimony” (Isa. 8:20) because there are many strange versions circulating up and down the churches such as: it is the secret “Illuminati” Order of Freemasonry which include the Bilderbergers and the Trilateral Commission and their New World Order or, the Muslim “terrorists,” etc.

Some even in the fringes of Adventism claim that it is the New International Version of the Bible (NIV). “Why and how,” I asked. “It is the “One World Order Bible.” Advocates on this interpretation aver that the phrase found in the open-close parenthesis “(whoso readeth, let him understand),” actually means “whoso readeth the NIV Bible version”! I was personally involved in a lively discussion on this interpretation with a zealous and well-spoken Caucasian woman in her late 50’s some years ago who was an active “home church” movement proponent. (I am not suggesting in any way, however, that every one in this movement believes in this interpretation). My only hope and prayer is that she and others who espouse similar views have already been disabused of such erroneous interpretation before it is too late! Those who, as of late, have been vouching for the NIV, for whatever reason—such as “it is more readable,” “more popular,” or “even the most accurate as research shows,” perhaps do not realize that the timing was never more favorable for the above misinterpretation!

What Daniel Wrote

We will quote directly from the King James Version, including the italicized words, meaning, they were added by the translators of this version—an unmistakable sign of honesty and humility. Other translations take the freedom to use “dynamic equivalence” in the translation, using the prevailing understanding of the topic—which is positively treacherous as discussed earlier on how cutting truths of the Bible, particularly

prophecies that positively identify the beast, his name, mark, and number, have been undergoing subtle yet progressive changes in authoritative references and textbooks!

“And they shall stand on his part, and they shall pollute the sanctuary of strength, and shall take away the daily *sacrifice*, and they shall place the abomination that maketh desolate.” Dan. 11:31, KJV.

“And from the time the daily *sacrifice* shall be taken away, and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days.” Dan. 12:11, KJV.

“Then I heard on saint speaking, and another saint said unto the certain saint which spake, How long shall be the vision concerning the daily *sacrifice* and the transgression of desolation, to give both the sanctuary and the host [of worshippers] to be trodden underfoot?” Dan. 8:13, KJV.

The Daily and the Transgression of Desolation. - In the KJV “the abomination that maketh desolate” and “the transgression of desolation” both refer to the same entity of which Jesus warned of, saying, “When ye therefore shall see the *abomination of desolation* spoken of by Daniel the prophet, stand in the holy place (whoso readeth, let him understand):” Matt. 24: 15.

The correct view. Who or what (1) “the daily *sacrifice*” and (2) “the abomination of desolation” are, is clearly identified in the following brief yet concise quotes: First, from E.G. White, who wrote (emphasis mine):

“Then I saw in relation to the “daily” that the word “sacrifice” was supplied by man’s wisdom, and does not belong to the text; and *that the Lord gave the correct view* of it to those who gave the judgment hour cry. *When union existed, before 1844, nearly all were united on the correct view of the “daily;”* but since 1844, in the confusion, other views have been embraced, and darkness and confusion have followed. I have also seen that time has not been a test since 1844, and that time will never be again a test.”—“*Christian Experience & Views of E.G. White,*” p. 39, a pamphlet published by James White, Saratoga Springs, New York, 1851. (See also *Early Writings*, pp. 74-5; *Selected Messages, vol. 1*, pp, 164-5, 167, 168).

Q. What was this “correct view of the daily” upon which “nearly all who participated in the judgment hour cry,” also known as “the midnight cry” given in the summer of 1844 (GC 398)? This is a critical point for once the correct view is established the right interpretation of both “the daily” and “the transgression of desolation” or the “abomination that maketh desolate” can then be accurately ascertained.

In his book, “*Bible Adventism or Sermons on the Coming Kingdom,*” originally published by the *Seventh-day Adventist Publishing Association, Battle Creek, Michigan*, Elder James White wrote (emphasis mine):

“**The daily sacrifice and the transgression of desolation represent Rome in its pagan and papal forms.** Leaving out the supplied words [“sacrifice”], the text would read, “The daily, and the transgression of desolation.” **These are the two desolating powers; first, paganism, then, [the] papacy.** Of these, Paul, in 2 Thess. 2:3-8 says [quoted]. That which withheld the manifestation of the papacy in Paul’s day was paganism. These are the two powers which have desolated the people of God, of which the angel speaks in the vision of Daniel 8.”—“*The Two Desolations*” chapter, p. 127, *Leaves of Autumn Books, Payson, AZ.*

“A Time, and Times, and Half a Time”

In prophetic time, a day is equivalent to one literal year of 360 days. (Gen. 6:3; Num. 14:34; Eze. 4:6). How the full transition from pagan Rome to papal Rome took place, may be clearly seen in the following extensive quotation from Christian Edwardson’s

book, *Facts of Faith*, pp. 52-58. It explains what John wrote in Revelation 13: 2 (last part): “And the dragon gave him his *power*, his *throne*, and *great authority*.” While the dragon primarily represents Satan, it secondarily symbolizes pagan Rome. The papacy is symbolized in prophecy in several ways, including “the little horn” (Dan. 7: 8, 25), etc.

“The little horn of Daniel 7: 8, 25, was to reign for ‘a time and times and the dividing of time.’ This same ‘time, and times, and half a time’ is also mentioned in Revelation 12:14 and in the 6th verse it is said to be ‘a thousand two hundred and threescore days.’ In prophecy a days always stands for a year. (Ezekiel 4:6). This prophetic period is therefore 1260 literal years. We shall now show that these 1260 years began in 538 A.D., and invite the reader to notice the 4 great changes that took place that year:

1. We have already seen that the little horn symbolized the Papacy, and that the 3 Arian kingdoms, which stood in its way, were plucked up by the roots, and that the last of these received its deathblow in 538 A.D. through the efforts of Justinian, the faithful son of the [Roman] church.

2. History states that the work of Justin and Justinian in elevating the Papacy to power brought in a new era, introducing the Middle Ages:

“Accordingly, the religious and political tendencies of the Empire now took so different a direction as to positively constitute the dawn of a new era. . . . Thus at last Rome had triumphed, after fighting so long with unflinching vigor and without yielding a single point.”--*“The Barbarian Invasion of Italy,” P. Villari, Vol. I, pp. 177, 178.*

“The reign of Justinian is more remarkable as a portion of the history of mankind, than as a chapter in the annals of the Roma Empire or of the Greek nation. The changes of centuries pass in rapid succession before the eyes of one generation. . . .

“With the conquest of Rome by Belisarius,* the history of the ancient city may be considered as terminating; and with his defense against Witigis [A.D. 538], commences the history of the Middle Ages.” – *“Greece Under Romans,” George Finlay, pp. 198, 240, Dent edition, revised by author, 1877.*

3. **Even the papacy itself changed, so as there was a new order of popes after 538 A.D.** History relates:

“Down to the 6th century all popes are declared saints in the martyrologies. Vigilius (537-555) is the first of a series of popes who *no* longer bear this title, which is henceforth sparingly conferred. From this time on the popes, more and more enveloped in worldly events, no longer being solely to the church; they are men of the state, and then rulers of the state.”- *“Medieval Europe,” Belmont and Monod (revised by George Burton Adams), p. 120. New York: H. Holt & Co., 1902.*

In the foregoing quotation the date of Vigilius should be 538 instead of 537 fro the following reason:

“Vigilius having been ordained in the year of 537, . . . and the death of Silverius having been certainly not earlier than 20 June, A.D. 538, it is evident that for at least seven months his position was that of an unlawful anti-pope, his predecessor never having been canonically deposed.”-*Dictionary of Christian Biography, Drs. Smith and Wace, Vol. IV, art. “Vigilius,” p. 1144. London: 1887.*

For this reason A. Bower says:

“From the death of Silverius Roman Catholic writers date the Episcopacy of Vigilius, reckoning him thenceforth among the lawful popes.”- *“History of the Popes,” Vol. II, p. 488, under the year “538.” Dublin: 1751.*

Dr. Philip Schaff says:

“Vigilius, a pliant creature of Theodora, ascended the papal chair under the military protection of Beelisarius (538-555).”- *“History of the Christian Church” (7-vol. ed), Vol. III, p. 327. New York: Scribner’s, 1893.* See also “General History of the Catholic Church,” M. l’Abbe J.E. Darras, Vol. II, pp. 146, 147 (New York: 1866), and “The Official Catholic Directory” for 1933, ‘List of Roman Pontiffs’ on page 7.

4. Dr. Summerbell still gives another reason why we should date the beginning of the papal supremacy from 538. He says:

“Justinian. . . enriched himself with the property of *all ‘heretics’—that is, non Catholics,* and gave all their churches to the Catholics; published edicts in 538 compelling all to join the Catholic Church in ninety days or leave the empire, and confiscated all their goods.” – *History of the Christian Church,* pp. 310, 311. *Cincinatti: 1873.* The same is stated by Samuel Chandler in “History of Persecution,” pp. 142, 143; and by Edward Gibbon, in “Decline and Fall,” chap. 46, par. 24.

THE STATE RELIGION

“Thus we see that Roman Catholicism was made the state religion in 538, and all other religions were forbidden. What gave special significance to these edicts of Justinian was the fact that he had already in 533 declared the Bishop of Rome to be the head of the universal church, and had subjected all the priests even of the East under the see of Rome. This fact he wrote to Pope John II on March 15, 533, in the following language:

“With honor to the Apostolic See, . . . We hasten to bring to knowledge of Your holiness everything relating to the condition of the Church, as we have always had great desire to preserve the unity of your Apostolic See, and the condition of the Holy Churches of God, as they exist in the present time, that they may remain without disturbance or opposition. Therefore, We have exercised Ourselves to unite all the priests of the East and subject them to the See of your Holiness. . . For we do not suffer anything which has reference to the state of the Church, even though what causes the difficulty may be clear and free from doubt, to be discussed without being brought to the notice of Your Holiness, because You are the head of all Holy Churches, for we shall exert Ourselves in every way (as has already been stated), to increase the honor and honor of your see. . . .

“Therefore we request your paternal affection, that you, by your letters, inform Us and the Most Holy Bishop of this Fair City, and your brother the Patriarch, who himself has written by the same messengers to Your Holiness, eager in all things to follow the Apostolic See of your Blessedness, in order that you may make it clear to Us that Your Holiness acknowledges all the matters which have been set forth above.” – *“The Civil law of Justinian,” translated by S.P. Scott, A.M. (in 17 volumes), Book 12, pp. 11-13.*

To this letter Pope John II answered:

“John, Bishop of the City of Rome, to his most Illustrious and Merciful Son Justinian.

‘Among the conspicuous reasons for praising your wisdom and gentleness, Most Christian of Emperors, and one which radiates light as a star, is the fact that through love of the Faith, and actuated by zeal for charity, you, learned in ecclesiastical discipline, have preserved reverence from the See of Rome, and have subjected all things to his authority, and have given it unity. . .

‘This See is indeed the head of all Churches, as the rules of the Fathers and the decrees of the Emperors assert, and the words of your most reverent piety testify. . . .

‘We have received with all due respect the evidences of your serenity, through Hypatius and Demetrius, most holy men, my brothers and fellow bishops, from whom statements we have learned that you have promulgated an Edict addressed to your faithful people, and dictated by your love of the faith, *for the purpose of overthrowing the design of the heretics, which is in accordance with the evangelical tenets, and which we have confirmed by our authority over the consent of our brethren and fellow bishops, for the reason that it is in conformity with the apostolic doctrine.* . .

‘Therefore, it opportune to cry out with a prophetic voice, ‘Heaven will rejoice with You, and pour out its blessing upon You, and the mountains will rejoice, and the hills be glad with exceeding joy’ . . .

‘The favor of Our Lord. . . remain forever with you, Most Pious Son, Amen. . .

‘Given at Rome, on the eighth of Kalends of April, during the Consulate of Emperor Justinian, Consul for the fourth time.” – *Id. pp. 10-15.*

Both of these letters appear in the “Code of Justinian,” as well as the following law:

‘Hence, in accordance with the provisions of those Councils, we order that the Most Holy Pope of Ancient Rome shall hold the first rank of all the Pontiffs, but the Most Blessed Archbishop of Constantinople, or New Rome, shall occupy the second place after the Holy Apostolic See of Ancient Rome, which shall take precedence over all other sees.” – *Id. Vol. XVII, p. 125.*

‘Under the date March 25, 533, Justinian, writing to Epiphanius, Patriarch of Constantinople, stating that he had written letter to the pope, ‘repeats his decision, that all the affairs touching the Church shall be referred to the Pope, ‘Head of all bishops, the true and effective corrector of heretics.’” – *“The Apocalypse of St. John,” George Croly, A.M. p. 170, second edition. London: 1828.*

“The epistle which was addressed to the Pope, and another to the Patriarch of Constantinople, were inserted into the volume of the civil law; thus the sentiments contained in them obtained the sanction of the supreme legislative authority of the empire. . . .

“The answer of the Pope to the imperial epistle was also published with the other documents; and it is equally important, inasmuch as it shows that he understood the reference that had been made to him, as being a formal recognition of the supremacy of the See of Rome.”—“*A Dissertation on the Seals and Trumpets of the Apocalypse,*” William Cunningham, pp. 185, 186. London: 1843; cited in “Source Book,” pp. 383, 384, ed. of 1922.

“The recognition of the Roman See as the highest ecclesiastical authority (cf. Novella cxxxi) remained the cornerstone of his [Justinian’s] policy in relation to the West.”—*New Schaff-Herzog Encyclopedia, Vol. VI, art. “Justinian,”* p. 286.

Thus we see that the way had been prepared in 533, in anticipation of the three final acts which were to occur in 538, when the Arian powers were destroyed, Catholicism made the state religion, and the Papacy placed under the protection of the State, which gave rise to the long struggle between church and state as to which would be supreme.”—*Facts of Faith*, pp. 52-57.

End of the 1260 Years. - Christian Edwardson continues:

“Having now seen that the 1260 years of papal supremacy began in 538 A.D., it is an easy matter to find their close. Adding the 1260 years to 538 brings us to the year 1798. And if we have given the right application to this prophecy, history must record and event in 1798 that would appear like a death stroke to the Papacy [see Rev. 13: 3, first part]. Turning to history we just such an event recorded:

The official Swedish newspaper. *Stockholms Posttidning*, for March 29, 1798, has the following news item:

“Rome, the 21st of February [1798], Pope Pius VI, has occupied the papal chair for all of twenty-eight years, but the 15th inst. His government in the Papal States were abolished, and five days later, guarded by one hundred French soldiers, he was taken away from his palace and his capital. . . .

“His . . . property was sold by the French, and among it were seven hundred head of cattle, one hundred fifty horses, and eight hundred cords of wood. . . .

“Poor Pius! He must have felt very sad as he left Rome to go into captivity [see Rev. 13:10]. When he departed his tear-filled eyes were turned heavenward.”

Rev. E. B. Elliot, A.M. , says of these events:

“In the years 1796, 1797, French dominion being established by Bonaparte’s victories in *Northern Italy*, . . . the French armies [urged] their march onward to the Papal Capital. . . . The aged Pope himself, now left mere nominal master of some few remaining shreds of the Patrimony of Peter, experienced soon after *in person* the bitterness of the prevailing anti-papal spirit. . . .

“On pretence of an insult to the French Ambassador there, a French corps d’armee under Berthier, having in February, 1798, crossed the Appenines from Ancona, and entered Rome, the tricolor flag was displayed from the Capitol, amidst the shouts of the populace, the Pope’s temporal reign declared at an end, and the Roman Republic proclaimed, in strict alliance fraternization with the French. *Then, in the Sistine Chapel of the Vatican, the ante-hall to which has a fresco painted by Papal order commemorative of the Protestant massacre on St. Bartholomew’s day, (might not the scene have served as a memento of God’s retributive justice?)* there, while seated on his throne, and receiving the gratulations of his cardinals on the anniversary of his election to the Popedom, he was arrested by the French military, the ring of his marriage with the Church Catholic torn from his finger, his palace rifled, and himself carried prisoner into France, only to die there in exile shortly after.”—“*Horae Apocalypticae,*” Rev. E. B. Elliot, A.M., Vol. III, pp. 400, 401. London: 1862. . . .

Rev. Joseph Rickaby, and English Jesuit writes:

“When, in 1797, Pope Pius VI fell grievously ill. Napoleon gave orders that in the event of his death no successor should be elected to his office, and that the papacy be discontinued.

“But the pope recovered. The peace was soon broken; Berthier entered Rome on the 10th February, 1798, and proclaimed a republic. The aged Pontiff refused to violate his oath by recognizing it, and was hurried from prison to prison in France. . . . No wonder that half Europe thought Napoleon’s veto would be obeyed, and that with the Pope the Papacy was dead.”—“*The Modern Papacy,*” p. 1. London: Catholic Truth Society, “*Facts of Faith,*” pp.37, 58, 59.

“Who hath His eyes like unto a flame of fire.”- This description of the eyes of the glorified Christ in His office as high Priest, comprehends much more than its terrible and wonderful physical appearance. It means two things:

1. The comforting assurance that there is absolutely no pain or difficulty that His people suffer that His eye cannot reach, nor His sympathy cannot touch. “For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.” “Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” Heb. 4: 15; 5:8, 9. All our afflictions are His afflictions.

2. On the other hand it also reveals why the *pre-advent* judgment of all who *profess* to worship God is indispensable and why it will be both merciful and just. Every person’s character is measured by the one moral law by the same benevolent eye of the Lawgiver which sees every secret thought, intent, and purpose of the heart hidden from human view. All are weighed in the balances of the heavenly sanctuary where Christ has been performing His closing work for the salvation of His people of earth. Thus:

“The Savior was revealed to John, not in His humiliation, but in His majesty, as He now is, and as He will be revealed when He shall come in His glory. John saw not a Savior on the cross, not a man of sorrows [Isa. 53:3], but the glorified Son of God, clothed in a garment of light, and girded with a golden girdle. His eyes were like a flame of fire, His feet like brass when it gleams in a furnace. The sound of His voice was like the sound of many waters [Rev. 14: 2]; and His countenance shone like the sun in its noon-day splendor.”- *Signs of the Times*, Feb. 28, 1878.

“Yet a little while, and He that is to come will come and will not tarry [Heb. 10:37]. His eyes as a flame of fire penetrate into the fast-closed dungeons and hunt out the hidden ones, for their names are written in the Lamb’s book of life. The eyes of the Savior are above us, around us, noting every difficulty, discerning every danger; and there is no place where His eyes cannot penetrate, no sorrows or sufferings of His people where the sympathy of Christ does not reach.”- *Last Day Events*, p. 277.

“He whose eyes are ‘as a flame of fire’ is searching *every church* in the world. His gaze is piercing every heart. He is measuring the temple and the worshippers thereof [Rev. 11:1], weighing all their actions in the golden scales of heaven and registering the results in the books of record. All things are open to the eye of Him with whom we have to do [Heb. 4:13]. He is a ‘discerner of the thoughts and intents and purposes of the heart. [Heb. 4:12] No deed of darkness can be screened from His view. Sin, undetected by man, unsuspected by human minds, is noted and registered by the great Heart searcher.” – [PHO28] 2.

“But, according to the unerring word of God, every man will be judged and rewarded according as his works have been [Rev. 22:12], and we are admonished to so speak and to so do as ‘they that shall be judged by the law of liberty’ [James 2:12]. When sin has been *repented of, confessed, and forsaken, then pardon is written against the sinner’s name*; but his sins are not blotted out *until after* the investigative judgment. No finite being can tell how his case stands in the sight of Him whose eyes are like a flame of fire, who says, ‘I know thy works [Rev. 3: 18 quoted].’- *Signs of the Times*, May 16, 1895.

“I know thy works, charity, service, faith, and patience.” Rev. 2:19. - The textual evidence suggests that sequence should rather be: “love, and faith, and service and patience.” This, therefore, is an enumeration of the “works” of the church at Thyatira. However, it is *love and faith* that provides the inner basis for the outward expression of *service*, i.e., ministry, and *patience of the saints*. **Charity** here is the Greek *agape*, “love” (see on Matt. 5: 43, 44; 1 Cor. 13).

“The more we learn in reference to the early days of the Christian church, and see with what subtlety Satan worked to weaken and destroy, the better we shall be prepared to resist his devices and meet coming perils.”- *Testimonies for the Church*, vol. 5, p. 297.

This is precisely why we are carefully going through the study (a review for some) of the Seven Churches of Revelation. They contain very specific and special messages of counsel, reproof, and warnings for the members of the remnant church of the last days. Those who study and apply the precepts and principles of these messages to their practical lives, compelled by the love of Jesus and empowered by God's grace, will develop that faith that alone will stand the coming final test upon mankind!

"We are in the time when tribulation such as the world has never yet seen will prevail. 'Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and sea! For the devil has come down to you, having great wrath, because he knows he has a short time' [Rev. 12:12]. *But God has set bounds that Satan cannot pass. Our most holy faith is this barrier; and if we build ourselves up in the faith, we shall be safe in the keeping of the Mighty One.*"- *Ibid*.

Nevertheless I have a few things against you because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and beguile (seduce) my servants to commit fornication (sexual immorality), and to eat things offered to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, and she did not repent" Rev. 2:20, 21.

In the Bible, sexual immorality—adultery and fornication---are used to describe the *spiritual adultery of the church* when she departs from the truth, and bestows her affections on the things of this world and her loyalties to "the kings of the earth," or "the great men of the earth," particularly the civil powers, which belongs to God alone. Thus:

"In Revelation 17 Babylon is represented by a woman---a figure which is used in the Bible as the symbol of a church, a virtuous woman representing a pure church, a vile woman an apostate church."- *Great Controversy*, p. 381.

"Babylon is said to be 'the mother of harlots.' By her *daughters* must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world."- *Ibid*, pp. 382-383.

The church of Thyatira is known in church history as *the corrupt, apostate church*, not only because many openly submitted themselves to apostasy but because unlike the two previous church periods, no earnest efforts in a wide scale were made to counter the rapidly emerging apostasy and evils of the church. Their last chance to repent was given in the Reformation. Instead of humbling herself and repenting, she killed the reformers.

"That woman Jezebel." The "Footnotes" of *An Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation, Vol. 2*, p. 559 says:

"For the account of the *historical Jezebel* see 1 Kings 16:31; 18:13; 19:1, 2; 21:5-16, 23-25; 2 Kings 9: 30-37. It would appear that, as Jezebel sponsored the worship of Baal in Israel (1 Kings 21:25) so in John's day some false prophetess was attempting to lead away the church at Thyatira. The message indicates that here, even more than at Pergamum (Rev. 2:14), apostasy was openly and defiantly rampant. *As applied to the Thyatira period of Christian history, the figure of Jezebel represents the power that produced the great apostasy of the medieval centuries.*"

"Not only did Ahab introduce Baal [sun-god] worship at the capital city, *but under the leadership of Jezebel* he erected heathen altars in many 'high places,' where in the shelter of surrounding groves the priests and others connected with this seductive form of idolatry exerted their baleful influence, until well-nigh all Israel were following after Baal. [1 Kings 21: 25, 26 quoted]." - *Patriarchs & Prophets*, p. 114-115.

Though the historical Jezebel was apparently successful in employing her various seductive arts to further her evil ambitions, and to lead almost the whole of ancient Israel into the apostasy of sun-worship, there was a small, faithful remnant that remained steadfast for truth and righteousness, called "the sons of the prophets."

“When the early church [Pergamos period] became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel and accepting heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the conscience of the people, **she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state and employed it to further her own ends**, especially for the punishment of ‘heresy.’ In order for the United States to form an image to the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.” – *Great Controversy*, p. 443.

This will also be the same story, plot, and scenario in the final days of earth’s probation. The *antitypical worldwide Jezebel-church*, the papal church, with the aid of the *antitypical Ahab*, the world’s *state* and secular powers, beginning in America, will enact and enforce Sunday worship which will ultimately result in the final death decree.

“Babylon is said to be ‘the *mother* of harlots.’ By her *daughters* must be symbolized churches that cling to her doctrines and traditions, and follow her example of sacrificing the truth and the approval of God, in order to form an unlawful alliance with the world.”–*Great Controversy*, pp. 382-3.

Ahab [symbolizing state/civil power] was *weak in moral power*. He did not have a high sense of sacred things. He was selfish and unprincipled.” – *Review & Herald*, Sept. 16, 1873. “His union by marriage with an idolatrous woman of decided character and positive temperament resulted disastrously both to himself and to the nation. Unprincipled, and with no high standard of right-doing, his character was easily molded by the determined spirit of Jezebel. . . . Through the influence of Jezebel and her impious priests, the people were taught that the idol gods that had been set up were deities, ruling by their mystic power the elements of earth, fire, and water. . . . *How few realize the power of an unconsecrated woman!* God would have been with Ahab *if* he had walked in the counsel of heaven. But Ahab did not do this. He married a woman given to idolatry. *Jezebel had more power over the king than God had*. She led him to idolatry, and with him the people.”– *Conflict & Courage*, p. 204.

Indeed! Many politicians of the world’s earthly governments, whether duly elected, appointed, or in power by fraud or violent overthrow, are, corrupt, dishonest, scheming, greedy of and power and wealth--and shamefully *weak in moral power*. And for such to become “spiritually married” to the “mother of harlots” in order to boost their political stock is the perfect yet terrible combination that will bring on the final wrath of God when they jointly enact the final religious law that “will make void the law of God.”

“The *evil influence* that Jezebel had exercised from the first over Ahab continued during the later year of his life and bore fruits in deeds of shame and violence such as have seldom been equaled in sacred history. ‘But there was no one like Ahab sold himself to do wickedness in the sight of the Lord, because his wife Jezebel his wife stirred him up’ [1 Kings 21: 25].” – *Prophets & Kings*, p. 204.

But as in the type, a small, faithful Sabbath-keeping remnant, “antitypical sons of the prophets,” will refuse to receive the “mark of the beast”—that mark of the papacy’s claimed authority to change God’s immutable law and institute a counterfeit sabbath. And just like the faithful prophets and martyrs of the ages before them, many will be martyred before probation finally closes, for their blood will be the final witness for the sealing truths of the everlasting gospel!

“Jezebel fought determinedly against God *in the person* of His faithful people. The persecution of the prophets was so great that Elijah supposed he was the only one who had escaped her power. ‘I, even I only, am left,’ he said, ‘and they seek my life, to take it away’ (1 Kings 19: 14).”– *Manuscript 116*, 1899, p. 1 (“The Sin of Jezebel,” Aug. 15, 1899). White Estate, Washington, D.C. Apr. 27, 1891.

“With her *seductive arts*, Jezebel made Jehoshapat her friend. She arranged a marriage between her daughter Athaliah and Jehoram, the son of Jehoshapat. She knew that her daughter, brought up under her guidance and as unscrupulous as herself, would carry out her designs. But did she? No; the sons of the prophets, who had been educated in the schools which Samuel

established, were steadfast for truth and righteousness.”- *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 2, p. 1038.

“To commit fornication and to eat things offered to idols.” – “See Rev. 2:14; cf. 2 Kings 9:22. This doubtless had, first, a local application to the church at Thyatira. Applied to the Thyatira period of church history, *this would represent an admixture of paganism with Christianity* (see on Eze. 16:15; Rev. 17:1). This process was *accelerated greatly under Constantine* and his successors. Generally speaking, *medieval Christianity* was more pagan in form and in spirit than it was Christian.” –*Ibid.*

The Middle Ages or Medieval times was the age during which “Medieval Christianity” was at it height. Of this period the respected historian, J. A. Wylie, in *History of Protestantism*, b. 1, ch. 4, says: “*the noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world.*”- (Quoted in *Great Controversy*, p. 60). It was, in fact, the Dark Ages, even if all attempts are made to romanticize this dark period by referring to “the glory of Medieval art,” etc. As pointed out earlier, papal apologists, generally Jesuits, were able to infiltrate the publishing houses of encyclopedias, dictionaries, and textbooks and re-write church history as well as weed out all incriminating evidence that clearly pointed to the papacy as the “man of sin,” “the antichrist,” “the beast” of Bible prophecy.

Notice how the authoritative English Dictionary defines the Middle Ages, and dates the “Dark Ages.” If one were to merely rely on such sources alone for information and wisdom regarding the true history of the falling away of the Christian church, he would be confused and deceived. Notice (emphasis mine):--

“Middle Age. The period between ancient and modern times, as between the fall of the Roman Empire and the revival of letters; also the period from about 400 to 1400 A.D. The term *Dark Ages* is applied to the whole, or, more often, to the earlier part of this period.”- *Webster’s Collegiate Dictionary, Fifth Edition, Merriam Co., Springfield, Mass., 1942.*

Students of prophecy know that the real Dark Ages stretched from 538 to 1798 A.D., a period of **1260 years**, certainly not “to the earlier part of 400-1400 A.D”! Such reckoning is clearly a direct work or a result of the efforts of powerful, influential, and deeply-imbedded papal apologists and agents to remove from all historical archives and records its reign of absolute religious terror—the longest and darkest period of the church’s and earth’s history! Jesus prophesied of this “great tribulation” perpetuated by the “abomination of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet” (Verse 15) in His mini-apocalypse recorded in *Matthew chapter 24*. He warned His disciples:---

“Pray that that your flight may not be in the winter or on the Sabbath. For then there will be great tribulation such as has not been since the beginning of the world until this time, no, nor ever shall be. And unless those days be shortened, no flesh would be saved; but for the elect’s sake those days will be shortened.” Verses 20-22, NKJV.

These long “days” of prophetic years were “shortened” by the rise of the Reformation, spearheaded by Luther in Germany—preceded earlier by John Wycliffe’s pioneering work in England. This movement in the Old World brought the terrible engine of persecution of the Roman Catholic Church to almost a standstill about twenty five years before Pope Pius XI was taken captive by Gen. Berthier of Napoleon’s French Republic army in 1798, bringing the “great tribulation” of the Dark Ages to an end—“for the elect’s sake, *lest no flesh be saved.*” Why “lest no flesh be saved”? Because it has been *estimated* that over **100 million** followers of Christ were martyred during these dark century!

A well-orchestrated, well-funded, and sustained effort is in place to focus the public mind on the Holocaust where it is claimed that **six million Jews** were *allegedly* killed by Hitler, a number seriously questioned by many thinking minds. That Hitler was guilty of killing thousands, perhaps, millions of Jews is as much an abomination as the little-discussed *Konkordat* signed July 20, 1933 between Hitler and by then Cardinal Pacelli who later became the Pope Pius XII!

Moreover, in stark contrast, nothing is ever mentioned much less commemorated officially by the Christian world, or of America---the supposed liberty-loving, human rights champion of the world, of the **1,260 years of the reign of the papacy**---the so-called “successors of St. Pete,” who, through their infamous Office of the Inquisition headquartered in Lisbon, Portugal, invented the most diabolical forms and instruments of torture (in addition to the stake), ever imagined by warped human minds and used these to extirpate millions of innocent souls whom the church declared as “heretics.”

These Christians did not crucify Christ as the Jewish nation did in collusion with Rome. Their only fault was choosing to obey God’s Word and their conscience rather than yield to the unbiblical and antichristian edicts and bulls issued by the popes. But in heaven’s book of records they are called “the saints of God.” Their lives are preserved in Christ.

This is nothing short of selective amnesia on a universal scale. All involved, religious and secular powers alike, its main architects and perpetrators in particular, will have to render a fearful account in their day of judgment before God. While they think they have apparently succeeded in pulling the wool over the eyes of their credulous followers and votaries, as well as the world-at-large, the Omnipresent Eye sees and records all the secret schemes and deeds with unerring accuracy in the books of heaven where there is not one false entry. “Vengeance is Mine; I will repay, says the Lord.” “It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” Rom. 12:19; 2 Thess. 1:7, 8; Heb. 10: 30, 31.

Indeed! John, in vision at the Island of Patmos, is shown the Roman Catholic Church, the Biblical “Babylon the Great, as “drunk with the blood of the saints and the martyrs of Jesus.” He wrote: “*And on her forehead a name was written: MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND THE ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH. And I saw the woman, drunk with the blood of the saints and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. And when I saw her, I marveled with great amazement.*” Rev. 17: 5, 6, NKJV.

But while “the mother of harlots” and her “daughters” are silently yet diligently working to hasten the prophesied brief return to world power of the papacy, at America’s behest, there is even more heart-breaking news for professed Christians, particularly Sabbath-keepers, who are spending precious dwindling time, money, and strength wildly chasing temporal goals and indulging themselves in the heady pleasures and trendy fashions of the world, and finding ways and ideas to justify their choices, plans, and actions. These brethren are too busy “with the cares of this life” that spiritual things either bore them or make them feel uneasy. They can watch favorite TV programs in rapt attention for hours, even late into the night but will complain that a Bible study of about an hour-and-a-half, held once a week on the fundamental pillars of the faith “is too long.” They are self-assured that their “salvation is already secured” since they are faithful “church-goers” and “pay tithe regularly.” They feel no urge to devote time to individually searching the Word and growing in the knowledge of the deep things of God, no time to critically examine themselves whether they are prepared to stand in the searching judgment. Thus they have vague ideas on what it takes to receive the seal of the living God in their foreheads and be fortified for the coming final time of trouble.

The following are but few selected quotes, part of a vast array of others penned by God's servant. They are designed to jolt awake those who are spiritually asleep. It can only be a conscience desensitized by indulging too long in sinful ignorance, worldly practices, and presumptuous self-assurance that will not be moved by such warnings! God forbid that any one of us who profess faith in the third angel's message should be found among this class! Now this (emphasis mine):

“Transgression has almost reached its limit. Confusion fills the world, and a great terror is soon to come upon human beings. The end is very near. God's people should be preparing for what is to break upon the world as an overwhelming surprise.” - *Maranatha*, p. 161.

“The events connected with the close of probation and the work of preparation for the time of trouble, are clearly presented. But multitudes have no more understanding of these important truths than if they had never been revealed. [Why?] Satan watches to catch away every impression [of the Holy Spirit] that would make them wise unto salvation, and the time of trouble will find them unready.” - *Great Controversy*, p. 594.

“Not all who profess to keep the Sabbath will be sealed. There are many even among those who teach the truth to others who will not receive the seal of the living God in their foreheads. They had the light of truth, they knew their Master's will, they understood every point of our faith, but they had not corresponding works. . . . Not one of us will ever receive the seal of God while our characters have one spot or stain upon them. It is left with us to remedy the defects in our characters, to cleanse the soul temple from every defilement. . . . Now is the time to prepare. The seal of God will never be placed upon the foreheads of the ambitious, world-loving man or woman. It will never be placed upon the foreheads of men and women of false tongues and deceitful hearts. All who receive the seal must be without spot—candidates for heaven.” - *Testimonies for the Church*, pp. 211, 213-216.

“Only those who receive the seal of the living God will have the passport through the gates of the Holy city. . . . Many will not receive the seal of God because they do not keep the commandments or bear the fruits of righteousness. The great mass of professing Christians will meet with bitter disappointment in the day of God. They have not upon their foreheads the seal of the living God. Lukewarm and half-hearted, the dishonor God far more than the avowed unbeliever. They grope in darkness, when they might be walking in the noonday light of the Word, under the guidance of One who never errs.” - *Maranatha*, p. 241.

“Only those who have been diligent student of the Scriptures and who have received the love of the truth will be shielded from the powerful delusion that takes the world captive. By the Bible testimony these will detect the deceiver in his disguise. To all the testing time will come. By the sifting of temptation the genuine Christian will be revealed. Are the people of God so firmly established upon His Word that they would not yield to the evidence of their senses? Would they, in such a crisis, cling to the Bible and Bible only?” - *Ibid*, p. 625.

“None but those who have fortified the mind with the truths of the Bible will stand through the last conflict. To every soul will come the searching test: Shall I obey God rather than men? The decisive hour is even now at hand. Are our feet planted on the rock of God's immutable word? Are we prepared to stand firm in defense of the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus?” - *Ibid*, p. 94.

Where do we stand today? Are we among those who are diligently studying the Scriptures because we love the truth as it is in Jesus? Are we, by God's enabling grace, striving to remedy the defects of character and cleanse ourselves every last vestige of sinful desires and practices that defile the soul temple? Or are we part of the greater majority of professed Christians who are lukewarm and half-hearted in spiritual matters

and are secretly ambitious and world-loving, speaking with false tongues and deceitful hearts? Joshua fearlessly declared: "Choose you today whom you will serve" (Joshua 24:15). We cannot serve both God and mammon for there can only be one master. Satan accepts such duality and two-facedness for we can even be more effective as his agencies. God absolutely can't for it is antagonistic to His nature and plan of salvation. To love one is to hate the other. Our works and lives, rather than *mere words* of profession, will reveal who we are truly serving. "By their fruits you shall know them."

And I gave her time to repent of her fornication, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. And I will kill her children with death. And all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works." Rev. 2: 21-23,

The *ancient* evil Jezebel, false prophetess and queen-wife of Ahab, apostate king of Israel, was given more than adequate time to repent. But she, Ahab, and the apostate of Israel refused to do so. Theirs, however, was no case of unenlightened or even willful ignorance but of defiant rebellion against God through His chosen messengers.

"As Ahab told the queen of the slaying of the idolatrous [Baal] prophets, Jezebel, hardened and impenitent, became infuriated. She refused to recognize in the events on [Mt.] Carmel the overruling providence of God, and, still defiant, she boldly declared that Elijah should die." – *Prophets & Kings*, p. 159.

"Jezebel served Satan with all the idolatrous devotion of her nature. She was an agency through whom Satan wrought to eclipse every ray of light that God designed should come to the nation. She was **determined** to uproot the religion so hateful to her, and which, as she thought, was the cause of the drought."- *Signs of the Times*, Feb. 17, 1898.

"I will cast her into a sickbed." – "The manner of punishment to be meted out to the false prophetess will be appropriate to her crime. This expression seems to be of Semitic origin, and is used with respect to falling ill (see Exo. 21:18; Judith 8:3, LXX; Matt. 9:2, literally, 'a paralytic cast upon a bed'). Compare to the expression 'to take to one's bed.' See on Rev. 17: 16, 17; 18."- "*Footnotes,*" *Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation*, vol. 2, p. 561.

"Unless they repent of their deeds." – Meaning, "the door of mercy had not yet been fully shut. God never shuts Himself off from sinners; it is they who shut themselves off from Him." – *Ibid*. "Textual evidence, however, favors the reading '*her deeds*.' From the standpoint of God speaking to His church, the sins of Jezebel and her lovers are essentially *her* sins, for it is she who as a prophetess, aspires to lead the church."

"I will kill her children. . . ." – "The fornication of this Jezebel was habitual and of long standing, *for she had children. Figuratively*, this should probably be understood in the sense that she won committed adherents. Judgment was not only to descend upon the mother but *also* upon the offspring, who were contaminated by her evil character. Compare the destruction of the children of Ahab (2 Kings 10:7)." - *Ibid*, p. 562.

"With death." – "John may have in mind the Septuagint version of Eze. 33: 27, where the significant passage reads, 'And those in the caves I will kill with death.' Instead of 'death,' the Hebrew reads 'pestilence' or 'plague.' Possibly this is the meaning of 'death' in John's passage." – *Ibid*.

“I am He who searches the hearts and minds.” - “Christ penetrates both the thoughts and emotions. Christ’s judgment is just because He sees and takes into consideration the secrets of the heart. See Ps. 7:9; Jer. 11:20; see on 1 Sam. 16:7.” – *Ibid.*

“I will give to each one of you according to your works.” – The very same truth is repeated with finality by Christ Himself in the Revelation. “Behold, I am coming quickly, and *My reward is with Me, to give to everyone according to his work. . . Blessed are they that do His commandments* that they have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city.” Rev. 22: 12, 14. “Works” here is the *fruit* of genuine faith--that kind of “faith that works by love” and purifies the soul from all that defiles. See Gal. 5:6. The relation of Biblical faith and Biblical works is clearly explained in the following quotes:

“Faith does not make void the law, and though there are persons who insist that through faith in Christ they are freed from obligation to keep the law, yet the teaching of prophets and apostles contradicts their position. ‘Faith without works [obedience] is dead.’ Men’s characters are estimated according to their works [of obedience]. James says, ‘Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works.’ James 2: 18. Faith in the great plan of redemption without corresponding works is not reckoned as faith.” – *Signs of the Times*, Sept. 24, 1894.

“But are good works of no real value? *Is the sinner who commits sin every day with impunity, regarded of God with the same favor as the one who through faith in Christ tries to work in his integrity?* The Scripture answers, ‘For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.’ Eph. 2:0. *In His divine arrangement, through His unmerited favor, the Lord has ordained that good works shall be rewarded. We are accepted through Christ’s merit alone; and the acts of mercy, the deeds of charity, which we perform, are the fruits of faith; and they become a blessing to us; for men are rewarded according to their works. It is the fragrance of the merit of Christ that makes our good works acceptable to God, and it is grace that enables us to do the works for which He rewards us.* Our works in and of themselves have no merit. . . . We deserve no thanks from God. We have only done what it was our duty to do, and our works could not have been performed in the strength of our own sinful natures.” – *E. G. White Bible Commentary*, vol. 5, p. 1122.

But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira, as many as have not this doctrine, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak; I will put on you none other burden.” Rev. 2:24.

“As many as have not known this doctrine.” – That is, the teaching of “Jezebel” (see on preceding discussion on verse 20).

“Which have not know the depths of Satan.” – “Literally, ‘deeps,’ meaning, ‘deep things.’ Christ [in Revelation] takes the very words the apostates proudly apply to their own teachings (“*as they speak*”) and devastatingly terms them ‘the deep things of Satan.’ The Gnostics [as well as the Illuminati, Freemasons, the popes, the Maharishis of India, etc.] claimed to be the only ones who know ‘the deep things.’”

“The rest in Thyatira.” – “That is, the loyal believers in Thyatira.

“Historically, this refers to *small groups throughout the Middle Ages* that sought to remain loyal to apostolic Christianity. Such movements were found both within and without the formal framework of the [Roman] Catholic Church. Particularly important were such groups as the *Waldenses* on the continent of Europe, and the *followers of Wyclife* in England. Neither of these groups had the measure of evangelical truth that was proclaimed later in the Protestant Reformation, but the message ‘unto the rest in Thyatira’ was appropriate to them. Upon them God ‘put no further burden’ to be faithful to the light was theirs [at that time.] “Faithfulness to the

light that was theirs would be sufficient.” - *Footnotes, Exhaustive E.G. White Commentary on Revelation, vol. 2, p. 563.*

God does not hold anyone accountable for light of truth not *yet* revealed. These principles must be carefully considered lest one misinterpret prophecies: (a) the “time and place” principle (b) there is a present, testing truth *for each and every generation*, and (c) to whom much is given much will be required. The greatest light of truth of the everlasting gospel is shining upon this *final generation*. Thus we who live in this dispensation will have to render the *greatest accounting* to God for sinful neglect to know the accumulated light and the testing truths of our final generation!

“Hold fast till I come.” Rev. 20: 5. – “The ‘blessed hope’ (see Titus 2:13) of the soon coming Christ has ever been the hope and stay of Christians in affliction throughout all ages. However, in this passage here Christ does not necessarily imply that He would return *within* the lifetime of the faithful members of the *literal* Thyatira church, nor even within the *entire* Thyatira period of church history. “The second coming of Christ is the great climactic even of the age-long conflict between good and evil that began when Lucifer challenged the character and government of God. Statements in the Revelation and elsewhere concerning the imminence of Christ’s return must be understood against the background of this great controversy.

“On the rocky Patmos **the beloved disciple [John]** hears the promise, ‘Surely I come quickly,’ and his longing response voices the prayer of the church in all her pilgrimage, ‘Even so, come, Lord Jesus.’ Rev. 22:20. From the dungeon, the stake, the scaffold, where saints and martyrs witnessed for the truth, comes down the centuries the utterance of their faith and hope. ‘Being assured of His personal resurrection, and consequently of their own at His coming, for this cause, says one of these Christians, ‘they despised death, and were found to be above it.’ - Daniel T. Taylor, *The Reign of Christ on Earth; or The Voice of the Church in All Ages*, p. 33. They were willing to go down in the grave, that they might ‘rise free.’ - *Ibid*.

“They looked for the ‘Lord to come from heaven in the clouds with the glory of His Father, ‘bringing to the just the times of the kingdom.’ The **Waldenses** cherished the same faith- *Ibid*, pp. 129-132.

“Wycliffe [the ‘morning star of the reformation’] looked forward to the redeemer’s appearing as the hope of the church.---*Ibid*, pp. 132-134.

“Luther declared, ‘I persuade myself verily, that the day of judgment will not be absent full three hundred years. God will not, cannot, suffer this wicked world much longer.’ ‘The great day is drawing near in which the kingdom of abomination shall be overthrown.’ -*Ibid*, pp. 158, 134.

“This aged world is not far from its end,’ said **Melanchthon. Calvin** bids Christians, ‘not to hesitate, ardently desiring the day of Christ’s coming as of all events most auspicious,’ and declares that ‘the whole family of the faithful will keep in view that day.’ ‘We must hunger after Christ, we must seek, contemplate,’ he says, ‘till the dawning of that great day, when our Lord will fully manifest the glory of His kingdom.’ - *Ibid*, pp. 158. 134.

“Has not the Lord Jesus carried up our flesh to heaven,’ said **Knox**, the Scottish Reformer, ‘and shall He not return? We know that he shall return, and that with expedition.’ **Ridley and Latimer**, who laid down their lives for the truth, looked in faith for the Lord’s coming. Ridely wrote: ‘The world without doubt—this I do believe, and therefore I say it—draws to an end. Let us with John, the servant of God, cry in our hearts to our Savior Christ, Come, Lord Jesus, come.’ - *Ibid*, pp. 151, 145.

“The thoughts of the coming of the Lord,’ said **Baxter**, ‘are most sweet and joyful to me.’ - Richard Baxter, *Works*, vol. 17, p. 55. ‘It is the work of faith and the character of His saints to love His appearing and to look for that blessed hope.’ If death be the last enemy to be destroyed at the resurrection [], we may learn how earnestly believers should long and pray for the second coming of Christ, when this full and final conquest shall be made.’ - *Ibid*, vol. 17, pp. 182, 183.

“This is the day that all believers should long, and hope, and wait for, as being the accomplishment of all the work of their redemption, and all the desires and endeavors of their

souls.’ ‘Hasten, O Lord, this blessed day!’ – *Ibid*, vol. 17, pp. 182, 183. **Such was the hope of the apostolic church**, of ‘the church in the wilderness,’ and the Reformers.” – *Great Controversy* pp. 303, 304.

The urgency in Christ’s last message, “Surely I am coming quickly” (Rev. 22:20), is for His church to “step fast” and give “the trumpet that certain sound” announcing the soon return of Jesus; to “work for the night is coming when no man can work.” *Since 1798 A.D.* we have been living “in the time of the end.” And *since 1844* we have been living under the judgment hour where the heavenly “sanctuary is being cleansed from all the sins of God’s people”—determining their final reward of either everlasting life or eternal death! The various other applications of this message are explained in the following:--

“Hold fast.” This does not mean, Hold fast to your sins; but, hold fast to the comfort, the faith, the hope, that God has given you in His Word. Never be discouraged. A discouraged man can do nothing. Satan is seeking to discourage you, telling you it is no use to serve God, that it does not pay, and that it is just as well to have pleasure and enjoyment in this world. But ‘what shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?’ [Mark 8:36, 37]. You may have worldly pleasure at the expense of the future world; but can you afford to pay such a price? We are to ‘hold fast’ and live up to all the light we receive from heaven. Why?—Because God wants us to grasp the eternal truth, and act as His helping hand by communicating the light to those who are not acquainted with His love for them. When you gave yourself to Christ, you made a pledge in the presence of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, ---the Three great personal Dignitaries of heaven. ‘Hold’ to this pledge.” – *Sons and Daughters*, p. 351.

“The very existence of this people [the faithful during the Thyatira period of church history], holding the faith of the ancient church, was a constant testimony to Rome’s apostasy, and therefore excited the most bitter hatred and persecution. Their refusal to surrender the Scriptures was also an offense that Rome could not tolerate. She determined to blot her [the faithful] from the earth. Now began the most terrible crusades against God’s people in their mountain homes. Inquisitors were put upon their track, and the scene of innocent Abel falling before the murderous Cain was often repeated.” – *Great Controversy*, p. 76.

“God will have a people zealous of good works, standing firm *amid* the pollutions of this degenerate age. There will be a people who hold so fast to divine strength that they will be proof against every temptation. Evil communications in flaming handbills [and all forms of electronic age advertising, marketing, and promotions] may seek to speak to their senses and corrupt their minds; yet they will be so united to God and angels that they will be as those who see not and hear not. They will have a work to do which no one can do for them, which is to fight the good fight of faith, and lay hold on eternal life.”- *God’s Amazing Grace*, p. 36.

“There will be seducing spirits and doctrines of devils in the midst of the church, and these evil influences will increase; but hold fast the beginning of your confidence firm unto the end.” – *Manuscript 61*, 1906, p. 2. (‘Hold Fast the Beginning of Your Confidence,’ June 3, 1906).

“All the people of God are now to stand on the platform of truth as it has been given in the third angel’s message. . . .The only hope for anyone is to hold fast the evidences that have confirmed the truth in righteousness. Let these be proclaimed over and over again until the close of earth’s history.” – *Ibid*.

“He that overcometh.” Rev. 2: 26. – “Satan assailed Christ with the fiercest and most subtle temptations, but he was repulsed in every conflict. Those battles were fought on our behalf; **those victories make it possible for us to conquer.** Christ will give strength to all who seek it. No man without his own consent can be overcome by Satan. The tempter has no power to control the will or force the soul to sin. He [Satan] may distress, but he cannot contaminate. He can cause agony, but not defilement. The fact that Christ has conquered should inspire His followers with courage to fight manfully the battle against sin and Satan.”- *Great Controversy*, p. 510.

“And keepeth My works to the end.” –That is, those works of faith and righteousness that reflect the character of Christ. These “works of Christ” are in stark contrast to the “evil deeds” of those who ally themselves with the “works of darkness” of both ancient, literal Jezebel and modern, spiritual Jezebel—the papal church!

“Power over the nations.” – (See Rev. 2:4 on “judgment given to the saints”). Greek *krima*, ‘sentence,’ ‘verdict,’ ‘a decision rendered.’

“Here *krima* seems to mean the authority to pass sentence. The passage does not refer to a verdict in favor of the righteous. The saints sit upon the thrones, which fact indicates that they are the ones who will pronounce sentence [upon the wicked]. The passage is doubtless an allusion to Dan. 7:22, where the prophet notes that ‘judgment was given to the saints of the Most High.’ . . . The work of judgment referred to by the revelator is doubtless that spoken by Paul: ‘Do you not know that the saints shall judge the world? . . . Know ye not that we shall judge angels?’ (1 Cor. 6: 2, 3). The work of judgment will doubtless involve a careful investigation of the records of evil men, so that every man will be convinced of the justice of God in the destruction of the wicked (See DA 58). See GC 660, 661.” – *Footnotes, on Rev. 2:3, E.G. White Comprehensive Commentary on Revelation*, Vol. 2, p, 1143.

And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; and as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers: even as I received of My Father. And I will give him the Morning Star. Rev. 2:28.

“Rule with a rod of iron.” – Rule is the Greek *poimaino*, literally, ‘to shepherd,’ and thus ‘to rule (see on Matt. 2:6).

“The passage is quoted from Ps. 2:9. For the time, circumstances, and nature of Christ’s breaking the nations with a ‘rod of iron’ see on Rev. 19:15. . . **Rod.** The word used here represents the Hebrew shebet of Ps. 2:9, which may mean a shepherd’s rod (Ps. 23:4), or a scepter (Ps. 45:6), or a rod of punishment (Ps. 125:3). The context of Rev.2:7 suggests that the ‘rod’ is here both a symbol of rulership and an instrument of punishment.”- *Ibid.*

“The Morning Star.” – No doubt is Christ Himself. See on Rev. 22:16; cf. 2 Pet. 1:19.

“The truth of the **third angel’s message** has been proclaimed by some as a dry theory. But we must all place in that message Christ, as the first and the last, the I am, **the bright and morning Star.**” –*Signs of the Times*, Dec. 23, 1897. “Those who are truly the followers of Christ love as brethren, and are the salt of the earth, the light of the world. Every true believer catches the beams from the Morning Star, and transmits the light to those who sit in darkness. Not only do they shine amid the darkness in their own neighborhoods, but **as a church** they forth to regions beyond.” – *The Home Missionary*, Aug. 1, 1896.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. Rev. 2:19.

“When God’s people hear to a purpose the things that are revealed to the churches, when they get the burden of the message, and say to others, ‘Come,’ they are laborers together with God.” – *Manuscript Release No. 21*, p. 452.

Can this be safely said of us—that we truly *hear to a purpose* the deep things revealed in Revelation to all the churches, *experience the burden* of these messages, and *proclaim to others* by word and deed, by pen and voice, its *final* invitation, counsels, and warnings? If so then we are properly called co-laborers with God. If not, then we must be serving another master (Luke 16:13), knowingly or unknowingly because there is no middle

ground in the battle for souls! Jesus himself declared: "He who is not with Me is against Me, and he who does not gather with Me scatters abroad." Matt. 12: 30.

Are you part of those actively gathering in the "other sheep" of the Shepherd, "which are not yet of His "one fold?" and nurturing them in their growth? Or are you part of those scattering His "one little flock" (John 10:16),--the "remnant of her seed who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" (Rev. 12:17)? Think.

Source: Manuscript Release No. 23
Statements Concerning the Study of Prophecies

Overlooked Truths to Appear

"The Lord designs that in the revelation of truth in all ages, the doctrine of grace shall be gradually unfolded to the comprehension of man. If we follow on to know the Lord, we shall know His going forth is prepared as the morning [Hos. 6:3]. His truth unfolds as the obscurity of dawn brightens into the radiance of noonday....MS 75, 1897, p. 3.

Sink Shaft Deep into Mines of Truth

"The members of the church of God need to be instructed and educated, line upon line, as a Bible class. Nine-tenths of our people, including many of our teachers and ministers, are content with surface truths.

In the Bible the truth is compared to treasure hid in a field, the which, when a man hath found, he hideth; and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field, that he may make himself the possessor of all of its treasures. I call upon my brethren in the name of the Lord to sink the shaft deep into the mines of truth." MS 35, 1901 ("Consumers but not Producers," Apr. 25, 1901).

Dig Deeply for Solid Foundations

"Many who are serving as gospel ministers need to study the Word. Revelation means something revealed, which all are to understand. Dig deep for the truth. Plead with the Lord for understanding of His Word. Those who feel the need for special help of God will ask Him who is the Source of all wisdom to supply all their necessities. Ask Him to enlighten your understanding, that you may know how to give the light to others. Put your mind to the task. Never rest satisfied with a partial knowledge of the truth, pieced out with some suppositions." MS 174, 1988, pp. 7, 8. (Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation, " March 3, 1901)

Mighty Truths Buried Beneath Rubbish of Error

"Mighty truths have been buried beneath the sophistry of error, but they will be found by the diligent searcher. As he finds and opens the treasure house of the precious jewels of truth, it is no robbery; for all who appreciate these jewels may possess them, and then they too have a treasure house to open to others. He who imparts does not deprive himself of the treasure; for as he examines it that he may present it in such a way as to attract others, he finds new treasures." MS 88, 1898, p. 6 ("The Parable of the Householder," July 10, 1898).

Grapple With Great Themes

My brethren, the value of the evidences of truth that we have received during the past half century, is above estimate. The evidences are as treasure hidden in a field. Search for them. Study the Bible truths that for fifty years have been calling us out from the world. Present this evidence in clear, plain lines. Those who have been long in the truth and

those who have recently received the truth must now dig for the buried heavenly treasure. Let every man work to the point. Study the word of God. Revive the evidences given in the past, 'Search the Scriptures,' Christ said, 'for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of Me.'

Those who stand before the people as teachers of truth are to grapple with great themes. They are not to occupy precious time in talking of trivial subjects, Let them study the Word, and preach the Word. Let the Word in their hands be as a sharp, tow-edged sword. Let it testify to past truths and show what is to be in the future."

Christ came from heaven to give to John the great, wonderful truths that are to shape our lives and that by us are to be proclaimed to the world. We are to keep abreast of the times, bearing a clear, intelligent testimony, guided by the unction of the Holy Spirit." MS 31, 1906, pp. 5, 6 ("Be Vigilant," April 2, 1906)

Increased Light to Shine on all Grand Truths of Prophecy

"Increased light will shine upon all the grand truths of prophecy, and they will be seen in freshness and brilliancy, because the bright beams of the Sun of Righteousness [Mal. 4:2] will illuminate the whole. . . .

The Lord wants to impart to us increased light. He desires that we shall have distinct revealings of His glory, that ministers and people shall become strong in His strength. When the angel was about to unfold to Daniel the intensely interesting prophecies to be recorded for us who are going to witness their fulfillment, the angel said, 'Be strong, yea, be strong.' We are to receive the very same glory that was revealed to Daniel [and John] because it is for God's people in these last days, that they may give the trumpet a certain sound." – MS 18, 1888, p. 13 ("Religious Liberty," 1888).

Be Not Diverted With Minutiae

"We are to proclaim the third angel's message to a perishing world, and we are not to permit our minds to become diverted by minutiae that practically amount to nothing. If our brethren consider the important matters pertaining to eternal life and eternal death, many of the smaller matters that they desire so much to adjust, would adjust themselves.

The Lord calls upon His ministering servants to proclaim the message of truth, dwelling upon those things that are of great importance. When Jesus shall lead us by the side of the living waters flowing from God's throne, He will explain to us many of the mysteries of the Bible that we cannot now comprehend. He is the great Teacher of His Word, which cannot be fully understood in this life, but which in the future life will be clothed with the brightness of the light of clear understanding." Letter 16, 1903, p 7, 1903

We Now Discern only Shadow of Important Truth.

All who have misconceived opinions and principles because they have entertained them, hold them fast as too precious to yield in order to obtain the most precious knowledge of the true bearing of the Word of God upon all the movements of their daily life. These will lose much which they might have obtained, and that loss will prevent them from advancing in the light which God has given them opportunities to obtain. They have not mental or spiritual appetite to eat and digest; therefore the second advance steps could not be made in following the Lamb withersover He goeth [Rev. 14: 4].

The more closely and studiously we search for the truths as for hidden treasure,---for there are bright and important truths of which we only now discern the shadows, ---the more surely shall we advance in the light as He is in the light" –Letter 147, 1897, pp. 6,7.

To be continued next week on Sardis