

# REVELATION

## INTRODUCTION TO THE BOOK OF REVELATION

That this book was written by the Apostle and Evangelist John, is clear not only from the express mention of his name, and from his office, a servant of Jesus Christ, (~~600~~ Revelation 1:1); but also from the character this writer gives of himself, (~~600~~ Revelation 1:2); as being an eyewitness of the essential Logos, or Word of God, and who bore a faithful record of him as such, as John did in his Gospel, in a very peculiar and remarkable manner, and from this writer's being in the isle of Patmos when he wrote, (~~600~~ Revelation 1:9); for of what other John can this be said? to which may be added the testimonies of the ancient writers, as Justin Martyr<sup>f1</sup>, who lived within fifty years of the apostle, and Irenaeus<sup>f2</sup>, who was the disciple of Polycarp, an hearer of this apostle, and Clemens Alexandrinus<sup>f3</sup>, Tertullian<sup>f4</sup>, Origen<sup>f5</sup>, and others, who ascribe it to him. It was a most monstrously stupid notion of Caius, Dionysius of Alexandria mentions<sup>f6</sup>, that it was written by Cerinthus the heretic, when his heresies concerning the divinity and humanity of Christ are most strongly refuted in it. What seems to have led to such a thought is, that the account of the thousand years' reign, and the descent of the new Jerusalem from heaven, seemed to favour the judaism of this man, and his carnal notions of an earthly paradise, whereas they have no such tendency. And as for its being written by another John, who is said to be presbyter at Ephesus, after the apostle, it is not certain there ever was such a man; and if there was, he must be too late to be the writer of this book; nor to him can the above characters agree. What is observed in favour of him, that the penman of this book is called, in the title, John the divine, and not the evangelist, or apostle, will do him no service; for to whom does this character so well agree, as to the Evangelist John, who wrote of divine things in so divine a manner, and particularly concerning the divinity of Christ? hence this book was sometimes called **ψεολογια**, "Divinity"<sup>f7</sup>: besides, the title of the book is not original, but is what has been affixed to it by others, and varies; for in the Complutensian edition it runs thus,

“the Revelation of the holy Apostle and Evangelist John the Divine.”

In the Vulgate Latin version it is called the Apocalypse of the blessed John the Apostle; and in the Syriac version, the Revelation which was made to John the Evangelist; and in the Arabic version, the Vision of John, the Apostle and Evangelist, to wit, the Apocalypse. All which acknowledge the Apostle John to be the writer of it, and show the sense of the ancients concerning it. Nor is it of any moment what is alleged, that this writer makes mention of his name several times, whereas it was usual with John, both in his Gospel and epistles, to conceal his name; since there is a wide difference between writing an history and epistles to friends, and prophecy which requires the author's name, on whom the authority and truth of the prophecy greatly depend: and so likewise the disagreement of style observed in this book, with the other writings of John, has no force in it; since the prophetic style is always different from an historical and epistolary one; and yet, after all, in many things, there is an agreement; John in this, as in his other writings, speaks of Christ as the Word and Son of God and under the character of the Lamb; and likewise the following: passages may be compared together, as (~~Revelation~~ Revelation 1:2) with (~~John~~ John 19:35) and (~~1 John~~ 1 John 1:1, 2) (~~Revelation~~ Revelation 1:5) with (~~1 John~~ 1 John 1:7). All which being observed there no room to doubt, neither of the writer nor of the authority of this book; especially when the agreement of the doctrine contained in it with other parts of the Scripture, the majesty of its style, and above all the many prophecies of things to come to pass in it, several of which have been already fulfilled, are considered; and though it was called in question and rejected by some heretical men, because some things in it did not suit with their tenets, yet we have not the least reason to doubt of its being authentic who have lived to see so much of it already accomplished and which could come from no other but God. As for the time of its writing this is not agreed upon on all hands; the place where, seems to be the isle of Patmos, which yet some question. Some think it was written in the times of Claudius Caesar<sup>f8</sup>, before the destruction of Jerusalem. In the title of the Syriac version, this revelation is said to be made to John in the isle of Patmos, into which he was cast by Nero Caesar. But the more commonly received opinion is, that he had this vision there, at the latter end of Domitian's reign<sup>f9</sup> by whom he was there banished, about the year 95, or 96. But be this as it will, the book is certainly of divine authority, and exceeding useful and instructive; and contains in it the

most momentous and important doctrines of the Gospel, concerning a trinity of persons in the Godhead, the deity and sonship of Christ, the divinity and personality of the Spirit, the offices of Christ, the state and condition of man by nature, justification, pardon, and reconciliation by the blood of Christ; and it recommends the several duties of religion, and encourages to the exercise of every grace and gives a very particular account of the rise, power, and fall of antichrist, and of the state of the church of Christ in all the periods of time to the end of the world. And though it is written in an uncommon style, yet may be understood, by the use of proper means, as by prayer and meditation, by comparing it with other prophetic writings, and the history of past times, by which many things in it will appear to have had their accomplishment; and it ought to be observed, that it is a revelation, and not a hidden thing; that it is now not a sealed book, but an open one; and that such are pronounced blessed that read and hear it, and observe the things in it, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 1:3); and which is no small encouragement to attempt an explanation of it.

# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 1

This chapter contains the preface and introduction to the book, and the first vision in it. The preface begins with the title of the book, in which the subject matter of it is pointed at, a Revelation; the author of it, Jesus Christ, who had it from his Father; the minister of it, an angel: the person to whom it was made known, described by his name, office, and the testimony he bore to Christ, his Gospel, and to whatever he saw; and for encouragement to persons to read, hear, and observe it, happiness is pronounced to them ([Revelation 1:1-3](#)); the inscription of the book follows, in which are the name of the writer, and the place where the churches to whom it is inscribed were, with a salutation of them; in which grace and peace are wished for them, from God the Father, from the Holy Spirit, and from Jesus Christ; who is described by characters expressing his prophetic, priestly, and kingly offices, and by the benefits, favours, and honours bestowed by him on his people, to whom a doxology or ascription of glory is made, ([Revelation 1:4-6](#)); who is further described, first by his future visible coming in the clouds, which will greatly affect the inhabitants of the earth, and then by himself, as the eternal and almighty God, ([Revelation 1:7,8](#)); and in order to introduce the vision, hereafter related in this chapter, he that saw it gives an account of himself, by his name, by his relation to the churches, and by his partnership with them in affliction, and of the place he was in; and for what, and of the time when he had the vision, and the frame he was in, and what awakened his attention to it, ([Revelation 1:9-11](#)); and how, that adverting to it he saw seven golden candlesticks, and in the midst of them one like the son of man, who is described by his clothes and girdle, by his head, hair, and eyes, by his feet and voice, by what he had in his right hand, and by what went out of his mouth, and by his face shining like the sun in its strength, ([Revelation 1:12-16](#)), next is related the effect this vision had on. John, who upon it fell down as one dead, but was comforted by Christ, laying his right hand on him, and telling him who he was, and bidding him write what he had seen, or should see, ([Revelation 1:17-19](#)); and the chapter is concluded with

an interpretation of the mystery of the seven stars, and the seven candlesticks, (ἑπτὰ) Revelation 1:20).

**Ver. 1.** *The Revelation of Jesus Christ*, etc.] Either of which he is the author: for it was he that sent and showed it by his angel to John; it was he, the lion of the tribe of Judah, that took the book, and opened the seals of it, and which is a very considerable proof of his deity; since none but God could foreknow and foretell things to come, or declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet, as is done in this book: or of which he is the subject; for it treats much of his person, offices, and grace, and of Christ mystical, of the state of his church, in the several ages of time; or it is that revelation which was first made unto him, to which sense the following words incline:

*which God gave unto him*; not to him as he is God, for as such he is omniscient, and foreknew whatever would come to pass, and needed no revelation to be made to him, but as he was man and Mediator; and this was given him by God the Father, and put into his hands, to make known as being a part of the administration of his prophetic office: the end of its being given him was,

*to show unto his servant things which must shortly come to pass*: the Arabic version adds, “in future ages”; things that were to be hereafter, the accomplishment of which was necessary, because of the certain and unalterable decree of God, the good of his people, and his own glory; and these were to come to pass quickly, in a very little time; not that they would all be fulfilled in a short space of time, for there are some things not fulfilled yet, though it is nineteen hundred years ago and more, since this revelation was made; and we are sure there are some things that will not be accomplished till a thousand years hence, and more, for the millennium is not yet begun; and after that is ended, there is to be a second resurrection, and a destruction of the Gog and Magog army; but the sense is, that these things should very quickly begin to be fulfilled, and from thenceforward go on fulfilling till all were accomplished. Now to show, to represent these things, in a clear manner, as the nature of them would admit of, to the servants of Christ, all true believers, read and hear and diligently observe them, and especially to the ministers of the Gospel, whose business is to search into them, and point them out to and particularly to his servant John, was this revelation made by Christ, who immediately answered this end:

*and he sent, and signified [it] by his angel unto servant John*; he who is the Lord of angels, and to whom they are ministering spirits, sometimes sent one angel and sometimes another; and by various emblems, signs, and visions, represented and set before John, a faithful servant, and a beloved disciple of his, the whole of this revelation.

**Ver. 2.** *Who bore record of the word of God*, etc.] Of the essential and eternal Word of God, his only begotten Son; as John the apostle did in his Gospel, and in his epistles, and also in this book; and which is a clear evidence of his being the writer of it.

*And of the testimony of Jesus Christ*; that is, the Gospel, which testifies of the person of Christ, of the truth of his divinity, and reality of his human nature; of the union of the two natures, divine and human, his person: of his several offices, of prophet, priest and King; of what he did and suffered for his people; and of the blessings of grace which they receive by him:

*and of all things that he saw*; with his bodily eyes, as the human body of Christ, the miracles he wrought in it, the transfiguration of it on the mount, the crucifixion of it, and the piercing of it with a spear, and the resurrection of it from the dead; and also the visions recorded in this book; and such a faithful witness serves greatly to confirm the authority of this book, and to recommend the perusal of it. The Complutensian edition and the Arabic version read, “which are, and which shall”, or “must be hereafter”, as in (~~4019~~ Revelation 1:19).

**Ver. 3.** *Blessed [is] he that readeth*, etc.] This book the Revelation, privately, in his closet or family, carefully and diligently, with a desire of understanding it; or publicly in the church of God, and endeavours open and explain it to others; and may allude to the reading of the law and the prophets in the synagogues, which were not barely read, but expounded; (see ~~4435~~ Acts 13:15 15:21); and the rather this may be thought to be the sense of the words, since there is a change of number in the next clause,

*and they that hear the words of this prophecy*; that listen attentively to the reading and exposition of this book, and have ears to hear, so as to understand the prophecies contained in it: for the whole, when delivered to John, was a prophecy of things to come: but some versions read the number alike in both clauses; as either, “blessed is he that readeth, and he that heareth”, as the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions; or “blessed are they that read, and they that hear”, as the Arabic version:

*and keep those things which are written therein*; the last version adds, “concerning this frail world”; who not only read, and hear, but put in practice what they read and hear; for there are some things in this book which are of a practical nature, especially in the epistles to the seven churches; or the sense is, happy are those persons that observe, and take notice of what is written herein, and meditate upon them, and well weigh them in their minds, and retain them in their memories. Now, though eternal happiness does not depend upon, nor is procured by any of these means, as reading, hearing, and observing; yet there is a real happiness, a true pleasure, that does attend these things, which may stir up to a regard unto them; and for which purpose the following words are added:

*for the time [is] at hand*; when thee things should begin to be fulfilled.

**Ver. 4.** *John to the seven churches which are in Asia*, etc.] In lesser Asia; their names are mentioned in (<sup><6011></sup>Revelation 1:11);

*grace [be] unto you, and peace*; which is the common salutation of the apostles in all their epistles, and includes all blessings of grace, and all prosperity, inward and outward: (see Gill on “<sup><6007></sup>Romans 1:7”). The persons from whom they are wished are very particularly described,

*from him which is, and which was, and which is to come*; which some understand of the whole Trinity; the Father by him “which is”, being the I am that I am; the Son by him “which was”, which was with God the Father, and was God; and the Spirit by him “which is to come”, who was promised to come from the Father and the Son, as a Comforter, and the Spirit of truth: others think Christ is here only intended, as he is in (<sup><6008></sup>Revelation 1:8) by the same expressions; and is he “which is”, since before Abraham he was the “I am”; and he “which was”, the eternal Logos or Word; and “is to come”, as the Judge of quick and dead. But rather this is to be understood of the first Person, of God the Father; and the phrases are expressive both of his eternity, he being God from everlasting to everlasting; and of his immutability, he being now what he always was, and will be what he now is, and ever was, without any variableness, or shadow of turning: they are a periphrasis, and an explanation of the word “Jehovah”, which includes all tenses, past, present, and to come. So the Jews explain this name in (<sup><0014></sup>Exodus 3:14);

“Says R. Isaac <sup>f10</sup>, the holy blessed God said to Moses, Say unto them, I am he that was, and I am he that now is, and I am he that is to come, wherefore *hyha* is written three times.”

And such a periphrasis of God is frequent in their writings <sup>f11</sup>.

*And from the seven spirits which are before his throne*; either before the throne of God the Father; or, as the Ethiopic version reads, “before the throne of the Lord Jesus Christ”; by whom are meant not angels, though these are spirits, and stand before the throne of God, and are ready to do his will: this is the sense of some interpreters, who think such a number of them is mentioned with reference to the seven angels of the churches; or to the seven last “Sephivot”, or numbers in the Cabalistic tree of the Jews; the three first they suppose design the three Persons in the Godhead, expressed in the preceding clause, and the seven last the whole company of angels: or to the seven principal angels the Jews speak of. Indeed, in the Apocrypha,

“I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” (Tobit 12:15)

Raphael is said to be one of the seven angels; but it does not appear to be a generally received notion of theirs that there were seven principal angels. The Chaldee paraphrase on (<sup><CH10></sup>Genesis 11:7) is misunderstood by Mr. Mede, for not “seven”, but “seventy angels” are there addressed. It was usual with the Jews only to speak of four principal angels, who stand round about the throne of God; and their names are Michael, Uriel, Gabriel, and Raphael; according to them, Michael stands at his right hand, Uriel at his left, Gabriel before him, and Raphael behind him <sup>f12</sup>. However, it does not seem likely that angels should be placed in such a situation between the divine Persons, the Father and the Son; and still less that grace and peace should be wished for from them, as from God the Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ; and that any countenance should be given to angel worship, in a book in which angels are so often represented as worshippers, and in which worship is more than once forbidden them, and that by themselves: but by these seven spirits are intended the Holy Spirit of God, who is one in his person, but his gifts and graces are various; and therefore he is signified by this number, because of the fulness and perfection of them, and with respect to the seven churches, over whom he presided, whom he influenced, and sanctified, and filled, and enriched with his gifts and graces.



**Ver. 5.** *And from Jesus Christ*, etc.] Who, though the second Person in the Trinity, is mentioned last, because many things were to be said of him; and who is described in all his offices: in his prophetic office,

*the faithful witness*; as he is of his Father, of his mind and will, with respect to doctrine and worship; of his truth and faithfulness in his promises; and of his love, grace, and mercy, to his chosen; and of himself, of his true deity, proper sonship, and perfect equality with the Father; of his Messiahship, and of salvation through his obedience, sufferings, and death; and of all truth in general, to which he has bore a faithful testimony several ways, in his ministry, by his miracles, at his death, and by the shedding of his blood to seal it; by his Spirit since, and by the ministers of his word: he is described in his priestly office by

*the first begotten of the dead*: being the first that rose from the dead by his own power, and to an immortal life; for though some few were raised before him, yet not by themselves, nor to live for ever, but to die again. Moreover, he is the firstfruits of the resurrection, the pledge and earnest of it, as well as the efficient cause and exemplar of it. This character supposes that he died, as he did, for the sins of his people; and that he rose again from the dead, as he did, for their justification; and that he rose first as their head and representative, and opened the way of life for them. And he is described in his kingly office, for it follows,

*and the Prince of the kings of the earth*: which is not to be understood figuratively of the saints, who have power over sin, Satan, and the world, through the efficacious grace of Christ, and of whom he is Prince or King; but literally of the kings and princes of this world, over whom Christ is King and Lord, who receive their crowns and kingdoms from him, and rule by him, and are accountable to him, as they one day must be. Next follows a doxology, or an ascription of glory to him,

*unto him that hath loved us*; his own, his people, his church, his chosen, and who are given him by his Father; these he has loved with an everlasting and unchangeable love, with a love of complacency and delight, which passes knowledge, and will never end: and which he has shown in espousing their persons, undertaking their cause, assuming their nature, and in nothing more than in giving himself for them as a propitiatory sacrifice, or in dying and shedding his precious blood for them, as is next expressed:

*and washed us from our sins in his own blood*; which shows that these persons were loved before washed; they were not first washed, and then loved, but first loved, and then washed. Love was the cause of washing, and not washing the cause of love; hence it appears that they were in themselves filthy, and unclean through sin; and that they could not cleanse themselves by anything they could do; and that such was the love of Christ to them, that he shed his precious blood for them, which is a fountain opened, to wash in for sin, and which cleanses from all sin. This is to be understood, not of the sanctification of their natures, which is the work of the Spirit, but of atonement for their sins, and justification from them by the blood of Christ, whereby they are so removed, that they are all fair, and without spot. It is afterwards said, that these same persons are made priests; and it may be observed, that the priests were always washed, before they performed their service, as such <sup>f13</sup>. The Alexandrian copy and the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “and hath loosed us from our sins in”, or “by his blood”; that is, from the guilt of them, which was bound upon them.

**Ver. 6.** *And hath made us kings and priests*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and Complutensian edition, read, “a kingdom, priests”; and the Vulgate Latin version, “a kingdom and priests”; and the Arabic version, “a kingdom of priesthood”; reference seems to be had to (<sup><D956></sup>Exodus 19:6): “and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests”; which the Jerusalem Targum renders, “ye shall be unto me”, <sup>ˆ</sup>ynhkw <sup>ˆ</sup>ykl m, “kings and priests”; and so the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel paraphrases it thus, “and ye shall be before me”, <sup>ˆ</sup>ykl m, “kings” crowned with a crown, <sup>ˆ</sup>ynhkw, “and priests” ministering. Hence it is a common saying with the Jews, that all Israelites are the sons of kings <sup>f14</sup>; and sometimes their doctors are called <sup>hrwt</sup> <sup>ykl</sup> m, “kings of the law” <sup>f15</sup>: and they ascribe the same thing to the word of the Lord as is here attributed to Jesus Christ: so the Targum of Jonathan on (<sup><D983></sup>Deuteronomy 28:13) paraphrases the words;

“the word of the Lord shall appoint or constitute you kings, and not private persons.”

Likewise they say <sup>f16</sup>

“that even a Gentile, if he studies in the law, is <sup>l wdg</sup> <sup>ˆ</sup>hkk, “as an high priest”.”

All which may serve to show to what the reference is had in the text, and from whence the language is taken. But the words are used in a higher and greater sense. The saints are made “kings” by Christ; they are so now; they have received a kingdom of grace, which cannot be taken away; and they have the power of kings over sin, Satan, and the world, and all their enemies; and they live and fare like kings, and are clothed like them, in rich apparel, the righteousness of Christ; and are attended as kings, angels being their lifeguards; and they will appear much more so hereafter, when they shall reign on earth with Christ a thousand years, shall sit upon the same throne, and have a crown of life and righteousness given them, and at last be introduced into the kingdom of glory. And they become such by being the sons of God, which power and privilege they receive from Christ, and so are heirs of God, and joint heirs with him, and by being united to him. And he also makes them “priests” to offer up the spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise, and those of a broken heart, and of a contrite spirit, and even their souls and bodies, as a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice unto God, by anointing and sanctifying them by his Spirit: and they are made such by him

*to God, and his Father*; not to men, nor to angels. Now to him that has shown so much love, and bestowed such high favours and honours, is the following ascription made,

*to him [be] glory and dominion for ever and ever, Amen.* The glory of his deity, and of all his offices; of his being the faithful witness, the first begotten of the dead, and the Prince of the kings of the earth; and of all the benefits and blessings, favours and honours, received from him by his people: and “dominion”; over all creatures, and over all his saints, and especially in his kingdom, in the last days, which will be an everlasting one; and which is continually to be wished and prayed for, that it would come, and come quickly. “Amen”; so let it be, and so it shall be.

**Ver. 7.** *Behold he cometh with clouds*, etc.] John carries on the account of Christ in his kingly office, one branch of which is to execute judgment; and describes him by a future coming of his, which cannot be understood of his coming to take vengeance on the Jews, at the time of Jerusalem's destruction, though that is sometimes expressed in such language, and with such circumstances, as here; (see <sup><ABF></sup> Matthew 24:30 26:64); because if this revelation was made to John, in the latter end of Domitian's reign, as is commonly reported by the ancients, and in the year 95 or 96, as

chronologers generally place it, it must be upwards of twenty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and therefore cannot relate to that; nor to his coming in a spiritual sense to convert the Jews in the latter day; for this coming is personal, and with clouds, when he will be seen by every eye; all which circumstances do not so well agree with that; besides, all the kindreds of the earth will not lament on that account: the wicked will take little notice of it, the tribes of the Jews will rejoice at it, and so will all the converted Gentiles: it is better therefore to understand this of Christ's second coming to judge the quick and dead, which is represented as just at hand, to denote the certainty of it; and a "behold" is prefixed to it, to excite attention, and to denote the importance of it: things of great moment, and very surprising, will then be done; Christ will appear in great glory and majesty, the dead in Christ will be raised, Christ's personal kingdom will take place, and the general judgment come on. The manner of his coming will be "with clouds"; either figuratively, with angels, who will attend him both for grandeur and service, or literally, in the clouds of heaven; he shall descend in like manner as he ascended, and as Daniel prophesied he should, (<sup>2013</sup>Daniel 7:13). Hence, one of the names of the Messiah, with the Jews, is, *ynn* [ , "Anani"<sup>f17</sup> ], which signifies "clouds"; and his coming is so described, both to denote the grand and magnificent manner, in which he will come, making the clouds his chariots; and to strike terror into his enemies, clouds and darkness being about him, thunder and lightning breaking out of them, as tokens of that vengeance he comes to take upon them; as also the visibility of his coming, he shall descend from the third heaven, where he now is, into the airy heaven, and sit upon the clouds, as on his throne, and be visible to all: hence it follows,

*and every eye shall see him*; that is, everyone that has eyes shall see him, or all men shall see him; the righteous shall see him, and be glad; they shall see him in his glory, as he is, and for themselves, and be satisfied; they shall rejoice at the sight of him; they will be filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory: but the wicked will see him and tremble; they will be filled with the utmost consternation and astonishment; they will not be able to bear the sight of him; they will flee from him, and call to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from his face.

*And they [also] which pierced him*; his hands, feet, and side, when they crucified him; both the Roman soldiers, who actually did it, and the body of the Jewish nation, the rulers and common people, who consented to it, and

at whose instigation it was done; these, being raised from the dead, shall see him with their bodily eyes, whom they so used.

*And all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him*; all the wicked, in the several parts of the world, will lament, and wring their hands, and express the inward terror and horror of their minds, at his appearing; they will fear his resentment of all their wicked words and actions; will dread his wrath, and tremble at his righteous judgment:

*even so, Amen*, says John, and so say all true believers; what the wicked lament, they rejoice at; they desire the coming of Christ, they love it, look and long for it; they believe it shall be, and wish it may be quickly, as in (<sup>622</sup>Revelation 22:20); This expression of faith in, and desire after the coming of Christ, is signified by two words, the one Greek and the other Hebrew; suggesting, that this is an article of faith among all the saints of all nations, Jews and Gentiles, and is what they are wishing and waiting for.

**Ver. 8.** *I am Alpha and Omega*, etc.] These are the words of Christ himself, appearing at once, and confirming what John had said of him, concerning his person, offices, and future coming: Alpha is the first letter, and Omega the last in the Greek alphabet, and signifies that Christ is the first and the last, as it is interpreted in (<sup>611</sup>Revelation 1:11,17), and is a character often given to the divine Being in prophetic writings; (see <sup>340</sup>Isaiah 41:4 44:6 48:12); and is no small proof of the proper deity of Christ. Alpha is used by the Jews for the chief of persons or things;

“Macmas and Mezonicha (names of places) are **tl sl apl a**,  
“Alpha for fine flour”;

that is, the best fine flour is there, they are the chief places for it: and again,

“Tekoah is **ˆmçl apl a**, “Alpha for oil”;

or the chief place for oil; the best oil was to be had there <sup>f18</sup>: so Christ, he is the Alpha, the chief as to his divine nature, being God over all, blessed for ever; and in his divine sonship, none, angels or men, are in such sense the Son of God as he is; and in all his offices, of prophet, priest, and King; he is the prophet, the great prophet of the church, never man spake like him, or taught as he did; he is the most excellent priest, that exceeds Aaron and all his sons, having an unchangeable priesthood; and he is the King of kings, and Lord of lords; he has the chief place in the church, he is the head of it, and has in all things the preeminence; he is the chief in honour and

dignity, is at the right hand of God, and has a name above every name: he also in some sense may be said to be the Omega, the last and the lowest; as in his state of humiliation, he was not only made lower than the angels, but than man; he was despised and rejected of men, and scarcely reckoned a man, a worm, and no man; and he humbled himself, and became obedient to death, even the death of the cross. Moreover, these letters, Alpha and Omega, being the first and the last in the alphabet, may stand for the whole; and it seems to be a proverbial expression taken from the Jews, who use the phrase, from Aleph to Tau, for the whole of any thing, which two letters in the Hebrew alphabet stand in the same place as these; accordingly the Syriac version renders it Olaph and Tau; and the Arabic version Aleph and Ye. It is said in (<sup>2006</sup>Ezekiel 9:6), “begin at my sanctuary”;

“R. Joseph taught, do not read “my sanctuary”, but “sanctified ones”, these are the children of men who confirm “the whole law”,  
 wyt d[w Pl am, “from Aleph to Tau”;

the same as from Alpha to Omega, or from one end to the other: and a little after,

“says R. Levi, Tau is the end of the seal of the holy blessed God, for says R. Chanina, the seal of the holy blessed God is tma,  
 “truth”: says R. Samuel bar Nachmani, these are the children of men who confirm the whole law “from Aleph to Tau”<sup>f19</sup>.”

So Christ, he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the chief, the whole of things; as of the covenant of grace, he is the first and last of it, he is the Mediator, surety, and messenger of it, and the ratifier and confirmer of it, he is the covenant itself, all its blessings and promises are in him; he is the sum and substance of the Scriptures, both of the law and of the Gospel; he is the fulfilling end of the law, and he is the subject matter of the Gospel; he stands in the first verse in Genesis, and in the last of the Revelation; he is the Alpha and Omega, the first and last, the whole and all in the business of salvation, in the affair of justification before God, in the sanctification of his people, in their adoption, and eternal glorification; he stands first and last in the book of God's purposes and decrees, in the book of the covenant, in the book of the creatures, or creation, being the first cause, and last end of all things, in the book of Providence, and in the book of the Scriptures: likewise, as these two letters include all the rest, this phrase

may be expressive of the perfection of Christ, who as God has the fulness of the Godhead, all the perfections of the divine nature in him; and, as man, is in all things made like unto his brethren; and, as Mediator, has all fulness of power, wisdom, grace, and righteousness in him, in whom all the saints are complete; and this may also denote his eternity, he having none before him, nor any after him; and which also is signified by some other following expressions:

*the beginning and the ending*; the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, leave out this; which seems to be explanative of the former clause, Alpha being the beginning of the alphabet, and Omega the ending of it; and properly belongs to Christ, who knows no beginning, nor will he have any end with respect to time, being from everlasting to everlasting; and agrees with him as the first cause of all things, both of the old and new creation, and the last end to which they are all referred, being made for his pleasure, honour, and glory: these things now

*saith the Lord*; that is, the Lord Jesus Christ; the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “the Lord God”; and the Ethiopic version only God:

*which is, and which was, and which is to come*; who is God over all, “was” God from all eternity, and is to come as such; which he will show by: his omniscience and omnipotence, displayed in the judgment of the world: who “is” now a Saviour of all that come to God by him; “was” so under the Old Testament dispensation, being the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and “is to come”, as such, and shall appear a second time unto salvation to them that look for him: particularly this phrase is expressive of the eternity of Christ, who is, was, and ever will be; and of his immutability, who is the same he was, and will be for ever the same he is, and was, unchangeable in his person, in his love, and in the virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice; he is the same today, yesterday, and for ever. This same phrase is used of God the Father in (Rev. 1:4); and is a further proof of the deity of Christ; and which is still more confirmed by the following character,

*the Almighty*; as he appears to be, by creating all things but of nothing; by upholding all creatures in their beings; by the miracles he wrought on earth; by the resurrection of himself from the dead; by obtaining eternal redemption for his people; and by his having the care and government of

them upon him, whom he keeps, upholds, bears, and carries to the end, through all their infirmities, afflictions, temptations, and trials.

**Ver. 9. I, John, who also am your brother,** etc.] Here begins the narrative of the visions and prophecies of this book, the former verses containing a general preface to the whole; and this, and the two following verses, are the introduction to the first vision, which John saw; who describes himself by his name, “I John”, the evangelist and apostle, a servant of Christ, and a beloved disciple of his; one that was well known to the seven churches to whom he writes, and who had no reason to doubt of his fidelity in the account he gives them; and also by his relation to them as a “brother”, not in a natural, but in a spiritual sense, they and he belonging to that family that is named of Christ, to the household of God, and of faith, and having one and the same Father, even God: thus, though he was an elder, an evangelist, yea, an apostle by office, yet he puts himself on a level with the several members of these churches, as he was a believer in Christ:

*and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ;* many are the afflictions and tribulations of the saints; these lie in the way to the kingdom; and they are companions and partners with one another in them, both by enduring the same, and by their sympathy and compassion with each other; and as they go sharers in the troubles of this life, so they do, and shall in the kingdom; in the kingdom of grace now, being all of them made kings and priests unto God, and in the kingdom of Christ on earth, where they will all reign with him a thousand years, and in the kingdom of glory, where they shall reign together to all eternity; and in the mean while, they join in the exercise of the grace of patience, of which Christ is the author, exemplar, and object; they are directed by the Spirit of God into a patient waiting for Christ, or a patient expectation of his coming, kingdom, and glory: the Alexandrian copy reads, “patience in Christ”; and the Complutensian edition, “patience in Christ Jesus”: this same person John, who gives this account of himself,

*was in the isle that is called Patmos;* but now “Palmosa”; it is one of the islands of the Cyclades, in the Archipelago, or Icarian sea, and sometimes called the Aegean sea, and had its name from the turpentine trees in it; it is, as Pliny<sup>f20</sup> says, about thirty miles in circumference; and it lay next to the churches on the continent, and is said to be about forty miles southwest of Ephesus, from whence John came thither, and to which church he writes first; how he came here he does not say, concealing, through modesty, his



sufferings; he did not come here of his own accord; Ignatius says <sup>f21</sup>, John **εφυγαδευετο**, “was banished to Patmos”: by Domitian emperor of Rome, as Irenaeus says <sup>f22</sup>, at the latter end of his reign, about the year 95 or 96; and, as Tertullian <sup>f23</sup> after he had been cast into a vessel of flaming oil, where he got no hurt: and this banishment was not for any immorality, and capital sin he had committed, but

*for the word of God*; for believing in Christ, the essential Word of God, and for professing and bearing record of him, both in preaching and writing:

*and for the testimony of Jesus*; for the Gospel of Christ, (see ~~<4100>~~ Revelation 1:2); for embracing it, adhering to it, and publishing it: it is generally thought that John wrote his Revelation in this isle, though some think it is not to be concluded from these words, but the contrary that he had been here, but now was not, but at Ephesus, where he wrote what he had a vision of there.

**Ver. 10.** *I was in the Spirit on the Lord's day*, etc.] Not on the Jewish sabbath, which was now abolished, nor was that ever called the Lord's day, and had John meant that, he would have said on the sabbath day; much less the Jewish passover, but the first day of the week is designed; so the Ethiopic version renders it “on the first day”; and is so called just as the ordinance of the supper is called the Lord's supper, being instituted by the Lord, and the Lord's table, (~~<4101>~~ 1 Corinthians 10:21 11:20), and that because it was the day in which our Lord rose from the dead, (~~<4102>~~ Mark 16:9); and in which he appeared at different times to his disciples, (~~<4103>~~ John 20:19,26), and which the primitive churches set apart for his worship and service, and on which they met together to hear the word, and attend on ordinances, (~~<4104>~~ Acts 20:7 ~~<4105>~~ 1 Corinthians 16:1); and Justin Martyr <sup>f24</sup> tells us, who lived within about fifty years after this time, that on the day called **τη του ηλιου ημερα**, “Sunday”, (by the Greeks,) the Christians met together in one place, and read the Scriptures, and prayed together, and administered the ordinance of the supper; and this, he adds, was the first day in which God created the World, and our Saviour Jesus Christ rose from the dead; yea, Barnabas <sup>f25</sup>, the companion of the Apostle Paul, calls this day the eighth day, in distinction from the seventh day sabbath of the Jews, and which he says is the beginning of another world; and therefore we keep the eighth day, adds he, joyfully, in which Jesus rose from the dead, and being manifested, ascended unto heaven: and this day was

known by the ancients by the name of “the Lord's day”; as by Ignatius <sup>f26</sup>, Irenaeus <sup>f27</sup>, Tertullian <sup>f28</sup>, Origen <sup>f29</sup>, and others; for it must be some day that was known by this name, otherwise it is mentioned to no purpose, because it would not be distinctive from others; for which reason it cannot merely design the day in which John saw this vision, because the Lord appeared on it to him, for this would not distinguish it from any other day. Some have conjectured that this was not the weekly Lord's day observed by the Christians, but the anniversary of Christ's resurrection; and so the Ethiopians still call Easter “Schambatah Crostos”, the sabbath of Christ: to understand it of the former is best. Now, though John was driven from the house and worship of God, and could not join with the saints in the public worship of that day; yet he was employed in spiritual contemplations and exercises, and was under a more than ordinary influence of the Spirit of God; and his spirit or soul was wholly intent upon, and taken up with divine and spiritual things, with visions and representations that were made unto his mind, which he perceived in his spirit, and not with the organs of his body; he was in an ecstasy of spirit, and knew not scarcely whether he was in the body or out of it:

*and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet*; which was the voice of the Son of God, as appears by what it uttered, (<sup>6011</sup>Revelation 1:11); and is afterwards said to be as the sound of many waters; and it was behind him, as in (<sup>2311</sup>Isaiah 30:21), it came to him at an unawares, and surprised him, while he was in deep meditation on spiritual things: and it was a very “great” one; it was the voice of a great person, of the Son of God, and expressed great things, and was very sonorous and loud, it was like the sound of a trumpet; and this was partly to awaken the attention of John to it, and partly to express the certainty of the relation he gives of what it said; had it been a low muttering voice, it might be questioned whether John rightly understood it, and whether he might not be mistaken in the account of what he heard; but it being so loud and clear, there is no room for such a doubt.

**Ver. 11.** *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last*, etc.] These characters, which are repeated here, (see Gill on “<sup>6008</sup>Revelation 1:8”); are left out in the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but are very fitly retained, to point out the person that speaks; to express his dignity, deity, and eternity; to excite the attention of John, and to give weight to what he said:

*and, what thou seest, write in a book*; that it might remain, and be read of all men, and be profitable to the churches in the then present age, and in all future ones:

*and send [it] unto the seven churches which are in Asia*; from whence it appears, that not only the seven following epistles were sent to the churches, but that after John had written in a book the account of all the visions that he saw, the whole was sent unto them, for their use and benefit; and who are particularly named:

*unto Ephesus*; which was a city of Ionia, and which Pliny calls <sup>f30</sup> the work of the Amazons, and the light of Asia; it was famous for the temple of Diana, but more so for having a church of Christ in it: hither the Apostle Paul came and preached, and continued for the space of two years; where a very famous church was planted by him, and proper officers appointed, to whom he wrote a very excellent epistle: this is now a miserable desolate place, not a city, but a village; and is called by the Turks, Aiasalik: of this place and church; (see Gill on “~~4189~~ Acts 18:19”), (see Gill on “~~4017~~ Acts 20:17”);

*and unto Smyrna*; another city of Ionia, so called from Smyrna, the wife of Theseus <sup>f31</sup>, the builder of it; or from Smyrna, an Amazon <sup>f32</sup>, the relics of whose marble bust are to be seen there to this day: it lies about forty six miles from Ephesus, and is by the Turks now called Esmir, and is still a place famous, not for pompous buildings, but for number of inhabitants, riches, and commerce:

*and unto Pergamos*; this was a city of Mysia, situated by the river Caicus, formerly the seat of the kings of Attalia, and was bequeathed by Attalus, their last king, to the Romans: it is famous for being the native place of Galen the physician, and of Apollodorus the rhetorician, master to Augustus Caesar, and for the invention of parchment in it, from whence it seems to have its name: it is now called by the Turks Bergamo, and is almost sixty four miles from Smyrna:

*and unto Thyatira*; a city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, formerly called Pelopia, and Ehippia, and now, by the Turks, Ak Hissar, or “the white camp”, and is distant from Pergamos about forty eight miles; (see Gill on “~~4164~~ Acts 16:14”);

*and unto Sardis*; this was another city of Lydia, situated at the side of Mount Tmolus, it was the metropolis of Lydia, and the seat of King

Croesus, and is now called, by the Turks, Sart; and instead of a famous city, it is now an obscure little village, of mean houses, and scarce any other inhabitants in it than shepherds and cow keepers, and is thirty three miles from Thyatira:

*and unto Philadelphia*; another city of Lydia, situated at the foot of Mount Tmolus; it had its name from Attalus Philadelphus, the builder of it; it is now called, by the Turks, Alah Shahr, or “the fair city”, though there is nothing beautiful or magnificent in it; it is distant from Thyatira about twenty seven miles:

*and unto Laodicea*; another city of Lydia, near the river Lycus, first named Diospolis, afterwards Rhoas, and is now, by the Turks, called Eski Hissar, or “the old camp”; and is inhabited by none, unless it be in the night, by wolves, foxes, and jackals, as our countryman Dr. Smith affirms, in his “Notitia” of the seven churches of Asia; from whom I have taken the account of these cities as they now are, and the rest from Pliny and Ptolomy chiefly.

**Ver. 12.** *And I turned to see the voice that spake with me*, etc.] The Complutensian edition reads, “and there I turned”: and so the Arabic version; that is, to see who it was that spoke, from whom the voice came, and by whom it was uttered; (see <sup><del>1210</del></sup>Exodus 20:18);

*and being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks*; which represented the seven churches, (<sup><del>1210</del></sup>Revelation 1:20); in allusion to the seven lamps in the candlestick of the sanctuary, (<sup><del>1257</del></sup>Exodus 25:37 <sup><del>3012</del></sup>Zechariah 4:2); compared to “candlesticks”, for the use of them, which is to hold forth light; these have none of themselves, but what is put into them, and being put into them, they hold it forth; so the churches of Christ have no light of themselves, but what is put into them; and the light which is put into them, is not the mere light of nature, nor the law of Moses, but the Gospel of Christ; which dispels darkness, and is the means of enlightening sinners, and gives light to saints, by which they walk and work; and this light is put into the churches by Christ, whose the Gospel is, and who is himself come a light into the world; and being put here by him, it is held forth by them, especially by the ministers of it, who are the lights of the world, both by their ministry, and in their lives and conversations: and they are compared to “golden” candlesticks, because of their excellency, preciousness, and value, in the esteem of Christ; and for their brightness and purity in doctrine, discipline, and life; and for their splendour, glory, and beauty; and

for their stability and duration; and though they are liable to corruption and taint, yet may be melted, refined, and purified as gold.

**Ver. 13.** *And in the midst of the seven candlesticks [one] like unto the son of man*, etc.] By whom is meant not an angel, for he speaks of himself as a divine Person, as the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, phrases not applicable to any created beings; and of himself also as having been dead, which angels are not capable of, and of living again, and of living for evermore, and having power over death and the grave, which no creature has; yea, he calls himself expressly the Son of God, (<sup>6611b</sup>Revelation 1:11,17,18 2:18); so that Christ is manifestly designed, who, as a divine Person, appeared in a form like that individual human nature which was at his Father's right hand; for that human nature of his, or he as the son of man, was not in the midst of these candlesticks, or churches, but he the Son of God was in a form like to his human nature in heaven; so before his incarnation, he is said to be like unto the son of man, in (<sup>2073</sup>Daniel 7:13); to which there is a reference here, and not only in this, but in some other parts of the description; so after his ascension, he in a visionary way appears, not in that real human nature he assumed, but in a form like unto it, that being in heaven; but when he was here on earth he is called the son of man, and not like to one; though even such a phrase may express the truth and reality of his humanity, for who more like to the son of man than he who is so? (see <sup>8014</sup>John 1:14 <sup>8207</sup>Philippians 2:7); now Christ was seen by John in the midst of the candlesticks or churches, and among whom he walked, as in (<sup>6601</sup>Revelation 2:1); which is expressive of his presence in his churches, and which he has promised unto the end of the world; and of the gracious visits he makes them, and the sweet communion and conversation he indulges them with, to their joy and comfort; as well as the walks he takes among them for his own delight and pleasure; and where he is, abides and takes his turns, particularly as a priest, in which form he now appeared, as the antitype of Aaron the high priest, to him the lamps or candles in the candlesticks, to cause them to burn more brightly and clearly:

*clothed with a garment down to the foot*; which some understand of the righteousness of Christ; this is called a garment, a wedding garment, the best or first robe, the robe of righteousness; and is fitly compared to one, it being unto, and upon believers, put upon them, and which covers their persons, keeps them warm and comfortable, and beautifies and adorns them; and is a very beautiful, pure, and spotless robe; and reaches to the feet, covers all the members of Christ's mystical body, the meanest and

lowest, as well as the more excellent; the weakest believer as well, and as much, as the strongest: but not Christ mystical, but personal, is here represented; others therefore think that this long garment is a sign of gravity and wisdom, it being usual for men of power and authority, and learning, as the Jewish sanhedrim, Scribes and Pharisees, to wear long garments; but it seems rather to design a priestly robe; the robe of the ephod wore by the high priest is called by this name in the Septuagint version of (<sup><D230></sup>Exodus 28:4,31); and so it is by Josephus <sup>f33</sup>, who speaking of the hyacinthine tunic, or robe of blue, says, this is *ποδηρης*, “a garment down to the foot”, which in our language is called “Meeir”; rather it should be *ly[m]*, “Meil”, which is its Hebrew name; and so this robe is expressed by the same word here, used by Philo the Jew <sup>f34</sup>, and by Jerom <sup>f35</sup>; so Maimonides <sup>f36</sup> says, the length of his garment was to the top of his heel: and in the habit of a priest did Christ now appear; and so he is described in his priestly office, in the midst of his churches, having made atonement for their sins by the sacrifice of himself; and now as their high priest had entered into the holiest of all with his own blood and righteousness; bore their names on his breastplate, appeared in the presence of God on their account, and ever lived to make intercession for them:

*and girt about the paps with a golden girdle*; as the high priest was with the girdle of the ephod, which was made of gold, of blue, purple, scarlet, and fine twined linen, (<sup><D238></sup>Exodus 28:8); and with which the priests were girt about the paps, or breast, as Christ is here described: it is said of the priests in (<sup><26418></sup>Ezekiel 44:18), “they shall not gird themselves with anything that causeth sweat”; which some render “in sweating places”: and so some Jewish writers interpret it, which will serve to illustrate the present place;

“says R. Abai <sup>f37</sup>, (upon citing (<sup><26418></sup>Ezekiel 44:18)) they do not gird themselves in the place in which they sweat; according to the tradition, when they gird themselves they do not gird neither below their loins, nor above their arm holes, but over against their arm holes;”

the gloss says, upon their ribs, against their arm pit, that is, about their breast, or paps; and which is still more plainly expressed by the Targum on the above place, which paraphrases it thus,

“they shall not gird about their loins, but they shall gird *whbbli*  
*l* [ , “about their heart” .”

So Josephus<sup>f38</sup> says, the high priest's garment was girt about the breast, a little below the arm holes. Christ's girdle, as a King, is the girdle of faithfulness and righteousness, which is about his loins; and his girdle, as a prophet, is the girdle of truth; but, as a priest, it is the girdle of love; it is that which has constrained him to put himself in the room and stead of his people, to assume their nature, give himself a sacrifice for them, and intercede on their behalf: this is like a girdle, round from everlasting to everlasting; is said to be "golden", because of the excellency, purity, glory, and duration of it; and because it is very strong, affectionate, and hearty, it is hid to be a girdle about the paps, near where is the heart, the seat of love; and this may also denote the power, strength, and readiness of Christ to assist and help his churches in every time of need.

**Ver. 14.** *His head and [his] hairs [were] white like wool, as white as snow*, etc.] In allusion to the white head and hairs of old men, said to be hoary, or like the hoar frost, and compared to an almond tree in bloom, (<sup>2005</sup>Ecclesiastes 12:5); and here to wool and snow for whiteness; (see <sup>3278</sup>Ezekiel 27:18); and according to the Jews<sup>f39</sup>, *bl rmx*, "white wool", is the wool of a lamb just born, about which a cloth is bound, that it may not be defiled; now these metaphors are expressive of the antiquity of Christ, who is the everlasting Father, and whose goings forth were of old, even from everlasting; and of his senile gravity and prudence, for with the Ancient is wisdom; he is the wisdom of God, in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid; and also of his glory and majesty, being the brightness of his Father's glory; and likewise of his true and proper deity, since this description is the same with that of the Ancient of days in (<sup>2009</sup>Daniel 7:9); for by his head is not here meant either God the Father, who is sometimes called the head of Christ, (<sup>4008</sup>1 Corinthians 11:3), nor his divine nature, which is the chief and principal in him, nor his headship over the church; nor do his hairs intend his elect, which grow upon him, and are nourished by him, and are so called for their number, weakness, and purity:

*and his eyes [were] as a flame of fire*: (see <sup>2706</sup>Daniel 10:6); which may design the omniscience of Christ, which reaches to all persons, and things, and is very searching and penetrating, and discovers and brings to light things the most dark and obscure; and also Christ's eyes of love upon his own people, which have both heat and light; Christ's love never waxes cold, and, being shed abroad in the hearts of his people, warms theirs; and in the light of his gracious countenance do they see light; and his love, like



flames of fire, melts their souls into a true and genuine repentance for sin: or else, rather his eyes of wrath and vengeance, as set upon his enemies, are here meant: which will be fierce and furious, bring swift and sudden destruction on them, before which there is no standing, and from which there is no fleeing. It is said of Augustus Caesar, that he had fiery eyes <sup>f40</sup>.

**Ver. 15.** *And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace,* etc.] By which is meant, not his human nature in a suffering state; or his people, the meaner and lower parts of his mystical body, in a like state; or his apostles and ministers, who are supporters of his church, and run to and fro with spiritual knowledge, for which, though they suffer much, are permanent and glorious; but either the power of Christ in bearing up and supporting his people, in the care and government and defence of them; or his ways, works, and walks in his churches, and all his providential administrations towards them, which are holy, just, and righteous, and will be manifest; or his wrath and vengeance in treading down and trampling upon his enemies:

*and his voice as the sound of many waters;* meaning his Gospel, as preached by his apostles and ministers, which was heard far and near; (see ~~508~~Romans 10:18); and which made a great noise in the world; or his voice of vengeance on his enemies, which will be very terrible and irresistible.

**Ver. 16.** *And he had in his right hand seven stars,* etc.] The angels or pastors of the seven churches, (~~602~~Revelation 1:20). The ministers of the Gospel are compared to stars, because of their efficient cause, God, who has made them, and fixed them in their proper place, and for his glory; and because of the matter of them, being the same with the heavens, so ministers are of the same nature with the churches; and because of their form, light, which they receive from the sun, so preachers of the Gospel receive their light from Christ; and because of their multitude and variety, so the ministers of the Gospel are many, and their gifts different; and chiefly for their usefulness, to give light to others, to direct to Christ, and point out the way of salvation, and to rule over the churches: nor was it unusual with the Jews to compare good men to stars, and to the seven stars. The Targumist <sup>f41</sup> says, the seven lamps in the candlestick answer to the seven stars to which the righteous are like. These are led and held in Christ's right hand; which shows that they are dear unto him, and highly valued by him; that they are his, in his possession, at his dispose, whom he uses as his instruments to do his work; and whom he upholds and sustains,



that they shall not sink under their burdens; and whom he preserves from failing, and so holds them that they shall stand fast in the faith, and not be carried away with the error of the wicked:

*and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword;* which designs the word of God; (see <sup><4017></sup>Ephesians 6:17 <sup><8012></sup>Hebrews 4:12); This comes out of the mouth of Christ, it is the word of God, and not of man; and is a sharp sword, contains sharp reproofs for sin, severe threatenings against it, and gives cutting convictions of it, and is a twoedged one; and by its two edges may be meant law and Gospel; the law lays open the sins of men, fills with grief and anguish for them, yea, not only wounds, but kills; and the Gospel cuts down the best in man, his wisdom, holiness, righteousness, and carnal privileges, in which he trusts; and the worst in man, teaching him to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts: or the word of God may be so called, because it is a means both of saving and of destroying; it is the savour of life unto life to some, and the savour of death unto death to others; and is both an offensive and defensive weapon; it is for the defence of the saints, against Satan, false teachers, and every other enemy; and an offensive one to them, which cuts them down, and destroys them and their principles: or this may mean the judiciary sentence of Christ upon the wicked, which will be a fighting against them, and a smiting of the nations of the world; (see <sup><4026></sup>Revelation 2:16 19:15 <sup><4306></sup>Psalms 149:6); which the Jews interpret of the law <sup>f42</sup>:

*and his countenance [was] as the sun shineth in his strength;* at noonday; such was the countenance of Christ at his transfiguration, (<sup><4012></sup>Matthew 17:2); and designs here the manifestation of himself in the glories of his person, and in the riches of his grace; who is the sun of righteousness that arises upon his people with light, heat, joy, and comfort; see the phrase in (<sup><4025></sup>Judges 5:31), which the Jewish writers understand of the strength of the sun both in the summer solstice, and in the middle of the day, or at noon, at which time its heat is strongest, and it usually shines brightest; the design of the metaphor is to set forth the glory and majesty of Christ.

**Ver. 17.** *And when I saw him,* etc.] The glorious person here described, who was just behind him, and of whom he had a full view, being so near him:

*I fell at his feet as dead;* through consternation and fear, the sight was so amazing and terrible; the appearance of a divine person in any degree of majesty and glory, has had some considerable effect upon men, even upon

the best of men; but John seems to be more affected with it than any, as the vision was the more grand and illustrious: Manoah was afraid he should die, but did not fall down as dead; Ezekiel fell upon his face, but had his senses; Daniel's comeliness turned into corruption, and he retained no strength, he fainted, and fell into a deep sleep; (see <sup><07132></sup>Judges 13:22 <sup><0103></sup>Ezekiel 1:28) (<sup><27108></sup>Daniel 10:8,9); but John fell down at once, as dead. This panic which good men were seized with, at any more than ordinary appearance of God, or apprehension of his presence, arose from a notion that present death ensues a sight of him; hence Jacob wonders, and is thankful, that he had seen God face to face, and yet his life was preserved, (<sup><0320></sup>Genesis 32:30); and such an effect as here, upon the body, any uncommon discovery of the divine Being has, partly through the weakness of human nature, which in its present circumstances is not able to bear the rays and glories of a divine person; hence the resurrection of the body in power, glory, and immortality, incorruption and spirituality, is necessary to the enjoyment of God and Christ in a state of bliss and happiness to all eternity; and partly through a consciousness of sin, which ever since the fall of Adam has occasioned fear and perturbation of mind, even in the best of saints, when they have had any sense of the divine Majesty being near, in an unusual form of glory:

*and he laid his right hand upon me*; even the same in which he had, and held the seven stars; and which showed what an affection he had for him, in what esteem he had him, what care he took of him, and what power he would exert in lifting up, strengthening, and supporting him; for he laid not his hand on him in wrath and angers, but in love; and in order to raise him up and revive his spirits, and remove his fears; hence the Ethiopic version renders it, “and he took hold on me with his right hand, and lifted me up”; as he does all who in a spiritual sense fall at his feet; it is always safe and comfortable falling there:

*saying unto me, fear not*; language which John had heard from him in the days of his flesh, and might therefore be chose now on purpose that he might the sooner know who he was and be comforted; (see <sup><01427></sup>Matthew 14:27 <sup><01232></sup>Luke 12:32).

*I am the first and the last*; a way of speaking used by God when he is about to comfort his people, and remove their fears; (see <sup><23104></sup>Isaiah 41:4 44:6 48:12); and is used by Christ for the same purpose here; and so is a proof of his true and proper deity, and is expressive of his eternity, and also

of his dignity and excellency: he is the first and last in divine predestination, in the covenant of grace, in creation, in the business of salvation, and in his church, by whom, and for whom, are all things in it; he is the head of the body, the Son over his own house, and the firstborn among many brethren; and so the Alexandrian copy read, here, “the firstborn and the last”.

Ⲱϥⲁⲣ, “the first”, is a name of the Messiah with the Jews<sup>f43</sup>; (see Gill on “Ⲅⲟⲟⲛ Revelation 1:8”).

**Ver. 18.** *I [am] he that liveth*, etc.] As the eternal God, who has life in himself, originally, essentially, and inderivatively, and is the fountain and author of life to others; and who ever lived as the Mediator and Redeemer, and still does, and ever will, yea, even when he was dead as man:

*and was dead*; he died the death of the cross, for the sins of his people, in due time, and but once; and it was but a short time he was held under the power of death, and will never die any more:

*and behold I am alive for evermore, Amen*; he was always alive as God, or he was always the living God, and ever will be; and he is now alive as man, and will for ever continue so; and he is alive to God, he lives by him, with him, and to his glory; and he is alive to the benefit and advantage of his redeemed ones, for whom he died; he ever lives to make intercession for them; he rose again from the dead for their justification; their being quickened together with him, and their being begotten again to a lively hope, are owing to his being alive; and as their reconciliation is by his death, so their salvation, or the application of it to them, is by his interceding life; and his resurrection is the cause of theirs: this is very fitly said to John, who was fallen as dead at the feet of Christ, and might be to animate him against the fears of death, or whatever he was to meet with on account of Christ; as well as to make himself known unto him, who had before known him, living, dying, and risen again. The word “Amen” is left out in the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions; but is in others, and is rightly retained, either as an asseveration of Christ to the truth of what is before said, or as an assent of John's unto it, who was a proper witness both of the death and resurrection of Christ:

*and have the keys of hell and death*; or “of death and hell”; as the words are transposed in the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition, in the Vulgate Latin and in all the Oriental versions, agreeably to (Ⲅⲟⲟⲛ Revelation 6:8 20:13,14), by which phrase is expressed the power of Christ over both:

his power over death is seen in taking away persons by death when he pleases, the instances of Ananias and Sapphira are proofs of this; and in delivering persons from death when near it, as the centurion's servant, Peter's wife's mother, and the nobleman's son of Capernaum; and in raising persons from the dead, as Jairus's daughter, the widow of Naam's son, and Lazarus, when he was here on earth; and in his raising up his own body when dead, and which will also appear in raising all the dead at the last day: and his power over "hell", by which may be meant the grave, or the place of the departed, and separate souls, or the place of the damned and of the devils which are there, will be seen in opening the graves at the time of the resurrection, when death and hell, or the grave, will deliver up the dead in them, at his command; and in retaining or sending out the separate souls "in hades"; and in opening the doors of hell, and casting in the wicked, and destroying them, soul and body, there; and in shutting them up, that they cannot come out from thence who are once in; and in binding Satan, and casting him into the bottomless pit, and shutting him up there, the key of which he has in his hand; and in preserving his church and people from his power and malice, so that the gates of hell cannot prevail against them. This is an expression of the sovereignty, power, and authority of Christ; and is designed to encourage and support John under his present concern and anxiety of mind about the person he saw in this vision: *hrwbq l ç j tpm*, "the key of the grave", and of the resurrection of the dead, is frequently said by the Jews to be one of the keys which are in the hands of the holy blessed God, and his only; not in the hands of an angel or a seraph, or any other<sup>f44</sup>.

**Ver. 19.** *Write the things which thou hast seen*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and some others, and the Complutensian edition, read, "write therefore the things", etc. meaning what he had now seen, the vision of one like to the son of man, amidst the golden candlesticks, with seven stars in his right hand, and as above described; this was what he had seen (~~and~~ Revelation 1:12,13,16); for it does not refer to what he had seen of Christ in the days of his flesh, but to what he had now seen in this representation of him:

*and the things which are*; the state of the churches of Christ in the apostolic age, and at that time signified by the Ephesian church, and that part of the Smyranean which John lived to see:

*and the things which shall be hereafter*; from hence unto the end of the world, in successive generations, signified by the rest of the churches, and in the visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials.

**Ver. 20.** *The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand*, etc.] The sense is, that John was to write the mystery of these stars, or the mystical sense of them:

*and the seven golden candlesticks*; the mystery, or mysterious sense of them also; for the words are in a continued connection with (<sup><ref>19</ref></sup>Revelation 1:19), and have respect to the following interpretation of them, and to the epistles in the following chapter, which are mystical, and prophetic of the state of the churches in all succeeding ages:

*the seven stars are the angels of the seven churches*; that is, the seven stars which John saw in Christ's right hand, represent the angels, or pastors of the seven churches of Asia, and in them all the pastors and ministers of the churches in all the periods of time until Christ's second coming. Here it may be observed, that the ministers of the Gospel are not only compared to "stars", for which (see Gill on "<sup><ref>16</ref></sup>Revelation 1:16"); but likewise to "angels", which signifies "messengers", as ministers are sent forth by Christ with the message of the Gospel to publish to the sons of men; and as the angels are Christ's ministering spirits, so are the preachers of the Gospel the ministers of Christ, that wait upon him and serve him in the ministry of the word, and in the administration of ordinances; and there is some agreement between them in holiness, knowledge, zeal, diligence, and watchfulness, in their work; as also they may be so called for the honour and esteem in which they are, both with Christ and his churches; and who like the angels rejoice at the conversion of sinners, and the enlargement of the interest of Christ:

*and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches*; represent the seven churches, of Asia, and in them all the churches of Christ, in successive ages, to the end of time; the reasons why these are signified by "candlesticks", (see Gill on "<sup><ref>12</ref></sup>Revelation 1:12"); and that they are prophetic of the churches of Christ in the several periods of time, until he comes again, will appear from the following considerations: the whole book is called a prophecy, and a revelation of things that were shortly to come to pass, and it would be very strange, and very unsuitable to its title, should the three first chapters contain nothing prophetic in them; the characters of the divine Person under which these seven churches

are saluted, as he which is, and was, and is to come, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, show that the things written to them belong to the Gospel church state, from the beginning to the end of it, for what other reason can be given for such a peculiar use of them? the very grand and illustrious appearance of Christ, antecedent to these epistles, when compared with the appearance of God, previous to the opening of the sealed book, and the seven seals of it, may induce one to conclude, that as the latter introduces the book prophecy in this revelation, so the former introduces the church prophecy; nor does it seem that such a magnificent appearance is necessary to the bare sending of some letters of advice to some particular churches: moreover, as there are some things in these epistles too common to all the churches and ministers to be restrained to some particular ones, such as Christ's affording his presence among them, signified by his walking amidst the candlesticks, and his care of, and respect unto the ministers of the Gospel, expressed by holding seven stars in his right hand; for can it be thought that Christ only granted his presence to the seven churches in Asia? or that the pastors of those churches were the only ones Christ holds in his right hand? so there are others too particular to certain periods to belong to those churches, as that Smyrna should have a crown of life, Pergamos hidden manna and a white stone, Thyatira the morning star, and Philadelphia be delivered from a temptation that would reach all the world, and is not yet come; for which no reason can be given in the literal sense of these epistles; and it is strange that only seven churches should be sent to, and these only in Asia; why not to the churches in Africa and Europe? and these churches also, all but Ephesus, very obscure ones; why not to the churches at Antioch, Corinth, Rome, etc. and it is stranger still, if, as Epiphanius says<sup>f45</sup>, there was no church at Thyatira till after the writing of these letters: nothing can account for all this but their being prophetic, there being something in the number, names, situation, and case of these churches, which were emblematical of the state of the church in successive periods of time; to which may be added, that the epiphonema at the close of every epistle, "he that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches", shows that each epistle to every church is not designed for that church only, but for churches; and for what churches but for those who are represented in that period of time, since they must be unsuitable to one another? and besides, this concluding sentence shows, that what is contained in each epistle is something intricate, abstruse, and parabolical, it being only used when some such thing is delivered; (see ~~4015~~ Matthew 11:15 13:9,43). There is one

observation more to be made, and which runs through all the epistles, and that is, that the names of the several churches, and the titles which Christ assumes in writing to each, as well as the subject matter of the epistles, have respect to the several distinct periods of the church; all which will more clearly appear in the following notes upon them.

# CHAPTER 2

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 2

This chapter contains the epistles to the churches at Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, and Thyatira. It begins with that to Ephesus, in which the sender of it describes himself by some of his characters mentioned in the preceding chapter; takes notice of some things commendable in this church, ([Revelation 2:1-3](#)), reproves her for leaving her first love; gives some advice upon it; threatens her in case of non-repentance; yet notwithstanding commends her for her detestation of some bad practices; and concludes the epistle with a phrase exciting to attention to what is written, and with a promise to them that are constant and conquering, ([Revelation 2:4-7](#)), next follows the epistle to the church at Smyrna, in which the sender assumes some of his former titles; takes notice of her works in general, and of her afflictions in particular, and of the blasphemy of others, ([Revelation 2:8,9](#)), fortifies her against a great affliction to be endured, described by its author, kind, use, and duration; and exhorts to faithfulness and constancy, with a promise of a crown of life, ([Revelation 2:10](#)), and closes the epistle in the same form as the preceding, promising security from the second death to the persevering and conquering Christian, ([Revelation 2:11](#)), and next in order is the epistle to the church at Pergamos, in which the sender takes to him one of the above characters in the description of him; observes her works and place of abode, and commends her faithfulness to him in the worst of times and places, ([Revelation 2:12,13](#)), yet exhibits a complaint against her for having, and conniving at persons of bad principles and practice, called Balaamites and Nicolaitans, ([Revelation 2:14,15](#)), exhorts to repentance, and in failure of it threatens to come and fight against them; and closes the epistle in the same manner as the two former, with a promise of hidden manna, a white stone, and a new name to him that overcomes, ([Revelation 2:16,17](#)), and the last epistle in this chapter is that to the church at Thyatira, in which the sender makes use of some other titles and characters of his before mentioned; takes notice of her good works, and yet signifies he had a controversy with her, for permitting a false prophetess to teach in her, who seduced men to fornication and idolatry, ([Revelation](#)



2:18-20), whose impenitence is complained of, and which was aggravated by having space for repentance given her, (<sup>4021</sup>Revelation 2:21), wherefore, in case of continuance in impenitence, he threatens both her and her followers with tribulation and death, whereby the omniscience and justice of Christ would be manifest to all the churches, (<sup>4022</sup>Revelation 2:22,23), and then another and better sort of men in this church are addressed, who are described as not having imbibed the doctrine of the false prophetess, and as not approving the depths of Satan, or her doctrines of devils; and these are told that no other burden should be laid on them than was, and are exhorted to hold fast what they had, until the coming of Christ, (<sup>4023</sup>Revelation 2:24,25), and for their encouragement to hold on to the end, many promises are made unto them respecting their power and rule over their enemies, and the happy days that they should enjoy, (<sup>4025</sup>Revelation 2:26-28), and the epistle is concluded with the usual epiphonema, (<sup>4029</sup>Revelation 2:29).

**Ver. 1.** *Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write*, etc.] Of the city of Ephesus, (see Gill on “<sup>4011</sup>Revelation 1:11”) and (see Gill on “<sup>4189</sup>Acts 18:19”). The church here seems to have been founded by the Apostle Paul, who continued here two years, by which means all Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, (<sup>4190</sup>Acts 19:10); of this church, (see Gill on “<sup>4107</sup>Acts 20:17”); it is named first, because it was the largest, most populous, and famous, and was nearest to Patmos, where John now was, and most known to him, it being the place where he had resided; and it was the place from whence the Gospel came to others, and spread itself in lesser Asia; but especially it is first written to, because it represented the church in the apostolic age; so that this letter contains the things which are, (<sup>4019</sup>Revelation 1:19); and in its very name, to the state of this church in Ephesus, there may be an allusion; either to **εφεσις**, “ephe-sis”, which signifies “desire”, and may be expressive of the fervent love of that pure and apostolic church to Jesus Christ at the beginning of it; their eager desire after more knowledge of him, and communion with him; after his word and ordinances, and the maintaining of the purity of them; after the spread of his Gospel, and the enlargement of his kingdom in the world; as well as after fellowship with the saints, and the spiritual welfare of each other: the allusion may be also to **αφεσις**, “aphesis”, which signifies “remission”, or an abatement; and so may point out the remissness and decay of the first love of these primitive Christians, towards the close of this state; of the abatement of the fervency of it, of which complaint is

made in this epistle, and not without cause. This epistle is inscribed to the angel of this church, or the pastor of it; why ministers are called angels, (see Gill on “<sup>f40</sup>Revelation 1:20”); some think this was Timothy, whom the Apostle Paul sent thither, and desired him to continue there, (<sup>f40B-1</sup>Timothy 1:3), there was one Onesimus bishop of Ephesus, when Polycarp was bishop of Smyrna, of whom he makes mention in his epistle <sup>f46</sup> to the Ephesians, and bids fair to be this angel; though if any credit could be given to the Apostolic Constitutions <sup>f47</sup> the bishop of this place was one John, who is said to be ordained by the Apostle John, and is thought to be the same with John the elder <sup>f48</sup>, the master of Papias; but though only one is mentioned, yet all the elders of this church, for there were more than one, (see <sup>f47</sup>Acts 20:17); are included; and not they only, but the whole church over whom they presided; for what was written was ordered to be sent to the church, and was sent by John, (see <sup>f40</sup>Revelation 1:4,11); the letter was sent to the pastor or pastors, to the whole body of ministers, by them to be communicated to the church; and not only to this particular church did this letter and the contents of it belong, but to all the churches of Christ within the period of the apostolic age, as may be concluded from (<sup>f47</sup>Revelation 2:7).

*These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand*; the Syriac version reads, “that holds all things, and these seven stars in his right hand”; for the explanation of this character of Christ, (see Gill on “<sup>f40</sup>Revelation 1:16”); only let it be observed how suitably this is prefixed to the church at Ephesus, and which represents the state of the churches in the times of the apostles; in which place, and during which interval, our Lord remarkably held his ministering: servants as stars in his right hand; he held and protected the Apostle Paul for two years in this place, and preserved him and his companions safe amidst the uproar raised by Demetrius the silversmith about them; here also he protected Timothy at a time when there were many adversaries, and kept the elders of this church pure, notwithstanding the erroneous persons that rose up among them; and last of all the Apostle John, who here resided, and died in peace, notwithstanding the rage and fury of his persecutors: likewise Christ in a very visible manner held all his faithful ministers during this period in his right hand, safe and secure, until they had done the work they were sent about, and preserved them in purity of doctrine and conversation; so that their light in both respects shone brightly before men. Moreover, as this title of Christ is prefixed to the epistle to the first of the churches, and its

pastor or pastors, it may be considered as relating to, and holding good of all the ministers of the Gospel and pastors of the other churches; and likewise of all the churches in successive ages to the end of the world, as the following one also refers to all the churches themselves:

*who walketh in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks*; (see Gill on “<sup>6012</sup>Revelation 1:12”); (see Gill on “<sup>6013</sup>Revelation 1:13”); Christ was not only present with, and took his walks in this church at Ephesus, but in all the churches of that period, comparable to candlesticks, which held forth the light of the Gospel, and that in order as the antitype of Aaron, to him these lamps, and likewise in all his churches to the end of the world; see (<sup>6014</sup>Matthew 28:20).

**Ver. 2.** *I know thy works*, etc.] The good works, both of ministers and churches; no evil works are mentioned, nor anything complained of in this church but an abatement of the fervour of her first love. Christ, as the omniscient God, knows all the works of his people, and the springs, and principles, and ends, and views of them, whether they are done in obedience to him, and spring from love to him, and are performed in his strength, and by his grace, and are directed to his glory; and such he takes notice of, approves of, and is well pleased with, not as the ground of his delight in their persons, but as the fruits of his own grace; and during the apostolic age, churches and ministers were very diligent in working; yea, they were laborious, as follows:

*and thy labour*: particularly the labour of ministers of the Gospel, in these times, in the frequent preaching of it, in season and out of season; and in the constant administration of the ordinances; and in the diligent exercise of church discipline. The work of the ministry is a laborious work to the mind in studying, and to the body in the outward discharge of it; and it becomes more so, through the malice and opposition of enemies, and the weakness of friends; and such as are diligent and laborious deserve respect, even double honour; and though they may not have it from men, yet Christ takes notice of them and their labours, and commends them for them, and will reward them.

*And thy patience*; as this may refer to the ministers of the word, it may denote their patience in suffering reproaches and persecutions for the sake of the Gospel, which they bore patiently, cheerfully, and constantly; and in bearing the infirmities of weak saints, in their several communities; and in reclaiming and restoring persons out of the way; and in waiting for the

success of their ministry, and their continuance and perseverance in it. And as this may respect members of churches, it may point at their patience under afflictions from the hand of God, and under reproach and persecution from men, for their embracing and professing the Gospel; and their patient waiting for the heavenly glory, and their firm expectation of it, and their perseverance unto it.

*And how thou canst not bear them that are evil;* that were so either in their principles or in their practices, or both; men that lived immoral lives, and held erroneous doctrines, these the primitive ministers and churches could not bear; they had an inward abhorrence and detestation of them in their minds; they could not bear them in communion with them; they admonished them according to the nature of their offence, and cast out such as were obstinate and incorrigible; they withdrew from such as were disorderly, and rejected heretics after the first and second admonition; their zeal for church discipline is here taken notice of to their commendation.

*And thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars;* this doubtless was done in the church at Ephesus, where, after the Apostle Paul's departure, grievous wolves, in sheep's clothing, entered, and men arose from among themselves, speaking perverse things, (~~4RE~~ Acts 20:29,30); yet it was not peculiar to that church, though it was to the apostolic age; for in no other could men with any face pretend to be the apostles of Christ; and such there were, who sprung up in the several churches at Jerusalem, Corinth, Galatia, and elsewhere, who called themselves the apostles of Christ, but were false apostles, deceitful workers; they pretended to have their doctrine, call, mission, and commission, immediately from Christ, as the true apostles had, and a power to work miracles, and talked of inspirations and revelations by the Spirit of God. Now the apostles, ministers, and churches of those times, tried their pretensions and doctrines by the word of God, and by the fruits which they produced in themselves and others; and through that discerning of spirits which they had, they found them to be liars; that they were not, nor had they what they pretended to be, and have, and exposed them as such.

**Ver. 3.** *And hast borne*, etc.] Not evil men, nor false apostles, but “burdens”, as the Ethiopic version reads, and as the word signifies; meaning afflictions, reproaches, and persecutions, which pressed sore, and lay heavy on these ministers and churches; and yet they bore them with

constancy and cheerfulness, and were not moved by them. The Arabic version reads, “and thou hast borne me”; my name and Gospel, among the Gentiles, and carried it from place to place; (see <sup><4495></sup>Acts 9:15);

*and hast patience*; which they had from God, as his gift, and which they had in their hearts, and in exercise, and found it useful to them. It was in exercise in a suitable time, and it continued with them; it was not worn out through the length and greatness of their trials.

*And for my name's sake hast laboured*: which may refer either to enduring sufferings for Christ's name's sake, for his Gospel's sake, for righteousness sake, for the sake of the elect, and for the sake of the honour, glory, and interest of Christ; or to labouring in the ministry, not for filthy lucre sake, nor for party sake, but for the honour of Christ, and the good of souls; and there never was an interval in which this was more true:

*and hast not fainted*: so as to sink under the burden borne; to have patience quite tired out; to, be weary of labouring for Christ's name's sake; and so as to give out, and quit the service of Christ.

**Ver. 4.** *Nevertheless I have [somewhat] against thee*, etc.] So the Jews represent God saying, concerning their fathers, “Abraham”, etc. **μϕυλ [ϕυλ] ϕϑυ**, “I have something against them”<sup>f49</sup>. Christ has nothing against his people, his faithful ministers, and true churches, in a judicial way, or to their condemnation, for there is none to them that are in him; but he has often many things to complain of in them, and to rebuke and chastise them for, in a way of providence: and what he had against the church at Ephesus, and against the churches in the period which that represents, follows,

*because thou hast left thy first love*: by which is meant, not hospitality to strangers, or an affectionate care of the poor of the church, or a zealous concern to feed the flock, and maintain church discipline; but the love of the saints to God, and Christ, and one another, which appeared at the beginning of this church state, when they were all of one heart and one soul, as generally at first conversion love is the warmest; and so it was at the first planting of Gospel churches, and therefore here called first love. Now this, though it was not lost, for the true grace of love can never be lost, yet it was left; it abated in its heat and fervour; there was a remissness in the exercise of it; what our Lord had foretold should be before the destruction of Jerusalem was fulfilled in this period of time, the love of

many waxed cold, (<sup>4012</sup>Matthew 24:12); through the prevalence of corruption in some; and through an over love to the world, as in Demas, and others; and through a desire of ease and freedom from reproach and persecution; and through the introduction of errors, which damp the heat of love, and spirit of religion; and through the contentions and divisions among themselves, as at Corinth, Galatia, and elsewhere, which greatly weakened their love to one another, and to divine things; and which was very displeasing to Christ, who, for the restoring of them, gives the following advice. Compare with this (<sup>5015</sup>2 Timothy 1:15).

**Ver. 5.** *Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen*, etc.] Believers cannot totally and finally fall away from the grace which they have received; but they may fall into sin, and from a degree of grace, and the exercise of it, as these first and pure churches did, from some degree of their love to God, and Christ, and one another; and therefore are called upon to remember, mind, and observe from what degree of it they were fallen; in order to bring them under a conviction and acknowledgment of their evil, and a sense of their present state, and to quicken their desires after a restoration to their former one:

*and repent*; of their coldness and lukewarmness, of the remissness of their love, and of those evils which brought it upon them:

*and do the first works*; of faith and love, with the like zeal and fervour, which will show the repentance to be sincere and genuine; so the Arabic version reads, “and exercise the former works, to wit, charity” or “love”. The Jews have a saying <sup>f50</sup>,

“if a man repents, do not say to him, “remember” μννωϑαρj  
Æyϑ [ m, “thy first works”;

which they seem to understand of evil works; but former good works are to be remembered and done, to show the truth of repentance for evil ones.

*Or else I will come unto thee quickly*; not in a spiritual way, to pay a love visit, nor in a judicial way, to take vengeance or inflict punishment, but in a providential way, to rebuke and chastise:

*and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent*; or thee out of the candlestick, the pastor from the church, either by persecution or by death; or else the church, and church state itself, signified by a candlestick; (see Gill on “<sup>4012</sup>Revelation 1:12”); and may design a

shaking and an unsettling of it, which is sometimes done by violent persecutions, and by false teachers and their doctrines, and by the divisions and contentions of saints among themselves; and by the former particularly was there a change made in the state of this apostolic church, when it passed into the Smyranean one, which was a period of great persecution and distress; for this cannot be understood of the total removing of the church state itself quickly, no, not of Ephesus itself; for though there is not now indeed, nor has there been for many hundred years, a church of Christ in that place, yet there was one till the times of Constantine, when there was none in any of the other seven cities, and a long time after; (see Gill on “<del>407</del> Acts 20:17”); which shows, that this was not a commination or threatening of divine vengeance to that church literally, but to the state of the church, which that represented; nor does it intend the utter abolition of that church, for the apostolic church still continued, though it ceased to be in the circumstances it was before.

**Ver. 6.** *But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans,* etc.] Though these Christians had left their first love, yet they bore an hatred to the filthy and impure practices of some men, who were called “Nicolaitans”; who committed fornication, adultery, and all uncleanness, and had their wives in common, and also ate things offered to idols; who were so called, as some think <sup>f51</sup>, from Nicolas of Antioch, one of the seven deacons in (<del>406</del> Acts 6:5); though as to Nicolas himself, it is said <sup>f52</sup>, that he lived with his own lawful married wife, and no other, and that his daughters continued virgins all their days, and his son incorrupt; and that these men, so called, only shrouded themselves under his name, and abused a saying or action of his, or both, to patronize their wicked deeds: he had used to advise *παραχρησσαι τη σαρκι*, by which he meant a restraining of all carnal and unlawful lusts; but these men interpreted it of an indulgence in them, and so gave themselves up to all uncleanness; and whereas, he having a beautiful wife, and being charged with jealousy, in order to clear himself of it, he brought her forth, and gave free liberty to any person to marry her as would; which indiscreet action of his these men chose to understand as allowing of community of wives. Dr. Lightfoot conjectures, that these Nicolaitans were not called so from any man, but from the word *ηλ ykn*, “Nicolah”, “let us eat”, which they often used to encourage each other to eat things offered to idols. However this be, it is certain that there were such a set of men, whose deeds were hateful; but neither their principles nor their practices obtained much in this period of



time, though they afterwards did; (see <sup><4415></sup> Revelation 2:15). Professors of the Christian religion in general abhorred such impure notions and deeds, as they were by Christ:

*which also I hate*; all sin is hateful to Christ, being contrary to his nature, to his will, and to his Gospel; and whatever is hateful to him should be to his people; and where grace is, sin will be hateful, both in themselves and others; and men's deeds may be hated when their persons are not; and hatred of sin is taken notice of by Christ, with a commendation.

**Ver. 7.** *He that hath an ear*, etc.] Such who have new ears given them, as all have who are made new creatures; such who have their ears circumcised, and opened by the Spirit of God; who hear with understanding, affection, and faith; who try what they hear, and approve, embrace, and retain that which is good.

*Let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches*; let such hearken, and listen with attention to what is said by the Spirit, in what goes before, and follows after, in this epistle, designed for the use of all the churches; from whence it appears, that this epistle was endited by the Spirit of God, and is of divine inspiration; that it was not intended for the single use of the church at Ephesus, but of all the churches; and not of the seven churches only, though the Alexandrian copy reads, "to the seven churches": but of all the churches in that period of time, which the Ephesine church represents; and which may also be useful to the churches of Christ in all other ages and periods of time. And moreover, it may be concluded from hence, that there are in this epistle, and so in all the rest, for the same words are subjoined to them all, some things which are parabolical and prophetic, and not obvious to everyone's understanding and view; for a like expression is used by our Lord, when he had delivered anything in a parabolical way, or was obscure; (see <sup><4015></sup> Matthew 11:15 13:9).

*To him that overcometh*: the false apostles, false teachers, and their doctrines; coldness, lukewarmness, and remissness in love; the impure tenets and practices of the Nicolaitans:

*will I give to eat of the tree of life*; by which is meant Jesus Christ himself, in allusion to the tree of life in the garden of Eden; and is so called, because he is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; and because of his fruit, the blessings of life and grace, that are in him, of which believers may eat by faith, and which they find to be soul quickening, comforting,



strengthening, and satisfying; and which are Christ's gift to them, even both the food they eat, and the faith by which they eat, are his gifts. So Christ, under the name of Wisdom, is called the Tree of life, in (~~1188~~ Proverbs 3:18); and this is a name which is sometimes given by the Jews to the Messiah <sup>f53</sup>:

*which is in the midst of the paradise of God*; as the tree of life was in the garden of Eden, (~~000~~ Genesis 2:9). The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “the paradise of my God”; the God of Christ, as well as of his people; and by which may be meant, either the church on earth, which is as a paradise, (~~2042~~ Song of Solomon 4:12); in the midst of which Christ is, affording his gracious presence, and reaching forth his grace, and the benefits of it, to his people; or heaven, (see Gill on “~~4724~~ 2 Corinthians 12:4”), said to be of God, because it is of his preparing, and where he dwells, and in the midst of which Christ, the Tree of life, is; and this shows, that he is to be come at by faith, and his fruit to be eaten, and lived upon; and he is to be beheld and enjoyed by all his saints, as he is now, and will be more perfectly hereafter.

**Ver. 8.** *And unto the angel of the church in Smyrna write*, etc.] Of the city of Smyrna, (see Gill on “~~6011~~ Revelation 1:11”). That there was a church of Christ here is not to be doubted, though by whom it was founded is not certain; very likely by the Apostle Paul, who was in those parts, and by whose means all Asia heard the Gospel of Christ, (~~490~~ Acts 19:10). Some think the present angel or pastor of this church, was Polycarp, the disciple of John. Irenaeus <sup>f54</sup>, who knew him, says he was appointed bishop of Smyrna by the apostles. Here he suffered martyrdom, and was buried: the large amphitheatre, in which he was put to death, is still to be seen, and his sepulchre is yet preserved in this place <sup>f55</sup>: a very famous epistle, sent by this church at Smyrna to the churches at Pontus, giving an account of the martyrdom of Polycarp, and others, is extant in Eusebius <sup>f56</sup>. According to the Apostolical Constitutions <sup>f57</sup>, the first bishops of Smyrna were Aristo Strataeas and Aristo the second, and Apelles, of whom mention is made in (~~560~~ Romans 16:10); and who is reckoned among the seventy disciples; (see Gill on “~~201~~ Luke 10:1”); and is said to be bishop of Smyrna before Polycarp; who succeeded Polycarp, I do not find; but it is said there was a church at Smyrna in the “third” century; and so there was in the beginning of the “fourth”, since there was a bishop from hence in the council at Nice: and in the “fifth” century, mention is made of several bishops of this place; as of Cyrus, a native of Constantinople; and Protherius, who, it is thought, succeeded him, and was present in the synod at Chalcedon; and Aethericus,

who assisted at three synods in this century, at Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon: and in the “sixth” century, there was a bishop of Smyrna in the fifth synod held at Rome and Constantinople: and even in the “eighth” century, one Antony, a monk, supplied the place of the bishop of Smyrna in the Nicene synod<sup>f58</sup>. The Turks have in this place now thirteen mosques, the Jews two synagogues, and of the Christians there are two churches belonging to the Greeks, and one to the Armenians<sup>f59</sup>. This church, and its pastor, represent the state of the church under the persecutions of the Roman emperors. Smyrna signifies “myrrh”, which being bitter of taste, is expressive of the bitter afflictions, and persecutions, and deaths, the people of God in this interval endured; and yet, as myrrh is of a sweet smell, so were those saints, in their sufferings for Christ, exceeding grateful and well pleasing to him; wherefore nothing is said by way of complaint to this church; not that she was without fault, but it was proper to use her tenderly in her afflicted state: and, as Dr. More observes, as myrrh was used in the embalming of dead bodies, it may point to the many deaths and martyrdoms of the saints in this period, whereby their names and memories are perpetuated and eternized.

*These things saith the first and the last, which was dead, and is alive.* Of these characters of Christ, (see Gill on “<sup><6008></sup>Revelation 1:8”), (see Gill on “<sup><6011></sup>Revelation 1:11”), (see Gill on “<sup><6017></sup>Revelation 1:17-18”); and they are very appropriately mentioned, to encourage the saints under their sufferings of death; since Christ, who is the eternal God, had in human nature tasted of the bitterness of death for them, and was risen again; suggesting, that though they were called to undergo the bitterest deaths for his sake, they should be raised again as he was, and live with him for ever. The Ethiopic version reads, “thus saith the holy Spirit”; but it cannot be said of him that “he was dead”.

**Ver. 9.** *I know thy works,* etc.] Good works, as before in (<sup><6012></sup>Revelation 2:2);

*and tribulation;* this is Christ's legacy to his people, and which lies in their way to heaven; and never was the way of any to heaven more strewn with it than was the way of the saints in this period. But Christ took notice of it, and of them in it; he knew their souls in adversity, and remarked their patience under it, and their constancy, and close adherence to him:

*and poverty;* which was true in a literal sense, through the spoiling of their goods, to which they were exposed for the profession of Christ: nothing is

more contemptible among men than poverty, yet Christ takes notice of it, and owns his people in it; for this poverty came not by sin, but by sufferings for his sake:

*but thou art rich*; they were rich, in faith, and heirs of a kingdom, though poor in this world; they were rich with the riches of Christ, with the blessings of the covenant, with the graces of the Spirit, and in good works; they were kings and priests unto God, had a kingdom of grace here, and a right to the kingdom of glory hereafter; and were heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.

*And [I know] the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not*; who asserted themselves to be the true Israel of God, Jews that were so inwardly, regenerate persons, or truly Christians; for the Christians, baptized persons<sup>f60</sup>, were by the Heathens called Jews; but these were not, they professed Christianity in words, but in works denied it; they were men of bad principles and practices, and both blasphemed the ways and doctrines of Christ themselves, and caused them to be blasphemed by others also; they were false Christians, nominal professors, and shunned persecution for the Gospel; who were not what they would be thought to be: these were the broachers of heresies in this period of time, in which there was a multitude of them, and which chiefly respected the doctrine of the Trinity, and the person of Christ; and they were introducers of Pagan and Jewish rites into the church, and were men of flagitious lives and conversations, and paved the way for the man of sin:

*but [are] the synagogue of Satan*: were the children of the devil, imitated him, and were influenced by him, and were the forerunners of antichrist, whose coming was after the working of Satan.

**Ver. 10.** *Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer*, etc.] God's people undergo sufferings of various sorts, as the Christians of those times did, scourgings, imprisonment, confiscation of goods, and death itself in various shapes; and these are certain, they shall suffer them; they are all known beforehand to Christ, and he sometimes gives his people previous notice of them, nor should they indulge a slavish fear about them. It is reported of Polycarp, bishop of this church at Smyrna, in a letter written by the church itself<sup>f61</sup> that three days before he suffered, he dreamed his pillow, on which he laid his head, was on fire; upon which, awaking, he said to those that were by him, that he should be burnt for Christ; and

when he came to suffer, as he was led along, a voice was heard by the bystanders, Polycarp, be strong, and play the man.

*Behold, the devil shall cast [some] of you into prison;* which has been the lot of many of the saints, and was of some, even of the faithful ministers of the word in this interval; in which Satan had an hand, instigating their enemies to prevent and stop the progress of the Gospel, and deter others both from preaching and professing it: the end was in the permission of it,

*that ye may be tried;* that their graces might be tried, their faith, love, zeal, courage, faithfulness, and constancy. Suffering times are trying times, whether men are real Christians or not; whether they have the true grace of God or not; and whether the principles they hold are right and true, and are worth, and will bear suffering for:

*and ye shall have tribulation ten days:* meaning it may be the ten persecutions under the Roman emperors; the “first” was under Nero, in the year 64 or 66; the “second” was under Domitian, about the year 93; the “third” was under Trojan, in the year 104; the “fourth” was under Hadrian, in the year 125; the “fifth” was under Marcus Antoninus, in the year 151; the “sixth” was under Septimius Severus, in the year 197; the “seventh” was under Maximinus, in the years 235, 236, 237; the “eighth” was under Decius, in the year 250; the “ninth” was under Valerianus, in the year 257; and the “tenth” was under Dioclesian, in the year 303. Austin <sup>f62</sup> reckons the ten persecutions thus: the first by Nero, the second by Domitian, the third by Trojan, the fourth by Antoninus, the fifth by Severus, the sixth by Maximus, the seventh by Decius, the eighth by Valerianus, the ninth by Aurelianus, the tenth by Dioclesian and Maximianus. Others, inasmuch as Nero's persecution was before this vision, reckon the ten persecutions thus: Domitian, Trojan, M. Antoninus, Verus and Lucius, Severus, Maximinus, Decius, Valerianus, Aurelianus, Dioclesianus, Licinius: the Dioclesian persecution lasted ten years almost throughout: and some think that this last persecution, which held ten years, is here particularly meant, and not without some good reason; since it is usual in prophetic writings, and in this book of the Revelation, to put days for years; so that these ten days may be the ten years the last persecution held, and at which time the period of this church state ended, and that of Pergamos took place.

*Be thou faithful unto death:* which is an address to the ministers in this interval, to be faithful in preaching the pure and unmixed Gospel of Christ; in a constant administration of the ordinances, as they were delivered; in

watching over the souls of men under their care, reproof, exhorting, etc. with all longsuffering; continuing in the discharge of duty, though in continual danger of death, and though it issued in it. And also to the churches and the members of them, to continue believing in Christ, professing his name, striving for his Gospel, attending on his ordinances, and following him whithersoever he went; though this should expose them to sufferings, even unto death, which it became them cheerfully to undergo: and to which they are encouraged by what follows,

*and I will give thee a crown of life*; which may refer not only to eternal life, which is so called, (<sup>3012</sup>James 1:12); because of the glory of that state, and its everlasting continuance, and is in the possession and gift of Christ; but to the deliverance of the Christians from persecution, by Constantine; who coming to the imperial crown, that became not only a crown of glory to him, but of life to the church, and was as life from the dead unto the saints: to dead men is promised a crown of life, in allusion to the Gentiles, who crowned their dead <sup>f63</sup>.

**Ver. 11.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on “~~6117~~ Revelation 2:7”);

*he that overcometh*; and is not intimidated by poverty, confiscation of goods, tribulation, persecution, and death itself, but through Christ is a conqueror, and more than a conqueror over all these things:

*shall not be hurt of the second death*; by which is meant eternal death, in distinction from a corporeal and temporal one; and lies in a destruction of both body and soul in hell, and in an everlasting separation from God, and a continual sense of divine wrath; but of this the saints shall never be hurt, they are ordained to eternal life; this is secured for them in Christ, and he has it in his hands for them, and will give it to them. The phrase is Jewish, and is opposed to the first death, or the death of the body; which is the effect of sin, and is appointed of God, and which the people of God die as well as others; but the second death is peculiar to wicked men. So the Jerusalem Targum on (<sup>6316</sup>Deuteronomy 33:6); paraphrases those words, “let Reuben live, and not die”, thus;

“let Reuben live in this world, and not die *anyynt a twmb*, “by the second death”, with which the wicked die in the world to come.”

Of which sense of the text and phrase Epiphanius makes mention <sup>f64</sup>. See the same phrase in the Targum of Jonathan ben Uzziel, in (<sup>2324</sup>Isaiah 22:14 65:6,15); and in (<sup>2613</sup>Jeremiah 51:39,57); and in Philo the Jew <sup>f65</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write*, etc.] Of the city of Pergamos, (see Gill on “<sup>6011</sup>Revelation 1:11”). In it was a church of Christ, but when it begun, and how long it lasted, is not certain. Antipas, who is mentioned, (<sup>6023</sup>Revelation 2:13); is thought, by some, to have been the pastor of it. Though, according to the Apostolical Constitutions <sup>f66</sup>, Caius was the first bishop of it; and it appears, that in the “second” century there were several in this place that suffered martyrdom for Christ, as Carpus, Papulus, and a woman whose name was Agathonice <sup>f67</sup>. Attalus, the martyr, who suffered in the same century, was also a native of this place <sup>f68</sup>. In the “fifth” century there was a bishop of Pergamos in the council at Ephesus; and in the “sixth” century, there was one in the “fifth” synod at Constantinople; and in the “seventh” century, Theodorus, bishop of the church here, was in the sixth synod held at the same place; and in the “eighth” century one Pastilas was bishop of Pergamos; and in the same age, Basil, bishop of this place, was in the Nicene synod <sup>f69</sup>; and the Christian name now is not wholly, though almost extinct; for when our countryman, Dr. Smith <sup>f70</sup>, was there, there was a little church called St. Theodore's, whither a priest was frequently sent from Smyrna, to perform divine service, there being but a very few Christian families in it. This church represents the church from the time of Constantine, and onward, rising up to, and enjoying great power, riches, and honour Pergamos signifies high and lofty; things that were sublime and lofty, were, by the Greeks, called *τα περιγυμνα*, and also all high and lofty towers <sup>f71</sup>. It was built under a very high and steep mountain, upon the top of which a tower was erected, by the lords of the lesser Asia, which still continues <sup>f72</sup>. The church it represents had its principal seat at Rome, where Satan dwelt, (<sup>6023</sup>Revelation 2:13); which signifies exalted likewise; and it introduces the man of sin, antichrist, the popes of Rome, who exalted themselves above all that is called God, princes, kings, and emperors; whom they excommunicated, dethroned, trod upon their necks, kicked off their crowns, and obliged them to hold their stirrups while they mounted their horses, with other haughty action, too many to name.

*These things, saith he, which hath the sharp sword with two edges:* of which (see Gill on “<sup>6016</sup>Revelation 1:16”); This title is used partly to show, that the only weapon this church, and the true ministers and members of it

had, to defend themselves against the growing corruptions of antichrist, who in this interval rose up by degrees, and was revealed, and came to the height of his power, was the word of God, the Scriptures of truth; and partly to show, that in process of time, though not in this period, the man of sin should be destroyed, with the breath of Christ's mouth, and the brightness of his coming; of which his fighting against the Nicolaitans, with the sword of his mouth, (<sup>(612)</sup>Revelation 2:16); is an emblem.

**Ver. 13.** *I know thy works*, etc.] Both good and bad, and which in that pure part of this church, which opposed the growing corruptions of antichrist, were for the most part good.

*And where thou dwellest, [even] where Satan's seat [is].* Pergamos was a city very much given to idolatry, here Satan reigned while it was Pagan, and so was a fit emblem of the idolatrous church of Rome. Pausanias says <sup>f73</sup>, the country the Pergamenes inhabited was sacred to the Cabiri, the chief gods of the Heathens. And the same writer <sup>f74</sup> observes, that Aesculapius particularly was worshipped at Pergamos; and hence he is called by Martial <sup>f75</sup> the Pergamean god; to his temple here, men used to go from different parts of the world for cure of diseases; hither Antoninus the emperor went for such a purpose, as Herodian <sup>f76</sup> relates; and this being a common thing, hence Lucian <sup>f77</sup> scoffingly says, that Aesculapius had an apothecary's shop at Pergamos. As Rome, and its dominions, were the principal seat of the church in this period of time, it may well be called Satan's seat or throne; not only because it had been the seat of the Roman emperors, the ten horned and seven headed beast, (<sup>(613)</sup>Revelation 13:2); but because it was the seat of antichrist, which the great dragon Satan gave him, whose coming was after the working of Satan, and he was influenced by him; and who, like Satan, exalted himself above all that is called God; yea, placed himself in the temple of God, the church, as God, showing himself to be God, assuming that power to himself which only belonged to God. Moreover, he may be called so for his enmity and malice against the saints, and for his art and subtlety, and insidious methods to ensnare and destroy them. Now to dwell where such an one has his seat, his throne, has a kingdom, power, and authority, must be very uncomfortable, as well as dangerous; and required great care, circumspection, and prudence how to behave: and yet to the commendation of this church it is said,

*and thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith:* the pure members of this church are the two witnesses, which rose up at the



beginning of the apostasy of Rome, and bore their testimony against it, and for the truth; and continued to do so amidst all the corruptions and persecutions of that state: these are the two olive trees, that, through the golden pipes of the word and ordinances, emptied the golden oil of Gospel truths out, of themselves, pure and incorrupt, and the two candlesticks that held forth the light of the Gospel in the darkest times of Popery; these held fast the name of Christ, or the Gospel, and denied not, but confessed the doctrine of faith in the worst of times. They had the truths of the Gospel in their possession, which were dear and valuable to them; and whereas there was danger of losing them, they held them fast, with great courage, magnanimity, and strength, though the greater number was against them, and they were attended with reproach and persecution:

*even in those days wherein Antipas [was] my faithful martyr, who was slain among you, where Satan dwelleth.* Antipas is the proper name of a man; so a son of Herod was called <sup>f78</sup>, even he that beheaded John, and mocked Christ: and there might be a man of this name at Pergamos, that might suffer martyrdom for the Gospel of Christ; and who was an emblem of the confessors, witnesses, and martyrs, that suffered for Christ, in this period of time, through their opposition to the popes of Rome; for Antipas is the contraction of Antipater, and is the same with Antipapas, or Antipappas, which signifies one that is against the pope, an opposer of that holy father; and so intends all those that made head against him, upon his rising and revelation, and when he assumed the power he did to himself; such as the Waldenses and Albigenses particularly, who set themselves against him, openly declared that the pope was antichrist, and that his government was tyrannical, and his doctrines the doctrines of devils, abominable and fabulous. They bore a faithful testimony against all his corruptions and innovations, and became martyrs in the cause of Christ, many thousands of them being slain for his sake within the dominions of this firstborn of Satan. The Alexandrian copy reads “Anteipas”; and his name is left out in the Syriac and Arabic versions.

**Ver. 14.** *But I have a few things against thee,* etc.] The members of this church before their open separation from the apostasy; who still continued in the communion of the corrupt church of Rome, though they remonstrated against the errors and evil practices that crept in; and so were a stumbling block, and a snare to others to join in their idolatry and superstition:



*because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to cast a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication:* which latter was in order to the former: the instruction Balaam gave to Balak, which is here called his doctrine, was, that Balak should get some of the most beautiful women in his kingdom to ply the men of Israel, and draw them into uncleanness, and so to idolatry; by which means, God being angry with them, he might get an advantage over them: that the Israelites did commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and eat things sacrificed to idols, and bowed down to Baal Peor, is certain, (<sup><0251></sup>Numbers 25:1-3); but that this was brought about through the counsel of Balaam is not so plainly expressed, though it is hinted at in (<sup><0615></sup>Numbers 31:15,16); but the Jewish writers are very express about this matter. Jonathan ben Uzziel, one of their Targumists on (<sup><0244></sup>Numbers 24:14), has these words of Balaam;

“Come, and I will counsel thee, (speaking to Balak,) go and set up inns, and place in them whorish women, to sell food and drink at a low price: and this people will come and eat and drink, and be drunken, and will lie with them, and deny their God; and they will be quickly delivered into thine hands, and many of them shall fall.”

This now was the stumbling block he taught Balak to lay before them. And elsewhere <sup>f79</sup> it is said,

“that Balaam, the wicked, gave counsel to Balak, the son of Zippor, to cause the Israelites to fall by the sword; he said to him, the God of this people hates whoredom, cause thy daughters to commit whoredom with them, and ye shall rule over them.”

And then they go on to relate how they built shops, and placed an old woman without, and a young woman within; and when the Israelites came to buy, how well they used them, and what familiarity they admitted them to; how they made them drink of Ammonitish wine, which inclined to lust and when the signified their desire, oblige them to worship Baal Peor, and renounce the law of Moses. Both Philo <sup>f80</sup> and Josephus <sup>f81</sup> speak of this counsel of Balaam, much to the same purpose. The Samaritan Chronicle says <sup>f82</sup> that this counsel pleased the king, and he sent into the camp of Israel, on a sabbath day, twenty four thousand young women, by whom the Israelites were so seduced, that they did everything they desired them, which was just the number of those that were slain, (<sup><0259></sup>Numbers 25:9). By Balaam may be meant the pope of Rome, for that name signifies, “the lord

of the people”; and is very appropriate to him, who in this interval took upon him to be universal bishop, and lorded it over both church and state, in a most haughty and tyrannical manner; and the Balaamites were those who submitted to his power and authority, and received his doctrines; and by Balak, king of Moab, may be intended the secular powers, the emperors, kings, and princes of the earth, who were instructed by the popes of Rome, to draw their subjects into idolatry, which is spiritual fornication, to eat the bread of God, to worship the host, images, and saints departed; and which proved a snare, and a stumbling to some of this church, as to the Israelites of old, to do the same things.

**Ver. 15.** *So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,* etc.] These impure heretics sprung up in the time of the apostolic church, but their doctrines were not received, and their deeds were hated, (see [Revelation 2:6](#)). This seems to design the doctrines of the church of Rome, which in this period took place; which forbid marriage to the priests, and recommended celibacy and virginity to others also; which were the source of all uncleanness and abominable lusts; for which pardons and indulgences were given, and, in process of time, brothel houses were set up, and licensed and encouraged by authority.

*Which thing I hate;* the doctrine of these men, as well as their deeds.

**Ver. 16.** *Repent,* etc.] This is said to those who were truly godly in those times, but still retained their communion with these corrupt men, and had not, as yet, separated from them; nor had they protested against these evil doctrines and practices, at least but very coldly, and had too much connived at them; and therefore are called upon to repent of their lukewarmness, negligence, and sinful compliances:

*or else I will come unto thee quickly:* in a providential way, to rebuke and chastise for such remissness, indifference, and evil communication:

*and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth;* of this sword, (see Gill on [“Revelation 1:16”](#)). And it is observable, that Christ does not say, “I will fight against thee”; the true members of his mystical body, though lax and supine, for Christ does not fight against his people, but for them; but he says, “and will fight against them”; the Balaamites and Nicolaitans, for their idolatry and uncleanness.

**Ver. 17.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear,* etc.] (See Gill on [“Revelation 2:7”](#)).

*To him that overcometh*; the Balaamites and Nicolaitans, and do not give in to the doctrines and practices of the one, or of the other, whatever persecution and trouble he meets with, and endures on that account:

*will I give to eat of the hidden manna*; in opposition to eating things sacrificed to idols, refused by him. The allusion is to the manna which the Israelites ate of in the wilderness, which may be called “hidden”: either because they knew not what it was, when they first saw it; or because it was laid up in a golden pot, and put in the most holy place, where it was secret, and none but the high priest could see it, and who entered there but once a year: or rather, because it was at first, hidden under the dew; for according to the account the Jews give of it, a dew first fell upon the ground, then the manna upon that, and then another dew upon the manna; so that there was a dew under it, and a dew over it; insomuch that it was as if it was laid up, they say, in a box or chests<sup>f83</sup>; and they supposed the manna had respect to things future<sup>f84</sup> and do expect it in the times of the Messiah. They say<sup>f85</sup>, as the first, so the last Redeemer will cause manna to descend from heaven; and the clouds are by them reckoned the mills which will grind manna for the righteous in the world to come<sup>f86</sup>: yea, they speak<sup>f87</sup> of *amts ann*, “hidden manna”, as the food of the righteous, the very phrase here used. Now this being the food of the children of Israel in the wilderness, is very fitly mentioned here; since the church, in this period of time, in which antichrist arose, was obliged to flee into the wilderness, and there abide during his reign, and where she is nourished with this hidden manna; by which may be meant the Gospel, which is soul quickening, comforting, strengthening, and satisfying food, by which the saints are nourished up unto everlasting life, and which is hid to the world, which the men of it know nothing of; and especially Jesus Christ, the sum and substance of it, may be meant, and that secret spiritual consolation enjoyed in communion with him, and by eating him, or feeding by faith upon him; in what respects Christ may be compared to manna, (see Gill on “~~John~~ John 6:32”). And he may be said to be “hidden”, because he is unknown to men, until revealed; and is wholly hidden from carnal and unregenerate men, and is enjoyed only by believers; and it may denote the private way, in which the true church of Christ had communion with him in his word and ordinances in the wilderness, and during the dark times of Popery. Philo the Jew<sup>f88</sup> often interprets the manna by the “Logos”, the Word of God, the most ancient Word of God.

*And will give him a white stone.* The phrase, “to add a white stone”, with the Latins, is used to give one's approbation of anything; and could it be applied here, might signify the approbation Christ gives of his church and people here, amidst the testimonies they bear, and the persecutions they endure for his name's sake, and that which he will give of them before his Father, angels, and men, at the last day: white stones were used on various accounts. The Grecians used them to mark good or lucky days with them, as they called them; and could the allusion be thought to be to this custom, the sense would be, that Christ promises, to his people that overcome, happy days, after the times of Popish darkness and persecution were over: white stones were also given to the conquerors in the Olympic games, with their names upon them, and the value of the prize they won; and, here applied, may respect the crown of life and glory given to them who are more than conquerors through Christ, with their right and title to it, and the excellency of it. The Romans in judgment used to give their suffrages for condemnation by casting black stones into the urn, and for absolution white stones; to which Ovid has respect, when he says <sup>f89</sup>,

“Mos erat antiquis, niveis atrisque lapillis, His damnare reos, illis  
absolvere culpa.”

And this is thought by many to be referred to here, and may denote, that though the pure members of Christ, and who abhorred and protested against the abominations of the church of Rome, were charged with heresy and schism, and what not, yet Christ would absolve them, and justify them from all those charges. But rather the allusion is to a custom among the Jews, who used to examine the priests and Levites before they went to their service, or to the sanhedrim, to judge and pass sentence, whether their ways and works were right; and if they were as they should be, they gave them *açdqmd armwj*, “the stone of the sanctuary”: if not, they might not enter on business, as it is said; “and of Levi he said, thy Urim and thy Thummim be with thy Holy One”, (~~<f89>~~Deuteronomy 33:8) <sup>f90</sup>. Now on the Urim and Thummim, the stones in the high priest's breastplate, were engraven the names of the children of Israel; and, as the Jews say, the name Jehovah, to which reference may be had in the following clause; and may denote that the church, though in the wilderness, is regarded by Christ, is bore upon his heart and cared for by him; and also its spotless purity in him, and justification by him.

*And in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth [it]*; by this name may be meant, either the name of “Jehovah” our righteousness, which is the name both of Christ, and of his church, (<sup><2216></sup>Jeremiah 23:6 33:16), or the name of a child of God, sometimes called a new name; (see <sup><2365></sup>Isaiah 56:5 62:2); and so designs the blessing of adoption; this may be said to be a new name, because renewed, manifested to, and put upon the people of God, when they are made new creatures, though provided in predestination, and in the covenant of grace from eternity; and because a renowned and excellent one, better than that of the sons and daughters of the greatest prince on earth; and because a wonderful one, being an instance of amazing love and grace; and is what “no man knoweth”, but the receiver of it; the Father of these adopted ones is unknown to natural men; and so is Christ, through whom this blessing is bestowed; and the Spirit of God also, who witnesses to it; and the persons that enjoy it, and the blessing itself, and the inheritance to which they are adopted: and this new name being on the white stone, may show that the blessings of justification and adoption, though they are two distinct ones, yet they are inseparable: they go together, and both give a right to the heavenly inheritance; and they are also, as well as the hidden manna, gifts of free grace, and not owing to the works and merit of men, and are given by Christ, and in and through him. At Rome, some white stones have been dug up, some lesser, some greater, with names and letters, and other engravings upon them, which Pignorius<sup>f91</sup> has given the figures of; and to such some have thought the allusion here is, and may serve to illustrate this passage. The Ethiopic version, instead of a “white stone”, reads, a “famous book”.

**Ver. 18.** *And unto the angel of the church in Thyatira write*, etc.] Of the city of Thyatira, (see Gill on “<sup><6011></sup>Revelation 1:11”); a church was formed here very likely by the Apostle Paul; Lydia was a native of this place, who, and her household were converted and baptized by him at Philippi, (<sup><4164></sup>Acts 16:14); though Epiphanius<sup>f92</sup> seems to grant, what some heretics objected to the authority of this book, that there was no church at Thyatira when this letter was written; however, it is certain, there was one in the “second” century, as the same writer observes, since, as he relates, it was overrun with the Cataphrygian heresy; and in the “fourth” century there was a bishop from Thyatira in the council of Nice; and even in the “eighth” century there was one Esaias a presbyter, who supplied the place of the bishop of Thyatira in another council at Nice<sup>f93</sup>: the Turks have now eight

mosques in it, but there is not one Christian church or place of worship to be found in it<sup>f94</sup>. Who was the angel, or pastor of this church at the writing of this epistle, is not certain; however, it is designed for all the ministers and churches in the interval this church represents; and this period takes in the darkest and most superstitious times of Popery, until the Reformation. Thyatira is the same as Thygatira, which signifies a “daughter”; and it had its name, as Stephanus Byzantius says<sup>f95</sup>, from hence: Seleucus, the son of Nicanor, being at war with Lysimachus, and hearing that he had a daughter born, called this city Thygatira, which was before called Pelopia, and Semiramis; which is a very fit name for this church, and expresses the effeminacy of it, when the virgin Mary, whom the Romanists call the daughter of God, was more worshipped than her son; and was not only made a partner with him in the business of salvation, but even set above him; when there were such swarms of monks and friars, and religious orders of several sorts, as Franciscans and Dominicans, who claimed her as their patroness; when such numbers of them clad themselves in cowls and long garments, that they looked more like women in hoods and petticoats, than really men; hence also the corrupt part of this church is signified by the woman Jezebel, the daughter of Ethbaal the Zidonian; and it should not be forgot that there was once a she pope, a woman that sat in the papal chair, a whore in a literal sense; wherefore antichrist, or the popes of Rome, are filly called the great whore, the mother of harlots. Mr. Daubuz observes, that the first Christian of Thyatira was a woman, and that the false prophets which first enticed the Christians to apostasy in this church were women, as Maximilia, Quintilia, and Priscilla; to which I would add, that according to Epiphanius, that among those heretics, and which swallowed up this church, their bishops were women, and so were their presbyters, or elders; and Dr. Smith<sup>f96</sup> is of opinion, that the inhabitants of this place, when Heathen, were worshippers of the goddess Diana; so that, upon all accounts, the church here was a fit symbol of the effeminate Church of Rome.

*These things saith the Son of God*; he who is truly, properly, naturally, and essentially the Son of God: this character Christ makes use of to assert his proper deity, as being of the same nature, and having the same perfections with his Father, as well as to command the greater regard to what he ordered to be written to the churches; and chiefly in opposition to the effeminate state of this church; it was time for him to take to him his highest name, as expressive of his highest nature, and to assert himself the

Son of God, when Mary, his mother according to the flesh, and who was but a mere creature, was called the daughter of God, and set upon a level with him, and even preferred unto him:

*who hath his eyes like unto a flame of fire*; quick and sharp, and penetrating through the darkness of this state; seeing into, discovering, and exposing the horrid actions and wickednesses of men done in the dark; expressing fury, wrath, and vengeance against the Romish antichrist and his followers; and may also design the light of Gospel doctrine, which broke out in those times at certain seasons, to the dispelling of Popish darkness in some measure; (see Gill on “<sup>(114)</sup>Revelation 1:14”);

*and his feet [are] like fine brass*; in the description of Christ in (<sup>(114)</sup>Revelation 1:14); it is added, as if they burned in a furnace; (see Gill on “<sup>(114)</sup>Revelation 1:14”); and may denote the strength, stability, and support Christ gave his people while suffering for his sake, when in the furnace and burning for him, which kind of death was much used in those times: hence Dr. More, to whom I am much obliged for many hints in this exposition of the epistles to the churches, thinks that Thyatira is an allusion to *ψυητρια*, which signify “altars” for the burning of sweet odours; and so may be expressive of the burning of the saints, those sweet odours, as they are to God and Christ, with fire and faggot; which was now practised, as in the other period killing with the sword was chiefly used; in the midst of which Christ was present, supporting his people.

**Ver. 19.** *I know thy works*, etc.] Good works, as appears from the particular enumeration of them afterwards, and the commendation of proficiency in them, the last being more than the first, and the distinction from the evil ones in (<sup>(121)</sup>Revelation 2:20); this is said to the faithful followers and professors of Christ in this interval:

*and charity*; by which is meant not a relieving the wants of the poor; much less such a charity as connives at the errors and heresies of men; but the divine grace of love to God and Christ, and the saints, without which a profession of religion is a vain thing; and, generally speaking, this grace is most in exercise in a time of trouble and persecution:

*and service*; or “ministry”, meaning either the ministry of the word, which was exercised by many with great zeal, diligence, and faithfulness, as by Wickliff, John Huss, Jerom of Prague, and others; or the ministering to the necessities of the poor saints, as an evidence of their charity or love; or else



the service of God is here intended, which is but reasonable, and is his due, and ought to be performed to him only, and that with fear and fervency, in faith, and with a pure conscience, with humility, and without mercenary views, and in righteousness and true holiness; or the service of love which the saints perform to one another, as praying for one another, bearing one another's burdens, admonishing and reproving for sin, restoring such as are gone astray, comforting the distressed, building up one another in their most holy faith, and exhorting and stirring up each other to the duties of religion:

*and faith*; not the doctrine of faith, as preached by the ministers of the word, and held and maintained by the true professors of it; but either the grace of faith, or the profession of both; or rather the faithfulness, both of the ministers and private believers of those times, as the Waldenses and Albigenses, the Lollards and Wickliffites, who abode by, and were faithful to the light which they had received:

*and thy patience*; in suffering for the sake of Christ and the Gospel: and very much it was they did endure, and yet held out to the end:

*and thy works, and the last [to be] more than the first*; that is, that their works or acts of love to God and Christ and one another, and of service to God and to the saints, and of faith and faithfulness in the cause of God, and of patience in suffering for the Gospel of Christ, were more in quantity, and greater in quality, toward the close of this period, which brought on the Reformation, than at the beginning of it; and which were done by the persons before mentioned, and by others.

**Ver. 20.** *Notwithstanding, I have a few things against thee*, etc.] By way of complaint; so the Arabic version renders it, “I have a certain complaint against thee”. The impartiality of Christ may be observed in taking notice of the bad deeds, as well as of the good ones of his people, and his tenderness in representing them as few; and these things he had against them not in a judicial way to their condemnation, but in a providential way, in order to chastise them for them, for their good; and they are as follow:

*because thou sufferest that woman Jezebel*; or “thy wife Jezebel”, as the Complutensian edition and Syriac version read; the name of King Ahab's wife, who seduced him, in the Hebrew language is “Izebel”, but is read by the Septuagint in (<sup><1165></sup>1 Kings 16:31), Jezebel, as here; and by Josephus <sup>f97</sup> Jezabela; she had her name from **I bz**, “Zebel”, “dung”, to which Elijah has



reference in (~~1297~~ 2 Kings 9:37); the Ethiopic version calls her “Elzabel”. By her is meant the apostate church of Rome, comparable to Jezebel, the wife of Ahab; as she was the daughter of an Heathen, so is Rome Papal the daughter of Rome Pagan; and as she was the wife of Ahab, and therefore a queen, so the whore of Babylon calls herself; and as Jezebel was famous for her paintings, so the church of Rome for her pretensions to religion and holiness, and for the gaudiness of her worship; and as she was remarkable for her idolatry, whoredoms, witchcrafts, and cruel persecution of the prophets of the Lord, and for murder, and innocent blood she shed; so the church of Rome, for her idolatrous worship of images, for her whoredoms, both in a literal and spiritual sense, and for the witchcrafts, magic, and devilish arts many of her popes have been addicted to, and especially for her barbarities and cruelties exercised upon the true professors of Christ, and for the blood of the martyrs, with which she has been drunk; and as Jezebel stirred up Ahab against good and faithful men, so this church stirred up the secular powers, emperors, kings, and princes, against the true followers of Christ: and the end of both of them is much alike; as scarce anything was left of Jezebel, so Babylon the great, the mother of harlots, shall be cast into the sea, and be found no more at all: compare (~~1297~~ 2 Kings 9:7,22,30,31,33,37) with (~~6170~~ Revelation 17:1,2,4-6,17,18 18:3,7,21,23);

*which calleth herself a prophetess*; as perhaps Jezebel might do, since she was such a favourer of the prophets of Baal, and so familiarly conversed with them, and kept them, even a hundred of them, at her table: and certain it is, that the antitype of her pretends to an infallible interpretation of the Scriptures, and to have a bulk of unwritten traditions; and which interpretations and traditions are to be regarded as an infallible rule of faith and practice. Now what is complained of in the true members and followers of Christ is, that they suffered this woman

*to teach*; when it was insufferable for a woman to teach, and especially such a strumpet:

*and to seduce my servants to commit fornication*; to deceive such who called themselves the servants of Christ, and draw them into the commission of spiritual fornication, which is idolatry; as the idolatrous worship of the Mass, and of images and saints departed:

*and to eat things sacrificed unto idols*; as Balaam, or the pope, before had done, (~~6124~~ Revelation 2:14). This may have respect to the latter part of this

period, when the eyes of many began to be opened to see these false doctrines and idolatrous practices, and yet had not courage enough to oppose them as they should.

**Ver. 21.** *And I gave her space to repent of her fornication*, etc.] Of idolatry. This may have respect to the time of the witnesses, the Waldenses, and others, who bore a testimony against the Romish idolatry, and reprov'd for it, and denounced the judgment of God in case of impenitence; and as these things were repeated time after time, this may be called a space given to repent in; just as Jezebel had a space given her to repent in, from the time that Elijah declared the word of the Lord, that the dogs should eat her: so the Jews <sup>f98</sup> say of the old world, that God gave them **בְּיָצֵא אֱלֹהִים אֶת-יִשְׂרָאֵל מִצִּיּוֹן**, “space to repent”, but they repented not, as here:

*and she repented not*; (see <sup>cfm</sup> Revelation 9:20,21); for the time for, and means leading to repentance may be given, yet if the grace of repentance itself is not given, men, either particular persons, or whole bodies of men, will never repent of their sins. The Alexandrian copy, Complutensian, Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “and she would not repent”.

**Ver. 22.** *Behold, I will cast her into a bed*, etc.] Of sickness and languishing; and which denotes the sickly, pining, and languishing state of the church of Rome, as a just retaliation for her bed of luxury and deliciousness, adultery and idolatry, she had indulged herself in; this was threatened, and was yet to come, and began at the time of the Reformation, signified by the next church state; and, ever since, the whore of Rome has been visibly sickening and decaying. The Alexandrian copy reads, “into a prison”:

*and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation*: the kings of the earth, and their subjects, who have joined in the idolatries and corruptions of the Romish church, (<sup>cfm</sup> Revelation 17:2 18:3), which may be understood either of that distress and uneasiness the Reformation in some countries gave them; or those outward troubles, wars, and desolations they have been since attended with, particularly the empire of Germany; which has been in great tribulation, formerly by the Turks, and of late by internal broils among themselves, and by the armies of other princes entering into it; or it may regard that eternal vengeance that will be recompensed to all such persons:

*except they repent of their deeds*; their spiritual fornication or idolatry, and all the abominations the members of that apostate church are guilty of. There seems to be an allusion in this verse to Ahaziah and Joram, sons of Ahab and Jezebel, who followed their mother's idolatrous practices, and were cast upon a bed of sickness, (<sup>1102</sup>2 Kings 1:2 8:29).

**Ver. 23.** *And I will kill her children with death*, etc.] Her popes, cardinals, priests, Jesuits, monks, friars, and all that join in the Romish apostasy, they shall be killed with death; there shall be an utter extirpation of them in God's own time; or they shall be killed with the second death: *antwm*, when used alone, or as distinct from any other kind of death, signifies the plague; compare with this (<sup>1103</sup>2 Kings 9:24 10:1,7);

*and all the churches*: that shall be in being at the time of Rome's destruction:

*shall know that I am he that searcheth the reins and heart*; or am the omniscient God; which will be known by inflicting punishment on the followers of antichrist; when their hidden things of darkness will be brought to light, and exposed by him; and they shall receive the righteous reward of their evil practices, which they have coloured over, and glossed with specious pretences of religion and holiness, and a zeal for God and his glory, when they only meant themselves, the gratifying their carnal lusts, and securing their worldly interests, and amassing riches and honours to themselves:

*and I will give unto everyone of you according to your works*; who have connived at, and joined with them in their evil deeds; as many as were seduced by the false prophetess to commit spiritual fornication with her: as Christ is omniscient, and does not judge according to the outward appearance of things, but knows the principles and ends of all actions, however covert they may be; so he is righteous in judging and in punishing, which will be according as men's works are; and not one shall escape his righteous judgment, nor the due desert of their sins, though the punishment of some may be greater than that of others.

**Ver. 24.** *But unto you I say, and unto the rest in Thyatira*, etc.] The copulative and is left out in the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition, and if retained, it may be rendered thus, "even unto the rest"; the persons spoken to are the same, the pastor of this church, with his colleagues, and all the rest of the faithful in it; which shows that this

epistle, and so the rest, were not written to the pastors only, but to the churches; and that the pastor and his colleagues, with others, were free from the abominable errors and corruptions before spoken of; and that, in the worst of times, God does, and will reserve a people for himself, who are described as follows:

*as many as have not this doctrine*; who had not given into, and embraced this doctrine of the antichristian church of Rome, concerning infallibility, the worshipping of images, transubstantiation, etc. the Arabic version reads, “this new doctrine”; for notwithstanding the large pretensions of the Romish church to antiquity, her doctrine is but a novel doctrine:

*and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak*; that is, had not approved of the doctrines of antichrist, which though his followers called deep things and mysteries of their holy religion, such as transubstantiation, etc. yet, to speak in the language of the pure and faithful professors of the Gospel, they are no other than the depths of Satan, or doctrines of devils; or else the sense is, as Jezebel and her followers say, to the contempt of the faithful, arrogating knowledge to themselves, and upbraiding them with simplicity and ignorance, as not knowing Satan's devices, nor how to rescue souls out of them, as they did; but the former sense seems best:

*I will put upon you none other burden*; meaning not any affliction or tribulation than the present one; nor any other errors and heresies than what were broached; but no other precept or command than what follows; (see ~~1~~<sup>2</sup> Kings 9:25).

**Ver. 25.** *But that which ye have [already]*, etc.] Which was something good, even the faithful word, the form of sound words, the mystery and doctrine of faith; this they had received from Christ and his apostles; they had it in their hearts, and a comfortable experience of the truth and power of it, and had made a profession of it, which they now held, and are here exhorted to hold fast:

*hold fast till I come*; meaning the coming of Christ, either at the Reformation by Luther, Calvin, and others, which began at the close of this church state, when the hands and hearts of those professors would be more strengthened, which seems to be the first sense of the words; or to judge Jezebel, destroy antichrist, which will be by the brightness of his coming; till which time the doctrine of the Gospel is to be held fast: and such an

exhortation will be always necessary, since, till then, there will be always more or less an opposition to it, and attempts made to wrest it out of the hands of its professors, to cause them to hesitate about it, and to intimidate them in the profession of it, by loading them with reproaches, calumnies, and persecution.

**Ver. 26.** *And he that overcometh*, etc.] Jezebel and her idolatries, her children, and all that commit adultery with her; such as are not drawn into the same evil practices with them, but bravely stand their ground against the Romish antichrist and his followers, and bear their testimony against his impious doctrines and idolatrous practices:

*and keepeth my works unto the end*; either of life, or of this church state, or of time, when Christ will personally appear, even at the end of the world; and by his works are meant, not the works which were done by him, as his miracles and works of mercy to the souls and bodies of men, and works of righteousness in obedience to the law, and the work of redemption and salvation; though these are works to be observed, and kept in view, and to be preserved in memory, and for the encouragement of faith and hope; but the works which are commanded, and required by Christ to be done by his people; as the public work of the ministry, by the preachers of the Gospel; and every private work, both internal and external, as the work of faith, the labour of love, and every act of obedience, which is constantly to be discharged. The Arabic version reads, “and keepeth my words and my works”; things both relating to doctrine and practice:

*to him will I give power over the nations*; or Gentiles, the Papists; so called because of the Pagan notions and worship introduced by them; and because they consist of many nations, tongues, and people, who are deceived, and drawn into idolatry by them: and this power over them may be understood in a spiritual sense, through the preaching of the Gospel, which being attended with the power of God, is the means of converting sinners, and so of weakening the kingdom of Satan, and of antichrist; and which had its fulfilment, at least in part, at the time of the Reformation, and onward, and will have still a greater accomplishment in the spiritual reign of Christ and his people, under the Philadelphian church state; and it may also design the temporal power which the saints shall have over antichrist, when they shall take away his dominion, and consume and destroy it, and the kingdom and the dominion under the whole heaven shall be given to the saints of the most High; (<sup>2175</sup>Daniel 7:25-27).

**Ver. 27.** *And he shall rule them with a rod of iron*, etc.] Either with the Gospel, which is the rod of Christ's strength, and is the power of God unto salvation, and by which the kingdom of Christ is enlarged, and the power of the church of Christ over the antichristian party is increased; or it may design great strictness and severity, with which the man of sin will be used by the saints of the most High, when they shall take away his dominion from him:

*as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers*; which may be expressive either of the breaking of rocky hearts in pieces at conversion, and of making souls humble and contrite; or of the irreparable ruin and destruction of antichrist, when the saints shall consume and destroy him:

*even as I received of my Father*; Christ, as God, has an underived power and government; but, as Mediator, his rule and power over the nations are asked by him, given to him, and received by him, (<sup>411B</sup>Psalm 2:8,9). This “as” does not intend equality, but similitude; and denotes the participation the saints will have with Christ in the judgment and destruction of antichrist, and in his kingdom and power.

**Ver. 28.** *And I will give him the morning star*.] So Christ is called, (<sup>6226</sup>Revelation 22:16); and here it designs an illustrious appearance of Christ at the close of this church state, and a communication of much light and grace from him, which introduced the Sardian church state, or the reformation by Luther, Calvin, etc. which is the phosphorus, or morning star, to the spiritual reign of Christ under the Philadelphian church state; which will be the bright, clear, day of the Gospel, when the present twilight, which is between the appearance of the morning star and that glorious day, will be removed: for by this morning star is not meant the glory that shall be put upon the bodies of the saints in the resurrection morn; nor the heavenly glory itself, or the hope of it; but the dawning of the latter day glory, which began at the Reformation, and is promised the faithful professors in the Thyatirian church state, who lived in the darkness of Popery.

**Ver. 29.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on <sup>4117</sup>Revelation 2:7”).

# CHAPTER 3

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 3

This chapter contains the epistles to the churches at Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea, and begins with that to Sardis; in which the sender describes himself by some things taken out of a former description of him; and gives an account of the state of this church; that her works were known by him, which were imperfect; and that she had the name of a living church, but was dead; wherefore she is exhorted to watchfulness and diligence, to remember how she had heard and received the Gospel, and to hold it fast, and repent of her sins: if not, he threatens to come as a thief unawares upon her, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:1-3), but excepts some few persons from this general account, who were not defiled with the corruptions of the majority, and who therefore should be favoured with communion with him, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:4), and then some gracious promises are made to persevering saints, and the epistle is concluded in the usual form, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:5,6). Next follows the epistle to the church at Philadelphia; in which the sender assumes some peculiar titles not before mentioned, taken from his holiness, truth, and power, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:7), signifies his approbation of her works; declares he had set before her an open door, which could not be shut; affirms she had a little strength, and commends her for keeping his word, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:8), and, for her encouragement, promises that some persons, formerly of bad characters, should come and worship before her, and should know what an interest she had in his love; and that since she had kept his word, he would keep her from an hour of temptation, which will be a trying time to all the world, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:9,10), and in consideration of his speedy coming, he exhorts her to hold fast what she had, that she might not lose her honour and glory; and promises the overcomer a fixed place and name in the house of God; and closes the epistle as the rest, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:11-13), and then follows the last epistle of all, which is that to the church at Laodicea; in which the sender describes himself by some characters taken from his truth and faithfulness, and from his eternity, power, and dominion, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:14), represents the members of this church as lukewarm, and very disagreeable to him, (~~REV~~ Revelation 3:15,16), and as having a vain

opinion of themselves, being ignorant of their real state and case, (<sup>f987</sup>Revelation 3:17), wherefore he gives them some wholesome counsel and advice, suitable to their condition, (<sup>f988</sup>Revelation 3:18), and whereas there were some among them he loved, he lets them know that his rebukes and chastenings were from love, and with a view to stimulate them to zeal, and bring them to repentance, which became them, (<sup>f989</sup>Revelation 3:19), and then he informs them where he was, what he expected from them, and what they might upon a suitable behaviour enjoy with him, (<sup>f990</sup>Revelation 3:20), and next promises to the overcomer great honour and glory, such as he had with his Father; and concludes the epistle in his usual manner, (<sup>f991</sup>Revelation 3:21,22).

**Ver. 1.** *And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write*, etc.] Of the city of Sardis (see Gill on "<sup>f991</sup>Revelation 1:11") when, and by whom this church was founded, and who was the present angel or pastor of it, is not now to be certainly known; however, here was a church in the "second" century, of which Melito was then pastor; and he is thought by some to be the angel here intended; this man wrote upon the book of the Revelation, and an apology for the Christians, sent to the Emperor Antoninus Verus, in whose time he lived <sup>f999</sup>; and in the "third" century a church remained in this place; and also in the "fourth", as appears from the council of Nice, which makes mention of it; and likewise in the "fifth", as is evident from the acts of the synod at Chalcedon, in which age it was the metropolitan church of the Lydians; and in the "sixth" century there was a bishop of this church in the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the "seventh" century, Marinus bishop of Sardis assisted at the sixth synod in the same place; and in the "eighth" century, Euthymius bishop of it was present in the Nicene synod; and even in the "ninth" century mention is made of an archbishop of Sardis <sup>f100</sup>; but now there are but very few Christians to be found here, and who have not a place to worship in, nor any to minister to them <sup>f101</sup>. This church represents the state of the church from the time of the Reformation by Luther and others, until a more glorious state of the church appears, or until the spiritual reign of Christ in the Philadelphian period; under the Sardian church state we now are: (this was published in 1747, Ed.) that this church is an emblem of the reformed churches from Popery, is evident not only from its following the Thyatirian state, which expresses the darkness of Popery, and the depths of Satan in it; but from its being clear of Balaam, and those that held his doctrine; and from the Nicolaitans and their tenets, and from Jezebel, and those that committed adultery with her;



things which the two former churches are charged with; but from these the present church reformed. This city of Sardis was once a very flourishing and opulent city; it was the metropolis of Lydia, and the royal seat of the rich King Croesus, though now a very poor and mean village; and may denote the magnificence and splendour of this church state, at least in name and figure, it has appeared in, in the world; though now in a very low and mean condition, and may be worse before the spiritual reign of Christ begins in the next period: there may be some allusion in the name of this church to the precious stone “sarda”, which, Pliny says <sup>f102</sup>, was found about Sardis, and had its name from hence; the same with the Sardian stone in (~~604E~~ Revelation 4:2 21:20). This stone, naturalists say <sup>f103</sup>, drives away fear, gives boldness, cheerfulness, and sharpness of wit, and frees from witchcrafts and sorceries; which may be expressive of the boldness and courage of the first reformers; of the cheerfulness, joy, and pleasure, which appeared in their countenances, and which they spread in others by preaching the doctrines of the Gospel; and of those excellent gifts and talents both of nature, learning, and grace, by which they were fitted for their service; and of their being a means of delivering men from the witchcrafts of Jezebel, and the sorceries of the whore of Rome: and perhaps some allusion may be in this name, as is thought by Cocceius, to the Hebrew word *dyrc̄*, “sarid”, which signifies a “remnant”, since in this church state there was a remnant according to the election of grace, a few names, whose garments were undefiled; or to the word *dr̄ç*, “sered”, which signifies a carpenter's rule or line; since the first reformers were endeavouring to bring every doctrine and practice to the rule and line of God's word:

*these things saith he that hath the seven spirits of God*; the fulness and perfection of the gifts and graces of the Spirit of God, as in (~~604E~~ Revelation 1:4), which Christ, as Mediator, has without measure, and are at his dispose, and which he, having received for men, gives unto them; and at the time of the Reformation bestowed them on many eminent servants of his in a very plenteous manner; for which reason he assumes this character in writing to this church:

*and the seven stars*; the ministers of the Gospel; (see Gill on ~~601E~~ Revelation 1:16”), (see Gill on ~~601E~~ Revelation 2:1”); these were filled by Christ at this time with evangelical light and knowledge; and were sent, and held forth by him as lights in the world; and were instruments in his

hand for great good; and were wonderfully held, kept, and preserved by him, notwithstanding the greatness of their work, their weakness in themselves, and the power, rage, and fury of the antichristian party; Luther is a remarkable instance of this: Christ's making use of the same title here as in the epistle to the church at Ephesus, which represents the apostolic church, may show that this church state bore some degree of likeness to that, and that it was a sort of renewing of it:

*I know thy works*; good works chiefly; the nature and imperfection of them; and also bad works: that

*thou hast a name that thou livest*: the reformed churches have had a name for spiritual living, by faith on Christ's righteousness only for justification, that article being the great article of the Reformation: there was in them an appearance of liveliness, by their zeal for Gospel doctrine and worship, and a form of living according to godliness; they were esteemed, were celebrated, and famous for these things, especially for living by faith on Christ's righteousness:

*and art dead*; or “but art dead”; for, the most part, or greater part of the members of these churches, are dead in trespasses and sins; and as for the rest, they are very dead and lifeless in their frames, in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duties; and under great spiritual declensions and decays, just as it were ready to die; and but few really alive in a spiritual sense, and especially lively, or in the lively exercise of grace, and fervent discharge of duty; yea, dead as to those things in which they had a name to live: and this seems to be our case now, who, it is to be hoped, are at, or towards the close of this period.

**Ver. 2.** *Be watchful*, etc.] Which may respect both ministers and members: the ministers of the Gospel, whose business is to watch over themselves, their conversation and doctrine, and watch every opportunity to preach it, and the success of their ministry; and that they do not grow careless, or be drawn aside through frowns or flatteries; and over others, as shepherds do, to know the state of their flock; as watchmen of cities to give the time of night, and notice of approaching danger; and to see that the laws of Christ's house are put in execution: and this may also respect the members of these churches, who ought to be watchful, and constant attenders on the word and ordinances, and in the duty of prayer; and should watch over themselves, their hearts, thoughts, affections, words, and actions, and against sin, Satan, the world, and false teachers: or “be awake”; which

shows that both ministers and churches are asleep, or much inclined to it; which is the present case of both in this period of time:

*and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die*; not good works; though these may be said to be ready to die when men grow weary of them, are lifeless in the performance of them, and want zeal for them; and may be said to be strengthened when men do their first works: nor the graces of the Spirit; for the whole work of grace remains, and though it is imperfect, yet no part is, or can be taken away from it; yea, there is an increase of it, though it may not be discerned; the work of grace cannot die, or be ready to die; there may be a decline as to the exercise of it, and a want of liveliness in it; and things may be ready to die in appearance, and in the apprehension of believers, but not in reality; and besides it is God's work, and not man's, to strengthen this: therefore they may intend the truths of the Gospel, which at the beginning of the Reformation were revived, and were preached with great life and liveliness; but towards the close of this state, as now, would be just ready to expire, to be almost lost, and dead, and buried, as they are; and which it becomes both ministers and members of churches to hold, and hold up, establish, and confirm: or else the rest of the members of this church may be meant, those of them that remained, that were not wholly sunk and apostatized; and yet were in a very faint and sickly state, scarce any life in them, ready to give up their religion and profession; which should be strengthened, by preaching the pure Gospel, by faithfully administering the ordinances of it, and by speaking comfortable and encouraging words to them. The Complutensian edition and some copies read, "which thou art about lose"; which seems a good reading; and the Arabic version, and some other copies, "which thou art going to reject":

*for I have not found thy works perfect before God*; meaning that the reformers, and reformed churches, stuck where they first began; and did not carry their works neither with respect to doctrine, and especially with respect to discipline and worship, to a greater perfection, as they ought to have done: and however perfect they might appear before men, they were not so in the sight of the omniscient God, nor found so by Christ, before whom all things are naked and open: the Arabic version reads, "before me"; and the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, "before my God". This church, though she has departed from the corrupt church of Rome, and from her evil doctrines and practices; yet did not go on to that perfection which

might have been expected and desired, and which would have rendered her praiseworthy, whereas she is now discommended. It is an observation of a Jewish writer<sup>f104</sup>, that

“if one departs from an evil way, and does not do that which is good, he does not *whç [m μyl çh*, “make his work perfect”, and he is not pronounced blessed.”

**Ver. 3.** *Remember, therefore, how thou hast received and heard*, etc.]

That is, hast received upon hearing; for hearing goes first, and then receiving: the design of the advice is to put this church in mind of the doctrines of grace she had heard at the beginning of the Reformation, from Luther and others; such as justification by the righteousness of Christ, pardon through his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, doctrines now almost lost and buried in forgetfulness; wherefore Christ would have her remember these things; how that she heard them with attention, reverence, humility, and without prejudice; and with much affection, so as to approve and love them, believe them, feel the power of them, and taste the goodness in them; and how she received them with all meekness, readiness, and joy, when now they are greatly disliked and rejected by many; very few attend to the doctrines of the Reformation. This is exactly our case:

*and hold fast*: the above doctrines, though the majority is against them, and learned men despise them, and they are charged with enthusiasm and licentiousness. It looks as if there was danger, as there is, that they would be entirely wrested out of her hands:

*and repent*: of her deadness, coldness, and indifference to these truths; of her unwatchfulness over them, and imperfection in them; not carrying truth to its fulness and perfection, resting in her first light and knowledge, and even going back from that:

*if therefore thou shalt not watch*: and preserve truth, and hold fast the form of sound words, and keep to the order, as well as the faith of the Gospel, and constantly attend divine worship, and look for the coming and kingdom of Christ:

*I will come on thee as a thief*; in the night, and at unawares, unthought of, and unexpected; which must be understood of coming to her in a way of rebuke and chastisement, by bringing some affliction, or suffering some

sore distress to fall upon her: the phrase, “on thee”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy and in the Ethiopic version:

*and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee*: which, though applicable to the spiritual coming of Christ in the next church state, and to his second coming in his kingdom and glory, which will be both sudden and unexpected, yet these will be to the joy and comfort of the church; whereas what is here spoken is by way of threatening, and must relate to some severe dispensation on her; and which we might now justly expect, were we not in the unwatchful, unthoughtful, and ignorant situation here described.

**Ver. 4.** *Thou hast a few names even in Sardis*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “but thou hast a few names”, etc. or “a few men”, as the Ethiopic version renders it; who were called by name, and were men of renown, excellent men, men famous for holding the truth of doctrine, and for powerful and practical godliness; men of great light and grace, and who were known by name to God and Christ: these are said to be but “few”, not in comparison of the world, in which sense all the elect of God are but few, though a large number, considered in themselves; but in comparison of formal lifeless professors of religion, with which this church state abounds; and which, if we were not as dead as we are, might easily be observed; there may not only be hypocrites in churches, but a majority of them: yea, these few may be understood in comparison of the greater number of true believers; for in this period of the church there are but few, even of them, that are lively, zealous, and careful, and are heartily concerned for the purity of doctrine, discipline, worship, and conversation; and a few there are, blessed be God, even in this our Sardinian church state. God will have a few in whom he will be glorified in the most declining times; and the Lord knows and takes notice of these few; and for their sake the church state is kept up, the Gospel and its ordinances are continued; nor is a church to be judged of by the number of its members, nor is a multitude to be followed to do evil.

*Which have not defiled their garments*; the Ethiopic version adds, “with a woman”, the woman Jezebel. They were not guilty either of corporeal or spiritual fornication, which is idolatry; they kept their outward conversation garments pure, and maintained a profession of Christ and his truths incorrupt; they did not defile it by an unbecoming walk, or by a

denial of Christ and a departure from him, and by embracing false doctrines; they were neither erroneous in their principles, nor immoral in their practices; few there, are indeed of this sort. Defiled garments, in either sense, very ill become members of the reformed churches. Among the Jews<sup>f105</sup>, if a priest's garments were spotted or defiled, he might not minister; if he did, his service was rejected.

*And they shall walk with me in white*; there is a walking in Christ by faith; and a walking before him as in his sight; and a walking worthy of him, in all well pleasing in his ways and ordinances; and here a walking with him, in a way of special and comfortable communion, both here and hereafter: and this is in white; in white raiment, meaning either in the robe of his own righteousness, compared to fine linen and white; or in the shining robes of immortality and glory; and may be expressive of that spiritual joy which such shall be partakers of, as well as of their spotless purity and innocence in the other world. White raiment was used among the Romans as a token of joy at festivals, and on birthdays, and at weddings, and such like times.

*For they are worthy*; not of themselves, or through any works of righteousness done by them, which are neither meritorious of grace here, nor of glory hereafter; but through the grace of God, and worthiness of Christ. The Jews have a saying somewhat like this<sup>f106</sup>;

“they that walk with God in their lifetime, *μykwz*, “are worthy” to walk with him after their death;”

In the Apocrypha we read:

“Take thy number, O Sion, and shut up those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord.” (2 Esdras 2:40)

This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

**Ver. 5.** *He that overcometh*, etc.] The deadness, formality, and imperfection of this church state; gets over these things, and is among the few names in it:

*the same shall be clothed in white raiment*; the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “thus shall he be clothed in white raiment”; he shall have abundance of spiritual peace and joy, great success and prosperity, both inward and outward, in himself, and in the church; and

triumph over all his enemies, sin, Satan, the world, death, and every other enemy; and not only be clothed with change of raiment, the pure and spotless righteousness of Christ, but shall enjoy eternal glory and happiness! the allusion seems to be to the custom of the Jewish sanhedrim in judging of priests fit for service<sup>f107</sup>;

“they examined the priests concerning their genealogies and blemishes; every priest in whom was found anything faulty in his genealogy, he was clothed in black and veiled in black, and went out of the court; but everyone that was found perfect and right, **μυνηι ἄβωι** , “he was clothed in white”, and went in and ministered with his brethren the priests.”

*And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life*; by which is meant the choice of persons to everlasting life and salvation; and this being signified by a book, and by writing names in it, shows the exact knowledge God has of his elect, the value he has for them, his remembrance of them, his love to them, and care for them; and that this election is of particular persons by name, and is sure and certain; for those whose names are written in it shall never be blotted out, they will always remain in the number of God's elect, and can never become reprobates, or shall ever perish; because of the unchangeableness of the nature and love of God, the firmness of his purposes, the omnipotence of his arm, the death and intercession of Christ for them, their union to him, and being in him, the impossibility of their seduction by false teachers, and the security of their persons, grace, and glory in Christ, and in whose keeping this book of life is; which respects not this temporal life, that belongs to the book of providence, but a spiritual and eternal life, from whence it has its name.

*But I will confess his name before my Father and before his angels*; which shows that Christ has an exact and perfect knowledge of all the chosen ones, he knows them by name; and that he has a strong and affectionate love for them, and is not ashamed of them, of their cause, of their persons, and of their relation to him; and that he does and will own, acknowledge, and approve of them, both here and hereafter: and the confession he will make of them will be in their praise; in praise of their persons and the comeliness of them, which he has put upon them; and of their graces, though they are his own; and of their good works as the fruits of grace: and this will be made before his Father, who chose these persons, and gave them to him to preserve and save; and before the angels, who rejoice at

their salvation and happiness; and this will be at the last day; (see Gill on “~~4002~~ Matthew 10:32”).

**Ver. 6.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on “~~4003~~ Revelation 2:7”).

**Ver. 7.** *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write*, etc.] Of the city of Philadelphia, (see Gill on “~~4004~~ Revelation 1:11”); According to the Apostolical Constitutions <sup>f108</sup>, one Demetrius was ordained bishop of this church by the Apostle John; but this is not to be depended on; nor is it known who this angel was: however, certain it is there was a church in this place in the “second” century, in the times of Ignatius, who wrote an epistle to it, and which then had a bishop or pastor over it, whom he mentions <sup>f109</sup>, though not his name. And in the same century twelve Philadelphians suffered martyrdom at the same time Polycarp did <sup>f110</sup>; and in the “third” century a church remained in this place; and also in the “fourth”, since a bishop of this church was in the council at Nice; and in the “fifth” century, a presbyter of Philadelphia was in the synod at Ephesus under Celestine; and in the “sixth” century, a bishop of this place assisted at the fifth synod at Constantinople; and in the “eighth” century, Stephen, bishop of the church here, was in the Nicene synod <sup>f111</sup>; and there are now very many that bear the name of Christians of the Greek Church in this place <sup>f112</sup>. This church is an emblem of, and represents the church in that period of time, in which will be the spiritual reign of Christ. Its name signifies “brotherly love”, which in this interval will be very remarkable; saints shall not envy, vex, and distress one another any more; they shall be one in the hand of the Lord, and among themselves. Love, which is now so cold, and so much wanting in our present Sardian church state, will be exceeding warm and fervent, and in its highest pitch in the Philadelphian state. The characters Christ here assumes point at the holiness of life, truth of doctrine, and purity of discipline, for which this church state will be distinguished: in this period of time an open door for the Gospel will be set; it will be preached in its power and purity, and; will be greatly succeeded; the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in, and the Jews will be converted; hypocrites and formal professors will be discerned and detected; great honour and respect will be shown the church by all men; and this state will be an emblem and pledge of the new Jerusalem state, of which mention is made in this epistle, or the thousand years' personal reign of Christ with all his saints:



*these things saith he that is holy*; which character not only agrees with Christ, as God, who is the Holy One of Israel, and equally glorious in holiness as his Father, but as man; his nature was free from original sin; his life from any actual transgression; his doctrines were pure and holy, and so were all his works, and all his administrations in each of his offices: and, as Mediator, he is the cause and author of holiness to his people; they are sanctified in him, and have their sanctification from him, and are sanctified by him: this character he chooses now to take, because he was sending an epistle to such as were lovers of holiness, and famous for it, both internal and external; so that while he describes himself, he points at persons, the members of churches in this interval:

*he that is true*; truly God, and truly man: true and faithful in the discharge of his several offices, and in the trust reposed in him, both of the grace and persons of the saints, and in what he undertook to do for them: he is truth itself, the truth of types, promises, and prophecies; and the sum and substance of all the truths of the Gospel; and is therefore to be depended on in every prediction and promise; and this title of Christ may have some view to the truth of doctrine which shall, in this period, prevail, and to the faithfulness and integrity of his people to his cause and interest:

*he that hath the key of David*; mention is made of David, because he was a type of Christ; and because from him Christ came according to the flesh, and whose throne he was to sit upon, in a spiritual sense; and because, in this period of time, the Jews are to be converted, who will seek the Lord their God, and David their king: and by the key of David is meant the key of the house of David; that is, the church of Christ, of which David's house and family were a type: and this key is either the key of knowledge, or it is expressive of power and authority. Christ has the key of knowledge, he knows all the persons of his people, all their affairs, and what they do in his house, and how they behave there: he has the key of knowledge in the Scriptures, and gives it to his ministers. And it may also design his authority in his house and church, in fixing the ordinances of it, in bestowing gifts on men, and in dispensing the blessings of grace and goodness; this may have some regard to the pure discipline of this church, as well as to its light and knowledge in the doctrines of the Gospel. The Targum on (<sup>237</sup>Isaiah 22:22) interprets the key of the house of David, of ןַיִּלְכֹּץ, “the dominion” or “government of the house of David”.

*He that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth;* he opens the Scriptures, which are shut to a natural man, as he did in his own personal ministry, when here on earth, and now by his Spirit; and none can shut them, either men or devils, or hinder the spread of light and knowledge by them: he opens the door of the Gospel, and gives an opportunity to preach it, and liberty of mind and expression to his ministers, and a door of utterance to them, and of entrance for it into the hearts of men, which none can shut, or hinder: he opens the door of the church, which is himself, and lets in his sheep into the sheepfold, into a Gospel church state, and the ordinances of it; and he opens the door of heaven by his blood and righteousness, and gives his people liberty and boldness to enter into the holiest of all, and brings many sons to glory in spite of all the opposition of men and devils: on the other hand, when he pleases, he shuts up the Scriptures, and the eyes of men from seeing what is in them; he shuts up the door of the Gospel, and forbids the preaching of it in this and that place; and the door of heaven will be shut by him at the last day, when all called to the marriage of the Lamb are entered, and there will be no opening. This shows the sovereignty, power, and authority of Christ, and which he will exercise in this church state, (see <sup><del>K124</del></sup> Job 12:14). A like phrase is in the Talmud <sup>f113</sup>, *j twp wnya bwç rgwsç ^wyk*, “when he shuts again, there is none that opens”.

**Ver. 8.** *I know thy works*, etc.] Good works, of faith, love, and patience; and which lay much in preaching, professing, and maintaining the pure Gospel, and in acts of charity to one another; and which were done to some degree of perfection, and with great sincerity; since this church is not complained of, that her works were not perfect before God, as the former church is:

*behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it;* or “which no man can shut”, as read the Alexandrian copy, and others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions. This “open door” may design an uncommon opportunity of preaching the Gospel; and a very great freedom of mind in the preachers of it, and great attention in the hearers, whose hearts will be opened to observe, receive, and embrace it; and a very large gathering in of souls to Christ, and his churches; much and frequent preaching of the word with great success, which it will not be in the power of any creature to stop or hinder: now will the abundance of the sea, the forces of the Gentiles flow in, and the nation of the Jews shall be born at once.

*For thou hast a little strength*; which is not to be understood of inward spiritual strength, for of this the church in this period will have a great deal, as well as of courage and fortitude of mind, but outward power and authority: some great men, and princes of the earth, will come into the churches of Christ, even kings will come to the brightness of her rising; for now will all those prophesies have their accomplishment, which respect the secular grandeur of the church, with regard to its numbers, power, and riches; (see <sup><23B></sup>Isaiah 49:18-23 60:3-17).

*And hast kept my word*; both the commands and ordinances of Christ in practice, and that in their primitive purity, as they were delivered by Christ and his apostles, particularly baptism and the Lord's supper; which have been, one or other of them, or both, most sadly corrupted in all the periods of the churches hitherto, excepting the apostolical one, but will now be restored to their pristine purity and glory; and also the doctrines of the Gospel, which will be kept, not in memory only, but in the heart and life; they will be publicly and openly preached, professed, and defended:

*and hast not denied my name*: Christ himself, his doctrine respecting his person, office, and grace, neither in words, nor in works, but both ways confessed and owned it.

**Ver. 9.** *Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan*, etc.] Which may be understood either of the Papists, the followers of the man of sin, whose coming was after the working of Satan, and whose doctrines are the doctrines of devils, many of whom will now be converted, and brought to the true church; or rather of the Jews, who had, and have, and will have till this time, their synagogues for religious worship in their way; but they are no other than synagogues of Satan; the men that assemble in them are of their father the devil, and do his works, and will do them:

*which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie*; they are Jews by name and nation; they are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly and spiritually, (<sup><8D></sup>Romans 2:28,29); they are carnal wicked men, under the influence of Satan, though they pretend to be religious men, and worshippers of God:

*behold, I will make them to come and worship before thy feet*; the conversion of the Jews is here intended. The worship here spoken of is not either a religious or civil worship of the church, for the church is not the object of worship; only before whom, and at whose feet, this worship shall be given to God in the most humble and hearty manner: the sense is, that

the convinced and converted Jews shall come to the church, and in the most lowly and contrite manner acknowledge their former blindness, furious zeal, and violent hatred of the Christians, and shall profess their faith in Christ; shall join themselves to the church, and partake of the ordinances of the Gospel with them; and shall worship God and Jesus Christ, their Lord and King, in their presence, and at their feet:

*and to know that I have loved thee;* the Gentile church, and the members of it, in assuming human nature, and dying for, and redeeming them, as well as the Jews; in sending his Gospel to them, and calling them by his grace, and planting them into Gospel churches; giving them a place, and a name in his house, better than that of sons and daughters.

**Ver. 10.** *Because thou hast kept the word of my patience,* etc.] The Gospel; so called because it gives an account of the patience of Christ, in the midst of all his outward meanness and humiliation; and because it is a means of implanting and increasing the grace of patience, which God is the efficient cause of, and Christ is the example of; that patience, which bears a resemblance to his, in enduring afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, desertions, and temptations, and in waiting for his kingdom and glory; and because both the preachers and professors of the word have need of patience, and should exercise it in like manner as Christ did. This word, the churches, in the Philadelphian state, will keep pure and incorrupt, and observe the ordinances of it according to the directions given in it; and will believe the promise of Christ's personal coming, and patiently wait for it: wherefore, Christ promises as follows,

*I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth;* this hour seems to refer not to any of the vials which will be poured out on the antichristian states, but to some affliction and distress which will befall the reformed churches, and will light upon the outward court worshippers among them. It seems to be the last struggle of the beast of Rome, and to denote some violent and sharp persecution, such as what Daniel mentions, that never was before nor since; but it will be but short, but one hour, the twenty fourth part of a prophetic day or year, perhaps about a fortnight; yet it will be very extensive; it will reach all the world, the whole Roman empire, and all that dwell upon the earth, that are called by the name of Christians, and will try them, whether they are so or not; Christ will now have his fan in his hand, and purge his floor of all his formal professors and hypocrites;

and it will be known who are his true churches, and pure members; and these he will keep close to himself, and preserve safe amidst all the distress and confusion the world will be in. This cannot refer to the bloody persecutions under the Roman emperors, for from those the church at Philadelphia was not preserved. We read <sup>f114</sup> of twelve members of it that suffered with Polycarp.

**Ver. 11.** *Behold, I come quickly*, etc.] To bring on this hour of temptation on the reformed churches, which will be at the beginning of this period; to help and deliver, save and preserve the truly godly among them; to destroy antichrist, and introduce the latter day glory:

*hold that fast which thou hast*; either her grace in the exercise of it, as her faith, patience, etc. or rather the doctrines of the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, which she had received, as delivered by Christ and his apostles: and which she had held in the truth and purity of them, and is now exhorted to hold them fast, since this hour of temptation would be a trying time to her faith, patience, integrity, and constancy:

*that no man take thy crown*; not eternal happiness, called a crown of life, glory, and righteousness, and which was prepared for her, and promised to her, and would be certainly given her; nor was there any danger of another's taking it from her; not but that exhortations of this kind to the saints are necessary, with respect to that, to excite to diligence, care, and watchfulness; and are no ways contrary to their final perseverance, and certain salvation, but are means thereof: but either her honour for her faith and faithfulness, for her integrity, sincerity, and purity, is here meant; or the glorious things which were spoken of this church state, and to be accomplished in it, (<sup><880></sup>Psalm 87:3); (see <sup><260></sup>Isaiah 60:1-22).

**Ver. 12.** *He that overcometh*, etc.] In the hour of temptation, in this period of time; that stands his ground then, sustains the shock of the beast, with courage and intrepidity, and overcomes him:

*will I make a pillar in the temple of my God*; by which is meant not the church triumphant, though such will have a place, and an abiding one there; but the church militant, so called in allusion to the temple at Jerusalem, for its author, matter, situation, strength, solidity, magnificence, and stateliness, and for its holiness; and may be said to be the temple of God, because it is of his building, and is the place where he dwells, and is worshipped; and the temple of Christ's God, as he is man and Mediator,

through whom all worship is given to God in it; and those who are overcomers by the grace and strength of Christ are made pillars by him here, in allusion to the two pillars, Jachin and Boaz, in Solomon's temple; that is, they become very ornamental in the church, they are made honourable members of it; they come in at the right door into it, and fill up their places, and all relative duties in it, and walk becoming their profession; and, like pillars, are a support to it, to the interest of the church, the truths of the Gospel, and to weak and poor saints; and, as pillars, they are upright in heart and conversation, and are steady, firm, and constant:

*and he shall go no more out;* out of the church, the temple of the Lord, but shall abide in it unto death: it is a promise of perseverance both in the grace of God, and in a profession of religion; there shall not be such instances of apostasy as now.

*And I will write upon him the name of my God;* in allusion to inscriptions of names on pillars; the sense is, that it should be manifest that such are interested in God, as their covenant God and Father, in like manner as he is the God and Father of Christ; and this should be as plain and as evident as an inscription on a pillar, or as if it was written upon their foreheads, as the high priest had on his forehead written, "holiness to the Lord"; and indeed it will be by their holiness that it will so clearly appear that God is their covenant God; for in this church state, or spiritual reign of Christ, holiness unto the Lord shall be upon the bells of the horses:

*and the name of the city of my God; [which is] new Jerusalem,* in allusion to "Jehovah Shammah"; meaning the Gospel church in the latter day glory; and the sense is, that such shall be manifestly citizens of this city, in this new and glorious state of the church, and shall enjoy all the privileges of it, which at this time especially will be many and great. This will not be the new Jerusalem church state, or the thousand years' reign of Christ in person, for in that there will be no temple, as in this; but it will have the name, and some appearance of it; it will bear some resemblance to it, and be a pledge of it:

*which cometh down out of heaven, from my God;* as it is before called new Jerusalem, in distinction from the old, so here it is said to come down from heaven, or to be the heavenly Jerusalem, in distinction from the earthly one. The inhabitants of it will be born from above, and be called with an

heavenly calling, and their conversation will be in heaven, and all the glory of this church will come from God.

*And [I will write upon him] my new name;* either the name of “Jehovah” our righteousness; or rather the name of King of kings, and Lord of lords, (<sup>f116</sup>Revelation 19:16); which Christ will now acquire, or at least this will now be made more manifest upon the destruction of antichrist, in this church state; in which conquest he will make all his people sharers, and they shall now more openly appear to be kings, and to reign with him in his spiritual kingdom.

**Ver. 13.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear,* etc.] (See Gill on <sup>f117</sup>“Revelation 2:7”).

**Ver. 14.** *And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write,* etc.] Of the city of Laodicea, (see Gill on <sup>f118</sup>“Revelation 1:11”); there was a church here in the times of the Apostle Paul; by whom it was founded is not known; mention is made of it in (<sup>f119</sup>Colossians 2:1,2 4:13,15,16), who was now the angel, or pastor of it, whether Epaphras, who is there named, or another, is not certain. According to the Apostolical Constitutions <sup>f120</sup>, Archippus was ordained bishop of it by the apostles; (see <sup>f121</sup>Colossians 4:16,17). There was a church here in the second century, for Sagaris, bishop of it, suffered martyrdom in the times of Antoninus Verus <sup>f122</sup>; and in the “fourth” century, this church was famous for two eminent bishops, Theodorus and Gregory; and in the “fifth” century, it was the metropolitan church of Phrygia, as it was in the “seventh” century, in which age Tyberius, bishop of this place, was in the sixth synod at Constantinople <sup>f123</sup>; but now it is even without inhabitants <sup>f124</sup>. This church represents the state of the church, from the end of the spiritual reign of Christ, till the time of his personal appearing and kingdom, to judge the quick and dead; for after the spiritual reign is over, professors of religion will sink into a formality, and into a lukewarm frame of spirit, and into great spiritual sloth and security, (<sup>f125</sup>Revelation 3:15,16), which will make those times like the times of Noah and of Lot; and such will be the days of the coming of the son of man to judge the world. Its name signifies either “the righteousness of the people”; and so may point at that popular and external righteousness, which the majority of the professors of religion in this period of time will be boasting of, and trusting in; being self-sufficient, and self-dependent, when at the same time they will be naked, as well as poor and blind, (<sup>f126</sup>Revelation 3:17,18); or it signifies “the judging of the



people”; for this church state, at the end of it, will bring on the general judgment; the Judge will now be at the door indeed, standing and knocking; and they that are ready to meet the bridegroom, when he comes, will be admitted into the nuptial chamber, and sit down with him in his throne, in the thousand years' kingdom, at the close of which will be the second resurrection, when all the people, small and great, shall be judged, (<sup><4189></sup>Revelation 3:19-21).

*These things saith the Amen*; (see <sup><2616></sup>Isaiah 65:16); The word “Amen” is the name of a divine Person with the Jews, and it seems the second Person; for so on those words in (<sup><2083></sup>Proverbs 8:30); “then was I by him as one brought up with him”, they observe <sup>f119</sup>, do not read “Amon”, the word there used, but “Amen”; and, a little after, “Amen”, they say, is the “notaricon”, or sign of <sup>^</sup>man Æl m l a, “God the faithful King”; they make <sup>f120</sup> “Amen” to be one of the names of the second “Sephira”, or number in the Cabalistic tree, by whom the second Person in the Godhead seems to be designed: and they say <sup>f121</sup>, that the word “Amen”, by gematry (or numerically) answers to the two names “Jehovah, Adonai”. Christ may be so called, because he is the God of truth, and truth itself; and it may be expressive of his faithfulness, both to God his Father, and to his people, in whom all the promises he either made, or received, are yea and amen; and also of the firmness, constancy, and immutability of Christ, in his nature, person, and offices, in his love, fulness of grace, power, blood, and righteousness; and is very appropriately assumed by him now, when he was about to give the finishing stroke to all covenant engagements, and to all promises and prophesies; (see <sup><4018></sup>Revelation 1:18).

*The faithful and true witness*; who as he was in the days of his flesh, (see Gill on “<sup><4015></sup>Revelation 1:5”); so he will be at the day of judgment, a swift witness against all ungodly men; and he may the rather take up this title, not only on that account, but to show that the description he gives of the state and condition of this church is just, (<sup><4015></sup>Revelation 3:15,16); and to engage it to take his advice the more readily, (<sup><4018></sup>Revelation 3:18); and to assure it of the nearness of his coming, (<sup><4019></sup>Revelation 3:20); and to strengthen the faith of his people, and quicken their hope and expectation of the happiness with him promised, (<sup><4021></sup>Revelation 3:21); the same character is given to the Logos, or Word of the Lord, by the Targumist in (<sup><2405></sup>Jeremiah 42:5), let the Word of the Lord be to us <sup>^</sup>myhmw j wçq Æyhsi , “for a true and faithful witness”; the very phrase here used.



*The beginning of the creation of God*; not the first creature that God made, but the first cause of the creation; the first Parent, producer, and efficient cause of every creature; the author of the old creation, who made all things out of nothing in the beginning of time; and of the new creation, the everlasting Father of, everyone that is made a new creature; the Father of the world to come, or of the new age and Gospel dispensation; the Maker of the new heaven and new earth; and so a very fit person to be the Judge of the whole world, to summon all nations before him, and pass the final sentence on them. The phrase is Jewish, and it is a title the Jews give to Metatron, by whom they sometimes mean the Messiah; so those words in (<sup>1024b</sup>Genesis 24:2), and Abraham said unto his eldest servant of his house, they paraphrase thus <sup>f122</sup>;

““and Abraham said unto his servant”, this is Metatron, (or the Mediator,) the servant of God, “the eldest of his house”; for he is **μωqm l c wytwyrb tl j t**, “the beginning of the creation of God”, who rules over all that he has; for to him the holy blessed God has given the government of all his hosts.”

Christ is the **αρχη**, “the Prince”, or Governor of all creatures.

**Ver. 15.** *I know thy works*, etc.] Which were far from being perfect, and not so good as those of the former church:

*that thou art neither cold nor hot*; she was not “cold”, or without spiritual life, at least in many of her members, as all men by nature are, and carnal professors be; she was alive, but not lively: nor was she wholly without spiritual affections and love; to God, and Christ, to his people, ways, truths, and ordinances; she had love, but the fervency of it was abated: nor was she without spiritual breathings and desires altogether, as dead men are; or without the light and knowledge of the Gospel, and a profession of it, and yet she was not “hot”; her love to God and Christ, and the saints, was not ardent and flaming; it was not like coals of fire, that give most vehement flame, which many waters cannot quench the had not fervency of spirit in the service of the Lord; nor was she zealous for the truths of the Gospel, and for the ordinances of it, and for the house of God and its discipline; nor did she warmly oppose all sin, and every error and false way.

*I would thou wert cold or hot*; which must be understood, not absolutely, but comparatively; and not that it was an indifferent thing to Christ

whether she was one or the other; but he alludes to what is natural among men, it being generally more agreeable to have anything entirely hot, or entirely cold, than to be neither; and so uses this phrase to show his detestation of lukewarmness, and that it is better to be ignorant, and not a professor of religion, than to be a vain and carnal one; Christ desires not simply that she might be cold, but that she might be sensible of her need of spiritual heat and fervency.

**Ver. 16.** *So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot,* etc.] A lukewarm professor is one that serves God and mammon; that halts between two opinions, and knows not what religion is best, and cares little for any, yet keeps in a round of duty, though indifferent to it, and contents himself with it; and is un concerned about the life and power of godliness, and takes up with the external form of it; and has no thought about the glory of God, the interest of Christ and truth; and this was too much the case of this church, at least of a great number of its members; wherefore it was very loathsome to Christ, hence he threatens:

*I will spew thee out of my mouth;* this shows how nauseous lukewarmness is to Christ, insomuch that on account of it he would not own and acknowledge her as his; but even cast her out, unchurch her, and have no more any such imperfect church state upon earth, as he afterwards never will, this is the last; nor is there any church state, or any remains of one in Laodicea; it is indeed quite uninhabited.

**Ver. 17.** *Because thou sayest, I am rich,* etc.] In worldly goods, which occasioned her lukewarmness, as riches often do, and her vanity, pride, and arrogance, afterwards expressed. Laodicea was a very rich city, and so will be this church state, through the accession of kings and princes, and great men of the earth unto it, in the former period: riches seldom do any good to the churches of Christ, they did not in Constantine's time; and it seems that even at the close of the spiritual reign of Christ they will be of bad consequence, since they will usher in the Laodicean church state: or her meaning is, that she was rich in spiritual things; not in grace, but in external gifts, which still remained, upon the very great pouring forth of the Spirit in the last church state; and in good works, on which she too much trusted for salvation, placing her righteousness in them: she is one whom the Jews<sup>f123</sup> call *hrwtb ryç* [ , “rich in the law”]:

*and increased with goods*: with outward peace and prosperity, with much natural and divine light and knowledge, with the purity of Gospel ordinances, even beyond the former church state in her own imagination:

*and have need of nothing*: contenting herself with these external things: true believers, as considered in Christ, stand in need of nothing indeed, they are complete in him, and have everything in him; but, as considered in themselves, they are daily in need of daily food for their souls, as for their bodies, of fresh light and life, strength and comfort, and of new supplies of grace; wherefore this church shows great ignorance of herself, as well as great pride and arrogance to express herself in this manner:

*and knowest not that thou art wretched*; as all men are in a state of nature and unregeneracy; which may be the case of many professors, and they be ignorant of it; as to be under a sentence of wrath, obnoxious to the curses of the law, in danger of hell and destruction, lost and undone, and unable to extricate themselves out of such a state: true believers account themselves wretched, as the Apostle Paul did, on account of indwelling sin, and the plague of their own hearts, which the members of this church, the greater part of them, were ignorant of:

*and miserable*; a miserable man is one that is attended with outward afflictions, but this was not the case of this church; and with spiritual poverty, blindness, and nakedness, and this was her case; some persons neither know their misery, nor their need of mercy:

*and poor*; not in purse, nor in spirit, nor with respect to outward afflictions, nor as to her church state, but in a spiritual sense; one whom the Jews call a <sup>f124</sup> *hrwtb cr*, “poor in the law”; as such may be said to be who have nothing to eat that is fit to eat; nothing to wear but rags, and have no money to buy either; who are in debt, and not able to pay, nor to help themselves on any account; and this may be the case of professors, and yet not known and considered by them:

*and blind*; natural men are blind as to a saving knowledge of God in Christ, as to the way of salvation by Christ, as to the plague of their own hearts, as to the work of the Spirit of God upon the soul, and as to the truths of the Gospel, in the power of them; but here it regards blindness with respect to her church state, and its imperfection:

*and naked*; sin has stripped man of his moral clothing; man's own righteousness will not cover his nakedness; and whoever is destitute of the righteousness of Christ is a naked person.

**Ver. 18.** *I counsel thee*, etc.] Christ is a Counsellor, and is every way fit to be one, for he is the all wise God, the Ancient of days, and the Father of his people, and, as Mediator, the Wisdom of God; and he was concerned in the council of peace from everlasting; and when he was here on earth he gave counsel in person, and now he gives it by his Spirit, and by his word and ministers; and the substance of it is, to come to him for grace, life, and salvation; for pardon, peace, and righteousness; for spiritual light and knowledge, and every supply of grace; and his advice is always wholesome, good, and suitable, is hearty, sincere, and faithful, and is freely given, and is wise and prudent; and, being taken, infallibly succeeds; the counsel here given follows:

*to buy of me gold tried in the fire*; by which is meant either a more pure and glorious state of the church, such as was in the former period, or greater; or a larger measure of light and knowledge in the Gospel, which is better than fine gold; or some particular graces, and a comfortable exercise of them, as fervent love and strong faith, which is much more precious than gold; or rather, all spiritual riches in general, which are in Christ, and are unsearchable, solid, substantial and satisfying; are lasting and durable, precious, excellent, and incorruptible: and the buying of this gold is not to be understood in a proper sense, by giving a valuable consideration for it, for no such is to be given, but in an improper sense; it is a buying without money and without price; Christ and his grace are given freely; Christ of whom it is to be had and of him only, does not sell it, but he gives it to those that come to him for it, and desire to have it, and are willing to part with all, so they may but enjoy it; for that it is to be understood in such a sense, is clear from the character of the persons who are advised to buy, who were poor, or beggars, (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 3:17); the end of it is,

*that thou mayest be rich*; for though this church was rich, yet not in spirituals; and though she was rich in her own conceit, yet not really so: persons are not to be accounted truly rich who have only this world's goods; none are rich but those who have an interest in Christ and his grace; and they who are poor in this world, and yet have grace, are really rich: the next thing advised to is,

*and white raiment*; that is, and buy white raiment, by which some understand the heavenly glory, robes of immortality, a being clothed upon with the house which is from heaven; this may be compared to raiment, for it is a glory, an immortality, an incorruption to be put on; and fitly enough to white raiment, for the purity and spotlessness of it; and being clothed with this, no nakedness, or shame of it will appear; and this is to be had from Christ, and in the same way as gold is to be bought of him; the design of this advice may be to quicken the desires of the church after heavenly things; though it rather seems to respect something suitable to her in this present state: wherefore others think that by it are meant good works, holiness of life and conversation; but these are never called white raiment, but even rags, yea, filthy ones, in the best; and whatever cover they may be from nakedness in the sight of men, they are no cover from it in the sight of God, nor do they preserve from shame and blushing: rather then by it is meant the righteousness of Christ, which may be compared to raiment; it is upon the saints, and is put upon them as such; it covers as a garment does, protects from injuries, keeps warm, beautifies and adorns, as raiment does; and it may be compared to white raiment for its purity and perfection; now this is to be bought of Christ, it is to be had of him, and is to be had of him freely, without money and without price; it is a free gift of grace; and even faith itself, which receives it, is the gift of God: the ends of giving this advice are,

*that thou mayest be clothed, and [that] the shame of thy nakedness do not appear*; the soul may be naked when the body is well clothed; and notwithstanding a man's moral righteousness, he may not be clothed; they, and they only are clothed, who have on the righteousness of Christ; nakedness arises from want of, righteousness, which is only covered by the righteousness of Christ; and from hence also springs shame, which Christ's righteousness hides:

*and anoint thine eyes with eye salve*; by which may be meant the word of God, particularly the Gospel; and anointing with it is making use of it for the gaining of light and knowledge: all without this divine revelation are in darkness, and such who reject the authority of it go astray; the Scriptures are the only directory, and rule of faith and practice; the law is a means of enlightening persons to see their sin and misery, and the danger they are in; and the Gospel is a light, whereby is beheld the glory of Christ, of his person and office, of his grace and righteousness, and of salvation by him; and this is the Gospel of Christ, and is to be had of him freely, even the

saving knowledge of it. The Jews have adopted the very Greek word here used into their language, and apply it to the law; says R. Chija <sup>f125</sup>, speaking of the law,

“*y[ I tyrwl yq*, “it is a salve for the eye”, a plaster for a wound, etc. it is a salve for the eyes, as is written (~~1908~~ Psalm 19:8).”

or else the illumination of the Spirit is meant, by which the eyes of the understanding being enlightened, men see themselves, the impurity of their hearts and nature, the imperfection of their righteousness, their impotency to all that is spiritually good, and that they are lost and undone in themselves; and by which they see Christ and salvation by him, that it is in him, and in no other, and that it is full and suitable, and for the chief of sinners, and that it is all of free grace, and that they have an interest in it; by this they have light into the doctrines of the Gospel, and have some glimpse of the glories of another world; and this is to be had of Christ, who gives his Spirit freely, and an understanding to know spiritual things: and the end of the advice is,

*that thou mayest see*; who, notwithstanding the conceit she had of herself, was blind; persons may have much human prudence, much knowledge in things moral, yea, in things evangelical, notionally, and yet be blind as to true spiritual light and experience; they only see spiritually and savingly who have the Spirit of God.

**Ver. 19.** *As many as I love I rebuke and chasten*, etc.] The persons the objects of Christ's love here intended are not angels, but the sons of men; and these not all of them, yet many of them, even all who are his own by his Father's gift and his own purchase; and who are called his church, and sometimes represented as such who love him and obey his commands: the instances of his love to them are many; as his suretyship engagements for them, his assumption of their nature, dying in their room and stead, paying their debts, procuring their peace and pardon, bringing in a righteousness for them, purchasing their persons, his intercession for them, preparations in heaven, supplies of grace, and frequent visits in a kind and familiar manner; and as for the nature of his love, it is free and sovereign, everlasting and immutable, and it is matchless and inconceivable, it is strong and affectionate, and as his Father loved him; and such are rebuked by Christ, not in a way of wrath, but in a tender manner, in order to bring them under a conviction of their sin and of their duty, and of their folly in

trusting in, or loving any creature more than himself, and of all their wrong ways; and they are chastened by him, not in a vindictive, but in a fatherly way, which is instructive and teaching to them, and for their good. This seems to refer to some afflictions which Christ was about to bring upon this church, by some means or another, to awaken her out of her sloth and security, and which would be in love to her, and the end be to rouse her zeal and bring her to repentance. Some think this respects the Gog and Magog army, which will encompass the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; but that will not be till after the thousand years' reign, and besides will be no affliction to them; rather it designs the unchurching them, signified by spewing them out of his mouth, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 3:16);

*be zealous, therefore, and repent*; zeal was what was wanting in this church; which is nothing else than hot, fervent, and ardent love, love in a flame; whereas she was neither cold nor hot, but lukewarm, Christ would have her be “zealous” for God; for his cause and interest, for his Gospel, ordinances, and the discipline of his house, and against everything that is evil; against all false worship, all errors in doctrine, all sin and iniquity; and to be zealous of good works, and in the worship of God, both private and public: and “repent”; in an evangelical way, of her lukewarmness, remissness, and supineness; of her pride, arrogance, and vain boastings of herself; and of her self-sufficiency, self-dependence, and self-confidence.

**Ver. 20.** *Behold, I stand at the door and knock*, etc.] The phrase of standing at the door may be expressive of the near approach, or sudden coming of Christ to judgment, (see ~~James~~ James 5:9); and his knocking may signify the notice that will be given of it, by some of the immediate forerunners and signs of his coming; which yet will be observed but by a few, such a general sleepiness will have seized all professors of religion; and particularly may intend the midnight cry, which will, in its issue, rouse them all:

*if any man hear my voice*; in the appearances of things and providences in the world:

*and open the door*; or show a readiness for the coming of Christ, look and wait for it, and be like such that will receive him with a welcome:

*I will come unto him, and sup with him, and he with me*; to and among these will Christ appear when he comes in person; and these being like wise virgins, ready, having his grace in their hearts, and his righteousness upon

them, he will take them at once into the marriage chamber, and shut the door upon the rest; when they shall enjoy a thousand years communion with him in person here on earth; when the Lamb on the throne will feed them with the fruit of the tree of life, and lead them to fountains of living water, and his tabernacle shall be among them.

**Ver. 21.** *To him that overcometh*, etc.] The lukewarmness, and self-confidence, and security of this state:

*will I grant to sit with me in my throne*; at the close of this church state, which will be the last of this kind, consisting of imperfect saints, Christ will descend from heaven with the souls of all the righteous, and raise their bodies and unite them to them; which, with the living saints, will make one general assembly and church of the firstborn, all perfect soul and body; among these he will place his tabernacle, and fix his throne; and they being all made kings as well as priests to him, shall now reign on earth with him, and that for the space of a thousand years: and this is the blessing promised the overcomers in the Laodicean state, that when Christ shall set up his kingdom among men, and reign gloriously before his ancients, they shall sit on the same throne with him, or share with him in his kingdom and glory; (see <sup>150</sup>Revelation 5:10 20:4 <sup>202</sup>Daniel 7:27);

*even as I also overcame*; sin, Satan, the world, death, and hell:

*and am set down with my Father in his throne*; in heaven, at his right hand; which is expressive of equality to him, distinction from him, communion with him, and of the honour and glory he is possessed of; but it is not on this throne that the saints will sit, only Christ sits on the same throne with the Father in heaven; it is on Christ's throne on earth, or in his personal reign there, that the saints shall sit down with him; and which honour they shall all have, all that are more than conquerors through him, and are made kings by him. And when this reign is over, then will follow the second resurrection, or the resurrection of the wicked, when will come on the judgment of the people, as Laodicea signifies; and when these, with the devils, will form themselves into the Gog and Magog army, and attack the beloved city, the church of glorified saints on earth, under Christ their King, which will issue in the everlasting destruction of the former; and thus these seven churches bring us to the end of all things.

**Ver. 22.** *He that hath an ear, let him hear*, etc.] (See Gill on <sup>107</sup>“Revelation 2:7”).



# CHAPTER 4

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 4

This chapter contains an account of the second vision John saw, as preparatory to the sealed book, and the opening of it, as the first vision was to the epistles to the seven churches. The preface to this vision, or the introduction to it, and preparation of John for it, are in (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:1,2), which declare the time of it, the position John was in, what he saw and heard, a call to him to come up, and the effect it had upon him; and then follows the vision itself, which is of a throne, described by the place where it was set, in heaven; and by him that sat upon it, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:2), who was like to a jasper and a sardine stone; and by what was about it, first a rainbow of an emerald colour, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:3), then four and twenty seats, with as many elders upon them, sitting clothed and crowned, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:4), and by what went out from it, lightnings, thunderings, and voices; and by what were before it, seven burning lamps, which are the seven spirits of God, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:5), and a sea of glass like crystal; and by what were between it all around, and the elders, four living creatures, described in general by their being full of eyes, before and behind, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:6), in particular, the first by its likeness to a lion, the second by its likeness to a calf, the third by its likeness to a man, and the fourth by its likeness to a flying eagle, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:7), and by what were common to them, first by their wings, of which they had each of them six; and by their eyes, they were full of within; and by their constant employment in celebrating the perfections of God, and in giving glory, honour, and thanks unto him, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:8,9), at which time also the four and twenty elders appear in a worshipping posture, and give adoration to God; partly by deeds, casting their crowns before his throne; and partly by words, ascribing glory, honour, and power to him; giving a reason for it, taken from his creating all things for his pleasure, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:10,11).

**Ver. 1.** *After this I looked*, etc.] After John had seen the vision of Christ, in the midst of the golden candlesticks, with seven stars in his right hand; after he was bid to write what he had seen, and what were, and should be hereafter; and after he had by order written the seven epistles to the seven

churches, he looked about him to see what else he could, having his desires and expectations raised of seeing more, and other things, for the eye is never satisfied with seeing; though this is to be understood, not of looking with the eyes of his body, but with the eyes of his mind; of his beholding things in a visionary way, as the prophets did, whence they are called “seers”, and their prophecies “visions”: how long this was after the first vision is not certain, it may be but a few minutes; and it is to be observed, that as the first chapter of this book, with the vision in it, is the preface or introduction to the church prophecy delivered out in the seven epistles; so this and the following chapter, with the vision therein, contain the preface or introduction to the book prophecy exhibited in the opening of the seven seals of the sealed book:

*and behold, a door [was] opened in heaven:* not in a literal sense, as the heavens were opened at Christ's baptism, and at Stephen's martyrdom, but in a figurative sense; and the phrase is to be understood of a discovery of things that were, or were to be in the church of God, which in this book is oftentimes signified by “heaven”: and it must be conceived as done in a visionary way, just as Ezekiel, in the visions of God, was brought to Jerusalem, and the temple there, and in at a door was shown all the abominations committed in the court and temple; so John, in a visionary way, through an opened door, had a scene of things in the church presented to him, as follows:

*and the first voice which I heard [was], as it were, of a trumpet talking with me;* this voice is not called the first voice with respect to any other voices that were to follow; but it designs the former voice, the voice that John heard behind him, when he saw the first vision; and this, as that, was clear, loud, and sonorous as a trumpet, so that he thoroughly heard, and rightly understood what was said; it was the same Person that made the following representation of things as did then, even he who is the Alpha and the Omega, the Lord Jesus Christ, the author of the whole revelation; the “first” is left out in the Arabic version: the allusion is to the blowing of trumpets at the opening of the door of the temple;

“every day there were one and twenty soundings of a trumpet in the temple, three  $\mu\upsilon\rho[\zeta\ \tau\jmath\ \upsilon\tau\pi\lambda]$ , “at the opening of the doors”, and nine at the daily morning sacrifice, and nine at the daily evening sacrifice<sup>f126</sup>.”

And one of them was called the great door of the temple; and he that slew the daily sacrifice, did not slay till he heard the sound of that door when it was opened<sup>f127</sup>; so here at the opening of the door in heaven, in the church, of which the temple was a type, the voice of the Son of God is heard as the sound of a trumpet, talking loudly and familiarly to John:

*which said, come up hither*; from the isle of Patmos, where he was, up to heaven; not into the third heaven, where Paul was caught up, but rather up into the Gospel church, the Jerusalem which is above; though this, as before, is to be understood in a visionary way, in like manner as Ezekiel was lifted up by the Spirit between the earth and the heavens; and so John, in a vision, was called up from Patmos into the air, where he had a representation of the church made unto him:

*and I will show thee things which must be hereafter*; in the world, in the Roman empire, and in the church of God, to the end of the world; not but that there were some things shown him, as before, in the church prophecy, which had been, and were, and which was done to give him a complete view of things from first to last: and these things were shown in the following visions of the seals, trumpets, and vials, and by the Lord Jesus Christ, who talked with him, and to whom this revelation was given to show unto his servants; and it was of things that “must” be, because determined and resolved upon in the unalterable purposes and decrees of God.

**Ver. 2.** *And immediately I was in the Spirit*, etc.] As he had been before, (☞ Revelation 1:10); it seems he had been some little time out of his ecstasy, how long cannot be said, and now, upon this new scene of things, returned to it; upon the opening of the door in heaven, and hearing the former voice, and the things it said, the Spirit of God at once possessed and filled him, in an extraordinary manner; and his soul or spirit was immediately taken from the consideration of all sensible objects, and was fixed and intent upon the things presented to it in the vision, so that it was as if it was out of the body. The Arabic version reads, “then therefore I went in the Spirit”; in obedience to the voice that called him up, in which he was assisted by the Spirit of God, who lifted him up as he did Ezekiel, when he saw what follows:

*and behold, a throne was set in heaven*; not for the final judgment, on which the son of man will sit, when he comes to judge the quick and dead, for he is not the person that fills this but this is a symbol of the power,

authority, and dominion now exercised by God, not over the world in general, who has prepared his throne in the heavens, and governs among the nations, according to his sovereign will and pleasure, but which he exercises in his church, signified by “heaven”. The allusion is to the temple, and the throne of God in it, (<sup>2301B</sup>Isaiah 6:1 <sup>2472</sup>Jeremiah 17:12). The temple was an emblem of the Gospel church, Jerusalem, or the Gospel church state, and was to be called the throne of the Lord, (<sup>2487</sup>Jeremiah 3:17), and now his throne is set there. Here he exercises a jurisdiction and government; he is King and lawgiver in it; he has enacted laws, and he writes them on the hearts of his people, and puts his Spirit within them, and makes them both able and willing to obey them.

*And [one] sat on the throne*; not the trinity of persons in the Godhead, which some think are signified by the three precious stones in (<sup>604B</sup>Revelation 4:3), the jasper, sardine, and emerald; for, as distinct from him that sat upon the throne, the Lamb is said to be in the midst of it, and the seven spirits of God are said to be before it: nor is Jesus Christ intended, and his two natures; his divine nature by the jasper, and his human nature by the red and blood coloured sardine; since he, the Lamb, is represented as in the midst of the throne, and is often distinguished from him that sat upon it; (see <sup>618B</sup>Revelation 5:6,7,13 7:10); but God the Father is designed, who sits on the throne, though not to the exclusion of the Son and Spirit, yet in distinction from them. This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

**Ver. 3.** *And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper*, etc.] For the brightness, glory, and majesty of his countenance, and for his being light itself, clothed with it, and dwelling in it; (see <sup>621B</sup>Revelation 21:11,18,19); and for the various perfections of his nature, as eternity, infinity, immutability, omniscience, omnipotence, omnipresence, wisdom, power, goodness, truth, love, grace, and mercy; for the jasper, at least one sort of them, is of various colours, and spotted with divers spots; that which is most valued is the green, spotted with red or purple <sup>f128</sup>: hence this stone, which is the twelfth in the high priest's breastplate, and on which the name of “Benjamin” was written, is called, by the Chaldee paraphrase of Onkelos on (<sup>623D</sup>Exodus 28:20), “Pantere”, and of ben Uzziel, on the same place, “Apanturin”, and on (<sup>2154</sup>Song of Solomon 5:14), “Apantor”, because some are variegated and spotted like panthers.

*And a sardine stone*; the same with the “Sardius”: and so read here the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Arabic versions, as in (<sup>6213</sup>Revelation 21:20), and in (<sup>12817</sup>Exodus 28:17) on which Reuben's name was written; this is of a red, or blood colour as its name *ṣuda*, in Hebrew, shows, and the same that is called a cornelian; and is expressive of the fiery indignation of God whose fury is poured out like fire, and who nakedly and absolutely considered, is a consuming fire to the wicked, his enemies, and the enemies of his church and people. Some jaspers being white and sky coloured and the white colour being most agreeable to deity, as Cicero says <sup>f129</sup>, and the sardine being red, and a gem of the ruby kind make up the description of the church's beloved; (<sup>2150</sup>Song of Solomon 5:10); and may denote in general his purity, glory, and excellency, and in particular good will to his people, and wrath to his enemies. And to the comfort of the former it is added,

*and [there was] a rainbow round about the throne*; which signifies the covenant of grace; (see <sup>0092</sup>Genesis 9:12,16 <sup>2549</sup>Isaiah 54:9,10 <sup>3028</sup>Ezekiel 1:28). The rainbow is a reverberation, or a reflection of the beams of the sun upon a thin watery cloud; and the covenant of grace is owing to Jesus Christ, the sun of righteousness; it is he that has formed it, and filled it with blessings and promises; he is the Mediator, surety, and messenger of it, and who in (<sup>6003</sup>Revelation 10:1) is represented as clothed with a cloud, and a rainbow on his head: the rainbow is of various colours and fitly expresses the various promises and blessings, in the covenant of grace, and the various providences, both prosperous and adverse, with respect to soul and body; and as the rainbow was an emblem of mercy, peace, and reconciliation in God to man, after he had destroyed the world by a flood, so the covenant is a covenant of grace and mercy; it springs from it, and is full of it, and provides for the peace and reconciliation of the people of God, by the blood of Christ; whence it is called a covenant of peace: and as the rainbow is a security to the world, and the inhabitants of it, from a destruction by a flood any more, so the covenant is a security to those who are interested in it, from eternal destruction, and wrath to come; herein lies all their salvation, and this is the security of it: to which may be added, that God calls it my bow, as he often calls the covenant of grace my covenant, in distinction from man's; (see <sup>0092</sup>Genesis 9:12 <sup>3928</sup>Psalms 89:28,34 <sup>3761</sup>Ezekiel 16:60-62); and this being round about the throne of God, shows that the covenant of grace does, as it were, include and enclose God in his persons, and in his perfections; all the three divine Persons have a concern

in it, and all the divine perfections are glorified by it; and it being around it, it is always in his view; he is ever mindful of it, and constantly remembers it for the good of his people, and faithfully keeps it; and it being in this form denotes, that in whatsoever way he comes forth unto his people, it is always in a covenant way, whether it be in things temporal or spiritual, in adversity or prosperity, with regard to the things of time and eternity; nor is there any coming to him with comfort, but as he is encompassed with the rainbow of the covenant; stripped of this, he is like the jasper and sardine stones, full of sparkling majesty, dread and terror, so that there is no coming nigh him; but being encircled with the rainbow, he may be approached as a covenant God, as the God of all grace, seated on a throne of grace, whither believers may come with boldness, freedom, and cheerfulness: and this rainbow was

*in sight like unto an emerald*; the stone on which Judah's name was written, in the high priest's breastplate; this is of a green colour, which colour is the prevailing one in the rainbow; it is of an exceeding fine green, very delightful to the eye, and gives pleasure to the mind to look upon it: and what a lovely and delightful sight is the covenant of grace to a believer! to see God as a covenant God, Christ as the Mediator of it, the exceeding great and precious promises and blessings, both of grace and glory, which are in it, yields an unspeakable pleasure to such persons; the covenant of grace, like the emerald, is ever green, it is always new; its promises and blessings are always fresh, and, like that, it is durable; it is sure, and cannot be broken, and is more immovable than rocks and mountains: the emerald is very bright, clear, and transparent; it is reported of Nero <sup>f130</sup>, that he could see in his emerald the combat of the gladiators in the theatre; in the covenant of grace, as in a glass, may be seen the glory of all the three Persons in the Godhead, for it is ordered in all things for the glory of each Person; as also all the perfections of the divine nature; here God appears abundant in goodness and truth; here mercy and truth meet together; and righteousness and peace kiss each other: to which may be added, that the emerald is said <sup>f131</sup> to help and refresh the memory; now though God stands in no need of any thing to bring things to his remembrance, yet such is his condescension to men, that he sets the rainbow in the cloud, to look at, that he might remember his everlasting covenant; and so he allows his people to put him in remembrance, by making mention of the covenant of grace, and pleading the promises of it.

The Alexandrian copy and the Ethiopic version, instead of  $\iota\rho\iota\varsigma$ , “a rainbow”, read  $\iota\epsilon\rho\epsilon\iota\varsigma$ , “priests”.

**Ver. 4.** *And round about the throne [were] four and twenty seats*, etc.] In a semicircular form, as the rainbow also was; the thrones in the above form, came to both ends, or sides of it; just as when the sanhedrim, or great court of judicature among the Jews say <sup>f132</sup>, the “Nasi”, or prince, sat in the uppermost seat, at his right hand was “Ab beth din”, or the father or the sanhedrim, and at his left hand a doctor or wise man, and all the rest of the members sat in a semicircular form upon seats before them, so that they could see them all; and to this the allusion might be thought to be, did their numbers agree, but in the great sanhedrim there were seventy one, and the lesser twenty three, which last comes very near the number here;

*and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting*; by whom are not meant the twenty four books of the Old Testament, as some of the ancients thought, and also some of the modern writers, as Lord Napier and others; for the things said of them are such as cannot be applied to inanimate things, such as sitting on seats, being clothed with white raiment, having golden crowns on their heads, falling down before the throne, and worshipping him that sat on it; and besides, in (~~4018~~ Revelation 5:8,9), they are said to be redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, out of very kindred, tongue, people, and nation; for which last reason, angels also cannot be designed, and who, moreover, in the place referred to, are manifestly distinguished from these elders; nor are they to be understood as to the representatives of the Jewish church, or of the Jewish and Christian church together, as triumphant in heaven; and so be signified by the twelve patriarchs and twelve apostles, which together make up twenty four; but rather the members of the Gospel church state, throughout the whole of it, in every succession and period of time, are here meant; and are expressed by the number “twenty four”, in allusion to the twenty four courses of the priests, into which they were divided by David, (~~1301~~ 1 Chronicles 24:1,4,18), and to the twenty four stations of the Levites, who in turn attended the service of the temple daily, and represented the whole body of the people of Israel, in putting their hands upon the sacrifices, and praying for them; of which (see Gill on “~~4015~~ Luke 1:5”); add to this, that in twenty four places the priests and Levites kept watch in the temple <sup>f133</sup>; so these twenty four elders before the throne of God, in his temple, represent the whole Israel of God, all the members of the Gospel church state, from the first to the last of it: and they are styled “elders”, not on account of office,



as pastors of the churches are called, but because of their senile gravity, prudence, and knowledge; they having a greater degree of spiritual knowledge of the manifold wisdom of God than the Jewish church, which was in a state of infancy, and under tutors and governors, had; but the Gospel church is in a state of manhood, and no longer under a schoolmaster, and so fitly expressed by “elders”; and these are represented as “sitting” on their seats, not only to hear the word of God, but as judging in cases that come before them, respecting the admission or exclusion of members, the laying on or taking off of censures, etc. and these, their seats being around and near unto the throne, denote their nearness to God, and their communion with him, in his house and ordinances, and his dwelling in the midst of them.

*Clothed in white raiment*; in the pure and spotless robe of Christ's righteousness, which is comparable to fine linen, clean and white; and is the righteousness of the saints in common, of every true member of Christ's body.

*And they had on their heads crowns of gold*; being made by Christ kings, as well as priests, unto God; for so these four and twenty elders are said to be, in (~~4450~~ Revelation 5:10); and they now reign as kings over sin, Satan, and the world, and have a kingdom of grace which shall never be removed; and they shall reign with Christ on earth a thousand years, and then reign with him to all eternity in heaven. It is a common saying with the Jews <sup>f134</sup>,

“that there is no eating and drinking in the world to come, but the righteous are “sitting”, *μῆχαρβ μῆτῶρj* [w, “and their crowns upon their heads”.”

**Ver. 5.** *And out of the throne proceeded lightnings and thunderings, and voices*, etc.] Which may be understood either of the doctrines of the Gospel which come out of Zion, and out of Jerusalem, the church of God, where he has his throne; and which are comparable to “lightning”, both for the light and knowledge they give, and for the swiftness with which they were spread over the world, by the apostles of Christ; and to “thunderings”, for the awfulness, authority, and majesty of them, especially as they were delivered out by the Boanergeses, or sons of thunder; and as the prophesies of the prophets are called “the voices” of the prophets, (~~4437~~ Acts 13:27); so may the doctrines of the Gospel be called “voices”, as they are the voice of God, and of Christ, and of his ministers; and are



voices of love, grace, mercy, peace, pardon, righteousness, and eternal life. The allusion is to the giving of the law on Mount Sinai, when such things were seen and heard, (<sup><1916></sup>Exodus 19:16) or else the judgments of God, and the punishments inflicted upon his enemies, and the enemies of his church and people, and his awful threatenings of them, may be designed; (see <sup><1913></sup>Psalms 18:13,14 <sup><2916></sup>Joel 3:16); with which compare (<sup><6615></sup>Revelation 8:5).

*And [there were] seven lamps of burning fire before the throne, which are the seven spirits of God;* in allusion to the seven lamps in the tabernacle and temple, which were trimmed by the priests, and always kept burning, and are expressive of the Spirit, and his gifts; and these being signified by the number “seven”, denote the fulness and perfection of them; and being said to be “before the throne”, show that there is always a sufficiency of them for the supply of the churches in all ages, to fit and qualify proper persons to minister the word, and administer ordinances; and these being called “lamps of burning fire”, point at the light the Spirit of God in his gifts communicates to the churches; and that warmth and heat, comfort and refreshment; conveyed to them, through the preaching of the Gospel, and the dispensation of the ordinances of it, under his illuminating and quickening influences.

**Ver. 6.** *And before the throne [there was] a sea of glass like unto crystal,* etc.] By which is meant, not heaven, nor the souls of the blessed there, nor the multitude of the holy angels, nor the first converts to Christianity at Jerusalem; for those that got the victory over the beast are said to stand upon this sea, (<sup><6612></sup>Revelation 15:2), which these senses, especially the three last, will by no means admit of. Some by it understand the world, which may be compared to a “sea”, for the multitude of people in it, as many waters in this book signify people and nations, (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 17:15); and to a sea of glass, which is brittle, for the frailty and transitoriness of the world, of the fashion of it, and of men and things in it; and to the clear “crystal”, because all things in it are open and manifest to the omniscient eye of God; but the world, and men of it, used not to be compared to a still and quiet sea, as this is, but to one disturbed and troubled by winds and tempests, whose waters cast up mire and dirt, (<sup><2571></sup>Isaiah 57:20). Others think the ordinance of baptism is designed, of which the Red sea, through which the Israelites passed under the cloud, was an emblem; and which may be compared to a “sea of glass”, for its transparency, it clearly expressing the sufferings, burial, and resurrection of Christ; and to crystal, for its purity; and to all this for its cleansing nature,

as it leads unto the blood of Christ; and its being before the throne may denote its being the way of entrance into the Gospel church. Others think the blood of Christ is meant, in allusion to the brazen sea in the tabernacle, which was made of the looking glasses the women brought, and for the priests to wash in, before they entered on business, (<sup><1072></sup>Exodus 30:18 38:8), and to the molten sea in the temple, which was for the same purpose, (<sup><1073></sup>1 Kings 7:23). Christ's blood is the fountain opened to wash in for sin, and may be compared to a sea for its abundant efficacy in cleansing from all sin; and it is this which makes way to the throne, and to him that sits on it; and is a special privilege enjoyed by those who come to Mount Zion, or into a Gospel church state; there is always this laver to wash their garments in, and make them white: though this sea, being of glass, seems not so much designed to wash in; and therefore rather I think by it is meant the Gospel, compared to a "sea" for the deep things of God and mysteries of grace which are in it; to a sea of "glass", because in it is beheld, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, of his person, office, and righteousness, as well as many other wondrous things; and to one like "crystal", for the clearness, perspicuity, and evidence of the truths contained in it; and to a, fixed, still; and quiet sea, because it is the Gospel of peace, love, grace, and mercy, and brings peace, joy, and tranquillity to troubled minds, when the law works wrath: but here are no tossing, foaming, raging waves of wrath, and fury, but all smooth, stable, solid, tranquil, and quiet. And this is said to be before the throne, where the rainbow of the covenant is, of which the Gospel is a transcript; and where the four and twenty elders, or members of churches be, for their delight and comfort; and where the seven spirits of God are, to furnish men with gifts to preach it; and where the four living creatures, or ministers of the word, have their place, who officiate in it. Agreeably to this figurative way of speaking, the Jews call <sup>f135</sup> the law, *atywad amy*, "the sea of the law", and the "sea of wisdom"; and frequently give the characters of such and such a doctor, as being very expert and conversant *dwml th myb*, "in the sea of the Talmud", or "doctrine"<sup>f136</sup>. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read, "there was as a sea of glass", somewhat that looked like one. The word "glass" is left out in the Ethiopic version, but very aptly is it so described, the colour of the sea being sometimes green like that of glass.

*And in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne, [were] four beasts*; or "living creatures", as the word may be better rendered, agreeably

to (<sup><2005></sup>Ezekiel 1:5), to which reference is here had; and by whom are meant not the angels, though there are many things which agree with them; they are said to be the “four spirits” of the heavens, which go forth from standing before the Lord of all the earth, (<sup><3005></sup>Zechariah 6:5). They may be rightly called living creatures, since they live a most happy life in heaven; their situation is before the throne, and in the presence of God; and their being so sedulous, diligent, and watchful in doing the will of God, may be signified by their being “full of eyes behind, and before, and within”; their strength may be fitly expressed by “the lion”; their indefatigableness in the service of God, by “the ox”: their wisdom, prudence, and knowledge, by “the face of a man”; and their swiftness in obeying the divine commands by “the flying eagle”; their number of wings agrees with that of the seraphim in (<sup><2005></sup>Isaiah 6:2); to which the allusion seems to be; and their work, in continually ascribing glory to God, suits with them: to which may be added, that the Jews often speak of four angels, *waskl bybs*, “round about his throne”, that is, the throne of God; whose names are Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael; the three first they place in this manner, Michael at his right hand, Uriel at his left, and Gabriel before him <sup>f137</sup>. Sometimes thus, Michael on his right hand, Gabriel on his left, Uriel before him, and Raphael behind him, and the holy blessed God in the middle; and they are expressly called <sup>f138</sup> by them the four living creatures, meaning in Ezekiel's vision; and they make mention of the intellectual living creatures which are *aysrkl ʿyrj s*, “round about the throne” <sup>f139</sup>. Notwithstanding all this, the angels cannot be intended, because these four living creatures are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are distinguished from angels in (<sup><4005></sup>Revelation 5:8-11); nor are the four Gospels, with the four evangelists, here meant; for whatever agreement may be fancied there is between these, and the likeness of the living creatures; as that Matthew may be signified by the creature that has the face of a man, because he begins his Gospel with the genealogy of Christ, as man; and Mark by the lion, because he begins his Gospel with the voice of one crying in the wilderness; and Luke by the ox, because he begins his Gospel with an account of Zacharias the priest, offering in the temple; and John by the eagle, because he begins his Gospel, the first face or leaf of it, in a very high style, and with the divinity of Christ: and with what truth soever it may be said of these that they are full of divine light and knowledge, and swiftly spread it in the world, and are continually giving glory to God; yet it cannot be said of them, with any propriety, as is said of these four living creatures, that they fall down before God, and worship him, and are

redeemed by the blood of the Lamb: besides, these four are represented as calling to John at the opening of the first four seals, to come and see what was to be seen; and one of them is said to give to the seven angels the vials of wrath to pour out, (<sup>668B</sup>Revelation 5:8,9 6:1,3,5,7 15:7), to which may be added, that this sense is attended with this inconvenience, that it makes John to be one of the four creatures which he saw: nor are four particular apostles, as Peter and John, Paul and Barnabas, pointed at, as others think; nor the pure apostolical church, for the church is represented by the four and twenty elders, and these four living creatures are distinguished from the hundred and forty four thousand on Mount Zion, in (<sup>640B</sup>Revelation 14:1,3). Dr. Goodwin has a very ingenious thought upon these words, could it be supported; he thinks that these four living creatures design the four officers in the Christian church, the ruling elder, the pastor, the deacon, and the teacher; the ruling elder by the “lion”, who needs courage to deal with men in case of sins; the pastor by the “ox”, for his laboriousness in treading out the corn; the deacon by that which has the “face of a man”, it being necessary that he should be merciful and pitiful to the poor, as is the heart of a man; and the teacher by the “flying eagle”, who is quick to espy errors, and soars aloft into high mysteries: but then it should be observed, that there is no such officer as ruling elder in the church, distinct from the pastor; and that the pastor and teacher are one; so that there are but two sorts of officers in the church, pastor, and deacon; (see <sup>300B</sup>Philippians 1:1); to which may be added, that the four living creatures are all in the same situation, and are alike full of eyes, and have the same number of wings, and are employed in the same work; all which cannot be said equally of church officers. By these four living creatures, I apprehend, we are to understand the ministers of the Gospel in general, in the successive ages of the church, to whom all the characters do well agree. And though they may not be all found in everyone, at least not in all alike, yet thou are in one or another of them, and in them as together considered. They are said to be “four”, being fewer in number than the members of the church, which are signified by the twenty four elders, and yet a sufficient number; and in allusion to the four standards of the camp of Israel in the wilderness, to which there seems to be some reference in the whole of this account; as the tabernacle there was placed in the midst, so the throne of God here; as the priests and Levites were round about that, so the four and twenty elders here; as there were seven lamps, over against the candlestick in the tabernacle, continually burning, so there are seven spirits here before the throne; and as there were four princes, who were

standard bearers, placed at the four corners of the camp, so here four living creatures, or ministers of the word, who are standard bearers: the standard of Judah, with Issachar and Zabulon under him, was at the east of the tabernacle; and Ephraim, with Manasseh and Benjamin, at the west; Reuben, with Simeon and Gad, at the south; and Dan, with Asher and Naphtali, at the north; and the Jewish writers say <sup>f140</sup>, that on Judah's standard was the figure of a lion, on Ephraim's the figure of an ox, on Reuben's the figure of a man, and on Dan's the figure of an eagle; and to which the four living creatures are likened here. And this number “four” may be the rather mentioned, with respect to the four parts of the world, and corners of the earth, whither the ministers of the Gospel are sent to preach, and whither their commission reaches; there being of the elect of God in all parts to be gathered in by their ministry: and very properly may they be called “living creatures”, because they are alive in themselves, being quickened by the Spirit of God; or otherwise they would not be fit for their work; and because their work requires liveliness in the exercise of grace, and fervency in the performance of duty: and because they are a means in the hand of God of quickening dead sinners, and of reviving drooping saints by the word of life, which they hold forth: the situation of these four living creatures agrees with them, who are said to be both in the midst of, and round about the throne, and so were nearer to it than the four and twenty elders, and were between that and them; as the ministers of the Gospel are set in the first place in the church; have nearness to God, and much of his presence, which is particularly promised them; and stand between God and the people, and receive from the one, and communicate to the other, and lead on the worship of God, as these four do; (see ~~Rev~~ Revelation 4:9,10). And these are said to be

*full of eyes*; of spiritual light, and evangelical knowledge; and they have need of all the eyes they have to look into the Scriptures of truth, to search and pry into them, and find out the sense and meaning of them; to overlook the flock committed to them, they have taken the oversight of; to look to themselves, their doctrine, and their conversation; to espy enemies and dangers, and give notice of them to the churches; to look to God upon the throne, and to the Lamb in the midst of it, for fresh supplies of gifts and grace; and to see to it, that all their ministrations tend to the glory of God, the honour of a Redeemer, and the good of souls. And they had eyes

*before and behind*; “before” them, to look to the word of God, and the deep things in it, which continually lies before them, and to the things that

are yet to come relating to the kingdom and church of Christ; and “behind” them, to observe how all sacrifices and types, predictions and promises, have had their accomplishment in Christ; they have eyes before them to watch over the church they are in the midst of, and which is the flock that is before them; and eyes behind, to guard against Satan and his emissaries, false teachers, who sometimes slyly and secretly come upon the back of them; they have eyes before them, to look to him that sits upon the throne, on whom their dependence, and from whom their expectations are; and they have eyes behind them, to look on the four and twenty elders, the members of the churches, to whom they minister.

**Ver. 7.** *And the first beast [was] like a lion*, etc.] And this figure expresses the strength of the ministers of the word, the lion being the strongest among beasts, (<sup>2<sup>ND</sup></sup>Proverbs 30:30), to do the work they are called to, to endure hardness, as good soldiers of Christ, and to bear the infirmities of the weak; and also it denotes their courage and boldness in preaching the Gospel of Christ, without fearing the faces of men, or of being afraid of their revilings:

*and the second beast like a calf*; or “ox”, for so the word here used signifies in the Hellenistic language, and with the Septuagint interpreters, and agrees with (<sup>2<sup>ND</sup></sup>Ezekiel 1:10), and designs the laboriousness of Christ's faithful ministers in treading out the corn of Gospel truth, who labour in the word and doctrine, and are labourers with God; as also their humility, meekness, and patience in bearing insults, reproaches, and sufferings for Christ, and instructing those that oppose themselves:

*and the third beast had a face as a man*; and points at the humanity and tender heartedness, the wisdom, prudence, knowledge, and understanding, and the use of the reasoning faculty, together with a manly spirit in abiding by the Gospel at any rate; all which are so necessary in the ministers of the word.

*And the fourth beast [was] like a flying eagle*; which sets forth the sagacity and penetration of Gospel ministers into the deep things of God, and mysteries of grace, and their readiness and swiftness to do the will of God, in publishing the everlasting Gospel; (see <sup>6<sup>TH</sup></sup>Revelation 14:6).

**Ver. 8.** *And the four beasts had each of them six wings about [him]*, etc.] As the seraphim in (<sup>2<sup>ND</sup></sup>Isaiah 6:2) with two of which they might cover their faces as they did, testifying thereby their reverence of God, when in

his presence; and with the other two cover their feet, signifying their sense of their sinfulness, weakness, and imperfection, in their conversation, even in their best works, and in the ministry of the word; and with the other two fly about, as denoting their readiness to minister the word and ordinances, to visit the members of the church, and do all good offices of love and service to them that lie in their power:

*[and they were] full of eyes within;* to look into the sin and corruption of their own hearts, which is a means of keeping them humble amidst all their attainments, gifts, and graces, and of qualifying them to speak aptly of the cases of others; and they have eyes within, to look into and consult their own experience; for besides the word of God, which lies before them, they have a testimony in themselves of the truth of the doctrines of the Gospel, which they do well to attend unto; and they have these inward eyes to look into that treasure which God has put into their earthen vessels, in order to bring out of it things new and old.

*And they rest not day and night;* they give up themselves to the ministry of the word, and prayer; are wholly in these things, meditate on the word continually, and preach the Gospel in season, and out of season:

*saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come;* living under a continual sense of the holiness of God, Father, Son, and Spirit; and how necessary holiness is in themselves, who bear the vessels of the Lord, and in the churches and house of God; taking care that all their doctrines are according to godliness, and serve to promote holiness of life and conversation; and also under a sense of the power of God, and of their need of it, to carry them through their work, and make their ministry successful; and of the eternity and immutability of God, which is a wonderful support unto them amidst all the difficulties and troubles that attend them. The word “holy” is three times used here, as by the seraphim in <sup>(206B)</sup>Isaiah 6:3; and in some copies it is repeated six times, and in others nine times, as in the Complutensian edition.

**Ver. 9.** *And when these beasts give glory,* etc.] When they give God the glory of all his perfections, covenant, and promises, and of all the gifts and grace bestowed on them, and of the success of their ministry; and in it glorify Father, Son, and Spirit, who bear their respective parts in the business of salvation; and ascribe to each their due glory in election, redemption, and sanctification:



*and honour*; in the several parts of religious worship performed by them; and not with their lips only, but with their hearts also:

*and thanks*; for all blessings, temporal and spiritual, bestowed on them, and on the saints: even

*to him that sat on the throne*; God the Father, (<sup>f141</sup>Revelation 4:3);

*who liveth for ever and ever*; he who is the living God, and will always continue so.

**Ver. 10.** *The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne*, etc.] The ministers of the Gospel begin the worship of God, and lead in it, who are the four living creatures; when the members of churches, who are the four and twenty elders, follow, and approach the divine Being in a most humble manner:

*and worship him that liveth for ever and ever*: in Spirit, and in truth, with faith and fervency, in every part of duty they are directed to:

*and cast their crowns before the throne*; signifying, that they received them, from him that sits upon it, being by the grace of God what they are; and that they are unworthy to wear them in his presence, being but unprofitable servants in all they do; and hereby also acknowledging their subjection to him as their King and lawgiver. Something like this the Jews relate of the family above; they say,

“when the holy blessed God ascends the glorious “throne of judgment”, the whole family above tremble; and when they see the holy blessed God “they take their crowns from off their heads” — and pray and seek mercy for Israel; and immediately he ascends the “throne of mercy”<sup>f141</sup>.”

And such like actions have been done by kings and princes to one another, in token of subjection. Thus Tigranes, king of Armenia, fell down at the feet of Pompey, and cast his crown from his head, which Pompey replaced; and having commanded him certain things, ordered him to enjoy his kingdoms<sup>f142</sup>: so Herod meeting Augustus Caesar at Rhode, when he entered the city took off his crown, and after a speech made to him, with which Caesar was pleased, he set it on him again<sup>f143</sup>.

*Saying*; as follows.



**Ver. 11.** *Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory honour, and power,* etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental ones, read, “thou art worthy, O Lord, and our God, to receive”; that is, to receive the acknowledgment and ascription of glory, honour, and power; for otherwise God cannot be said to receive these from his creatures, than by their confessing and declaring that they belong unto him: and that for the reasons following,

*for thou hast created all things;* the whole universe, the heavens, the earth, and sea, and all that in them are:

*and for thy pleasure they are and were created;* God is the first cause, and the last end of all things; by his power they are made, and according to his will, and for his own glory, and therefore is worthy of such a doxology; (see <sup>3164</sup>Proverbs 16:4 <sup>5113</sup>Romans 11:36). What is here said is contrary to a notion imbibed by the Jews <sup>f144</sup>, that the world was not created but for the sake of the Israelites: and elsewhere <sup>f145</sup> they say,

“the world was not created but for David; and one says for Moses; and Rabbi Jochanan says for the Messiah;”

which last is truest.

# CHAPTER 5

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 5

This chapter contains the vision of the sealed book, and the opening of it by Christ, which occasions universal joy among all ranks and sorts of creatures. The book is described by the place where it was, in the right hand of God; by the uncommon manner in which it was written within and without; and by the seven seals it was sealed with, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:1), next follows a proclamation made by a mighty angel, with a loud voice, to find out a person worthy and able to open this book, and loose its seals, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:2), upon which a declaration is made, that none could be found in heaven, earth, or hell, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:3), which had such an effect upon John, that it set him a weeping, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:4), but was comforted by one of the elders suggesting, that there was a person that could, and would do it, when he calls the lion of the tribe of Judah, and the root of David, which are names of Christ, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:5), of which he was assured by what he quickly saw, namely, the same person the elder spoke of, described by his position, standing between the throne, and the living creatures, and elders; and by his similitude and likeness, as a Lamb that had been lately slain, with seven horns and eyes in him; and by what he did, he went and took the book out of the right hand of God, his Father, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:6,7). This occasioned a general joy among all kind of creatures; first among the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, who are described by what they had, harps and golden vials, the one for praise, the other for prayer; and by what they did, they fell down in a worshipping posture before the Lamb, and sung the new song of redeeming love to him; in which they ascribe worthiness to him, to take the book and open its seals; declare their redemption unto God, by his blood, out of all nations of the earth; take notice of the honour done them by him, in making them kings and priests to God; and express their assurance that they shall reign with him on earth, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:8-10), and next an innumerable company of angels join the living creatures and elders, in a doxology or ascription of glory to him, (~~¶¶¶~~ Revelation 5:11,12), yea, every creature in heaven and earth, upon it, and under it, and in the sea, are introduced as giving glory both to him that sat upon the throne, and to the

Lamb, (<sup><6613></sup>Revelation 5:13), and the whole is closed by the living creatures saying “Amen”, to all, and by the elders prostrating themselves, and worshipping the living and eternal God, (<sup><6614></sup>Revelation 5:14).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw on the right hand of him that sat on the throne*, etc.] Of this throne, and who it was that sat upon it, (see Gill on “<sup><6602></sup>Revelation 4:2”); and who had “in” his right hand, or “at”, or “upon” his right hand, as the Syriac and Arabic versions render it, lying by, or near his right hand; though according to (<sup><6607></sup>Revelation 5:7), the book appears to have been in his right hand, as our version, and others render it:

*a book written within, and on the backside, sealed with seven seals*: this book was very much like Ezekiel's roll, (<sup><3009></sup>Ezekiel 2:9,10); which was written **rwj aw mynp**, “within” and “without”, before and behind, and indeed it was in the form of a roll: the manner of writings in those times was on sheets of parchment, which, when finished, were rolled up in the form of a cylinder; hence a book is called a “volume”. This book seems to have consisted of seven rolls, to which was annexed seven seals; and there being not room enough within, contrary to the common way of writing, some things were written upon the backside of the outermost roll; and such writings were by the ancients called “Opistographi”: and the word is used by them sometimes for very prolix writings <sup>f146</sup>. By this book some understand the Scriptures of the Old Testament, which were written in rolls; (see <sup><3005></sup>Hebrews 10:5 <sup><4017></sup>Luke 4:17,20); and which came out of the right hand of God, and were given forth by him; and being written within, and on the backside, may denote the fulness of them, they containing a variety of matter, useful and profitable, for different purposes; or else the literal and mystical, or spiritual meaning of some parts of them: or, as others think, the more clear explanation of the books of the Old Testament, by those of the New Testament; and its being sealed may signify the authenticity of those writings, having the seal of God's truth, and the impress of his wisdom, power, and goodness on them; and also the hidden sense and meaning of them, they being, especially in the prophetic and spiritual part of them, a sealed book to natural men, and of which Christ is the truest and best interpreter; but then this book was opened, and looked into, and read, and, in some measure, understood, even by the Old Testament saints, and had been before this time expounded by Christ, concerning himself; yea, he had opened the understandings of his disciples to understand those Scriptures, and had counted them, and others, worthy to open and explain this book to others, and had sent them into all the

world for this purpose; and for the same reasons it cannot be understood of the Gospel published to Jews and Gentiles, the one within, and the other without; rather therefore the book of God's decrees is here meant, which respects all creatures, and all occurrences and events in the whole world, from the beginning to the end of time; and so Ezekiel's roll, according to the Targum on (<sup>אֶתְּ</sup>Ezekiel 2:10); which was written before and behind, signified that which was *aywrç ^m*, “from the beginning”, and which *apwsb ywhml dyt [d*, “shall be in the end”, or hereafter. This book God holds “in [his] right hand”, as the rule and measure of all he does, and of the government of the world, and which he constantly fulfils and executes; and its being written “within and without” may denote the perfection and comprehensiveness of it, it reaching to all creatures and things, even the most minute; and its being “sealed” shows the certainty of its fulfilment, and the secrecy and hiddenness of it, until accomplished; though it seems best of all to understand it of that part of God's decrees relating to the church and world, particularly the Roman empire, which from henceforward, to the end of time, was to be fulfilled; and so is no other than the book of the Revelation itself, exhibited in the following scenes and visions; and this may be truly said to be in the right hand of God, and from thence taken by the Lamb, it being the revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, (<sup>אֶתְּ</sup>Revelation 1:1); and may be said to be written, both “within and on the backside”, to show that it contains a large account of things, a long train of events to be accomplished; as also to signify, that it regards the church, and the members of it, who are those that are within, in the several ages of time, and the world, or those that are without; for this book prophecy regards both the state of the Roman empire, and of the Christian church; and its being “sealed” shows the authenticity, certainty, and also the obscurity of what was contained therein; and with “seven” seals, with respect to the seven periods of time, in which the prophecies in it are to be fulfilled.

**Ver. 2.** *And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice*, etc.] This was not the uncreated angel, Jesus Christ; for he is after spoken of as the lion of the tribe of Judah, and as the Lamb in the midst of the throne, but a created one; though who he was, whether Gabriel, as some say, because his name signifies the strong or mighty One of God, is not material to be known; angels are said to be mighty, and to excel in strength: this is called so here, chiefly with respect to his voice, which he, by reason of his great strength, exerted so loudly, as to be heard by all the creatures in heaven,

and in earth, and under the earth however, this was not John the Baptist, but if a minister of the Gospel, rather some one since, making the following proclamation:

*who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?* suggesting, that if there was any such person, that he was desired to come, and do it; and it seems, that he must not only be one of power and ability, but of dignity and authority, a person of greatness and worth, from whence his ability arises; as he ought to be that can engage his heart to draw nigh to God, and take a book out of his right hand, this mysterious book of the Revelation, as it was indeed while sealed; and open and explain it to others, unseal it or exhibit it, as it afterwards was in the following scenes and visions, and gave a view of all that is contained in it; and not only so, but fulfil and accomplish all the prophecies in it; and who can, or is worthy to do all this, but he that sits at the right hand of God, and who is God as well as man? and this proclamation was made to stir up an earnest desire in John, and all the saints he represents, to know what was in this book; and to show the impotence of all creatures to make any discovery of it; and to illustrate, and set off with a greater foil, the glory, excellency, ability, and worth of Jesus Christ. There seems to be an allusion to the president of the temple calling to the priests under him, to attend to the several parts of service assigned them, saying unto them, **hkzç ym**, “whosoever is worthy, let him” do so and so <sup>f147</sup>.

**Ver. 3.** *And no man in heaven*, etc.] Or “no one in heaven”, whether angels, or the souls of departed saints; neither the one nor the other know anything of what is to come, until it is revealed unto them:

*nor in earth*: among all the men on earth, even those of the greatest sagacity and penetration, the wise, the prudent, the scribe, the disputer of this world, such who are most conversant with books, and have the greatest reach into the things of nature, or of grace:

*neither under the earth*; the dead buried there, good or bad; which may be said agreeably to the notions of the ancient Jews, who believed the immortality of souls, and that they were rewarded or punished, **υπο χψονος**, “under the earth”, according to their virtue or vice in life <sup>f148</sup>: or the devils in hell; or whoever on the earth are influenced by them, as magicians, sorcerers, soothsayers, and necromancers:

*was able to open the book, neither to look thereon*; or in it, so as to read it, understand it, and show to John what was in it; for the sense is, there was no creature in heaven, earth, or hell, who were masters of the deepest knowledge, and made pretensions to any, that were able to foresee and foretell things to come; or to exhibit the prophecies in this book, and represent them to John in the manner they afterwards were, and much less to accomplish them.

**Ver. 4.** *And I wept much*, etc.] Not so much on his own account, because he feared his curiosity would not be gratified, and that strong desire answered, which were raised in him upon sight of the book, and increased by the angel's proclamation; but for the sake of the church of God, whose representative he was, and to whom the knowledge of this book, and the things contained in it, he judged must be very useful and profitable. The Ethiopic version reads, "and many wept"; many of those that were about the throne, as well as John:

*because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon*; because there was no creature in heaven, earth, or under it, that were of dignity and authority, as well as of ability, to open the book by unsealing it; and read and deliver out the prophecies in it upon the taking off of every seal; and so not to look into it, and foresee and foretell what was hereafter to come to pass, in the church and world: the phrase of being worthy to look on it seems to be Jewish; of the book of the generation of Adam, (~~GEN~~ Genesis 5:1), the Jews say <sup>f149</sup> that

"it descended to the first man, and by it he knew the wisdom which is above; and this book came to the sons of God, the wise men of the age, *hyb aj gçal ykzd ^am*, "whoever is worthy to look in it", knows by it the wisdom which is from above."

The whole verse is left out in the Alexandrian copy; and the phrase, "to read", is neither in the Vulgate Latin, nor in any of the Oriental versions.

**Ver. 5.** *And one of the elders said unto me*, etc.] The Ethiopic version reads, "one of these elders"; that is, one of the four and twenty elders that were round about the throne; not the first of the four and twenty books of the Old Testament; nor the patriarch Jacob, because of the prophecy concerning Shiloh, Judah's son, which stands in (~~GEN~~ Genesis 49:10), nor Moses, who spoke of the Messiah as the great prophet of the church; nor John the Baptist, who pointed out the Lamb of God; these are all fancies

and conjectures. It was one of the members of the Christian church, who was near the throne of God, had communion with him, and knowledge of his will, who in this visionary way is represented as comforting John under his sorrow and concern, and giving him information: and sometimes persons of superior abilities may receive instruction from meaner persons, as did Apollos from Aquila and Priscilla: the same said unto John,

*weep not*; cease sorrowing, do not be cast down, nor despair;

*behold the lion of the tribe of Judah*; by whom is meant Christ, who, according to the flesh, was to come of the tribe of Judah; and certain it is, that our Lord sprang from thence: and he is said to be the lion of that tribe, in allusion to the prophecy concerning Judah in (<sup>0400</sup>Genesis 49:9), where he is said to be a lion, an old lion stooping down and couching, and on whose standard was the figure of a lion. Christ may be compared to one, because of his great strength, he being the mighty God, the able Saviour, and strong Redeemer, and protector of his church and people, and the avenger of their enemies; and because of his courage and intrepidity when he engaged with Satan, and his principalities and powers, when he bore the sins of his people, sustained his Father's wrath, and the terrors of death set themselves in array against him; and because of the fierceness of his wrath, and fury against the wicked, and for his generosity and lenity towards those that stoop unto him, and obey him. So the Jews say <sup>f150</sup>, that

“of Messiah, the son of David, who comes forth from Judah, is it said, (<sup>0400</sup>Genesis 49:9), “Judah is a lion's whelp”;

and a little after, Messiah, the son of David, who is *hyra*, “a lion”, shall be on his right hand, and Messiah, the son of Joseph, who is an ox, on his left hand; so the word of the Lord frequently, in the Chaldee paraphrase, is said to be a lion <sup>f151</sup>.

*The root of David*; in like manner is Christ called the root of Jesse in (<sup>2810</sup>Isaiah 11:10); and the meaning either is, that he is a branch that springs out of the roots of Jesse and David, is David's son and offspring, according to his human nature; (see <sup>6216</sup>Revelation 22:16); or that he is David's Lord, according to his divine nature: and the metaphor of a root well agrees with him as Mediator, he being hidden out of sight, and unknown to a natural man; and may denote his meanness in his state of humiliation, when he was as a root out of a dry ground; and because he is the root from whence all the elect of God spring, in whom they have their being, and by whom they

are bore and supported, and from whom are derived to them all the blessings of grace, all their spiritual life, holiness, fruitfulness, and perseverance. Now this illustrious Person, so described,

*hath prevailed*; or overcome all difficulties, being one of worth and value, of great authority and ability:

*to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof*; and deliver out all the prophecies in it, and fulfil them; and this through the merits of his blood, and in consequence of his sufferings and death: hence, in the next verse, he is represented as a lamb as it had been slain; and the four living creatures, and the four and twenty elders, put his worthiness to take the book, and open it, upon his having been slain, and having redeemed them by his blood, (~~413~~ Revelation 5:9). And as he, upon his resurrection from the dead, had all power in heaven and in earth given him, as Mediator, for the protection of his church, so he was deserving; and it was fit and necessary that he, as the great prophet of the church, should have and deliver out the prophecies concerning the state and condition of his redeemed ones in all ages.

**Ver. 6.** *And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts*, etc.] These words, “in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts”, are left out in the Syriac version:

*and in the midst of the elders stood a Lamb*; John, upon the intimation given him by the elder, lift up his eyes, and with great earnestness looked about, and saw the person he pointed at, though not in the form of a lion, but in the appearance of a lamb, to which Christ, both in the Old and New Testament, is often compared; and that very aptly, for his innocence and purity of nature; for his harmless and inoffensive conversation; and for his meek and humble deportment throughout the whole of his life; and for his patience at the time of his sufferings and death; and for his usefulness both for food and clothing to his people; and chiefly for his sacrifice for them, typified both by the passover lamb, and by the lambs of the daily sacrifice: hence it follows,

*as it had been slain*; or “as having been slain”; Christ had been really slain by the wicked hands of the Jews, and not in appearance only; the *as*, here, is not a note of mere similitude and likeness, but of reality and truth; (see ~~414~~ John 1:14 ~~415~~ Philippians 2:7); but he was now risen from the dead, and therefore is said to have been slain some time before, though now alive;



and he appeared to have the marks of his sufferings and death upon him, as he had after his resurrection the print of the nails and spear, in his hands, feet, and side; and he was as a lamb that had been newly or lately slain: and it may denote the continued efficacy of his blood, to cleanse from all sin, and of his sacrifice to take it away; he was as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, with respect to the continual virtue of his blood and sacrifice; and he will be, on the same account, the Lamb as it had been slain, unto the end of the world. The position and situation of this Lamb were, he “stood in the midst of the throne, and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders”; he “stood”, being risen from the dead, and ascended up into heaven, but was not as yet set down upon the throne with his Father, but was very near it; he stood before it, ready to be placed upon it, and receive his power and his kingdom; he stood between the throne, and between the living creatures, and the elders, being the Mediator between God, and his church, and people; he, appeared before the throne for them, as their advocate, and stood ready to give them all the assistance, and to do them all the good he could: and this his situation may also denote, that he is continually in view, is always in the sight of God, as the Lamb that had been slain; his blood is carried within the vail, is sprinkled upon the mercy seat, and is always in sight, and calls for peace and pardon; and God the Father always looks upon it, and to his righteousness, sacrifice, and satisfaction, on account of his people: moreover, his being in the midst of the four living creatures, and elders, may signify his presence in his churches, and with his ministers, which he has promised them to the end of the world. This Lamb is further represented,

*as having seven horns*; it is very unusual for a lamb to have horns, and especially seven: these horns are expressive of the power of Christ, of his dominion and government, even of his kingly power and authority; so kings are signified by horns in (<sup>2781</sup>Daniel 8:20,21 7:24); and Christ himself is called the horn of David, and the horn of salvation, (<sup>3927</sup>Psalm 132:17 <sup>2013</sup>Luke 1:69); and signify, that upon his resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, he was made and declared Lord and Christ; and the number “seven” expresses the fulness and perfection of his power and authority, having, as Mediator, all power in heaves and in earth given him; and what is above all power, might, dominion, and every name in this world, and that to come; and may have some relation to the seven states of his churches in so many periods of time; and show not only that he has power sufficient to protect and defend his people in all times, and to push

at and destroy his and their enemies, but to open the then sealed book, and unloose the seals: and as another qualification for this work, it follows,

*and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent into all the earth;* which some understand of angels, and of a sufficient number of them, which belong to Christ, and are at his command, and who are ready to do his will, and to be sent forth by him, into the several parts of the earth, to execute his pleasure: but these rather design the Spirit of God and his gifts, which Christ received without measure, both in his human nature, at his incarnation, and after his resurrection from the dead, and ascension; which he bestowed on his apostles and ministering servants, whom he sent forth into all the world, to preach his Gospel with them; and which he has, more or less, ever since continued to do. The Ethiopic version reads in the singular number, “and this is the Spirit of God which is sent into all the earth”; (see Gill on “<sup>(400)</sup> Revelation 1:4”); these “seven eyes” may design the perfect knowledge of Christ, his foresight of future events, and his all wise providence, which is always and everywhere concerned to fulfil and accomplish them; so that he is every way qualified to take the book of future events, as to the church and world, and reveal it, open and explain it, and fulfil the things contained in it; (see <sup>(300)</sup> Zechariah 3:9).

**Ver. 7.** *And he came*, etc.] He drew nigh to the throne of God, he engaged his heart to approach unto him, and came up even to his seat, which a mere creature, without a Mediator, cannot do:

*and took the book out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne;* (see Gill on “<sup>(400)</sup> Revelation 5:1”); it being given unto him, as in (<sup>(400)</sup> Revelation 1:1); and a commission and authority to open it, and make it manifest to others, and to accomplish the several events, in the several periods of time, it points unto.

**Ver. 8.** *And when he had taken the book*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin version reads, “when he had opened the book”, very wrongly; for the opening of it by unloosing the seals, one after another, is hereafter mentioned, in (<sup>(400)</sup> Revelation 6:1,3,5,7,9,12), but when it was observed, that the Lamb took the book, and his commission to open, unseal, and fulfil it,

*the four beasts, and four [and] twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb;* by way of religious worship and adoration of him; which shows that he was not a mere creature, who assumed human nature, suffered, and died, and is the Mediator between God and men, but is truly God, and is the proper

object of worship; and so he is regarded by all his faithful ministers, and true churches, which are here signified by the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders; who are represented as

*having everyone of them harps*; which were instruments of music, and with which the saints formerly used to praise God, (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 33:2); and so may here intend the praises and thanksgivings of the saints, of everyone of them, greater or lesser, upon the present occasion; having their hearts in right tune, making melody with them to the Lord, and giving thanks unto him for all their blessings, temporal and spiritual, and particularly for the Lamb, and his worthiness to open the book, and unloose the seals:

*and golden vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints*; this is said in allusion to the golden censers full of incense, which ascended upwards, and was of a sweet smell; the vessels on the shewbread table, in which incense was put, are by Josephus<sup>f152</sup> called “golden vials”, as here; his words are, upon the loaves were put two *φιαλαι χρυσεαι*, “golden vials”, full of incense: the prayers of the saints are compared to “odours”, or “incense”, as the word may be rendered, and as they are called, (~~Psalm~~ Psalm 141:2); partly because as incense goes upwards, so do they go up to God, and are received, regarded, and had in remembrance by him; and partly because as incense is of a sweet smell, so the prayers of the saints, put up in the name and faith of Christ, are very grateful and acceptable to God: the “golden vials” said to be “full” of them, may design the hearts of believers, in which they first are, and from whence they proceed; true prayer is that which is inwrought in the soul, and comes from the heart, even from a heart pure like gold, purified by faith in the blood of Christ, a true heart, that asks in faith, nothing wavering; such as are really saints, true believers in Christ, are praying souls; they are full of prayers for themselves and others; they pray always, and for all saints: this makes nothing for praying to angels and saints departed; for these prayers were their own, and not others; and besides, these four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, were not angels, for they are said to be redeemed by the blood of Christ, and are distinguished from angels in the following verses; nor the saints in heaven, but ministers and churches on earth, and who were to reign with Christ on earth, (~~Revelation~~ Revelation 5:10); it may be observed, that the Jews sometimes represent prayer in such like figures as here;

“prayer (they say) ascends with those spices which are mentioned in (<sup>2044</sup>Song of Solomon 4:14); and at the time that prayer ascends it is perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, and of this the holy blessed God asks, “who is this that comes up”, etc. <sup>f153</sup> (<sup>206</sup>Song of Solomon 3:6);”

and they say, prayer is greater than all offerings <sup>f154</sup>. (see <sup>688</sup>Revelation 8:3).

**Ver. 9.** *And they sung a new song*, etc.] Upon a new occasion and subject, redemption by the blood of the Lamb, and his worthiness to open the sealed book; and in distinction from the old song of Moses and the children of Israel at the Red sea; and this was a most famous and excellent song, an unheard of one, and which none could learn, or sing, but the redeemed of the Lamb:

*saying, thou art worthy to take the book, and open the seals thereof.* The Arabic version reads, “thou, O Lamb”; the reasons why they ascribe such fitness, ability, and dignity to him, are as follow:

*for thou wast slain:* by men, and for the sins of men; whereby, as he became worthy in his priestly office to take away the sins of his people, and to have all the glory of their salvation, and, in his kingly office, to have all power and authority, and to be exalted above every name, so, in his prophetic office, to have perfect knowledge, as man and Mediator, of all the future events that were to befall his church and people, and to make them known, and fulfil them:

*and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation;* this shows, that as the four living creatures, and four and twenty elders, were not angels, so they were not representatives of the Jewish church; or the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament; not even the apostles of the New; for they were all Jews, and could not be said to be redeemed out of every tongue, nation, and people; and also that not the Jews only were redeemed by Christ, but the Gentiles also, and not all mankind, or every individual of human nature, but some out of all the nations of the earth; for God hath chosen some, both of Jews and Gentiles, and these Christ has redeemed and therefore the Gospel is sent unto all nations, that these among them may be called and saved. The redemption of them supposes them to have been in a state of slavery and bondage, as they are by nature, to sin, Satan, and the law; and signifies

a deliverance from such a state, which Christ has obtained, not barely by power, but by price, as the word here used signifies, and may be rendered, “and hast bought us” and the price with which he has bought them in his own “blood”, and which is of full and sufficient value, it being not only the blood of a man, of an innocent man, but of one that is God as well as man: and this price was paid “to God”, and to his justice, against whom men have sinned, whose law they have broken, and whose justice they have injured and affronted, that he might reconcile them to God, bring them near to him, and that they might serve him in righteousness and true holiness.

**Ver. 10.** *And hast made us unto our God kings and priests*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup>6006</sup>Revelation 1:6”). The Alexandrian copy, and Complutensian edition, and the Syriac, Arabic, and the Ethiopic versions, read “them”, instead of “us”:

*and we shall reign on the earth*; meaning not merely in a spiritual sense, through grace reigning over sin and corruption, through Satan being bruised under their feet, and through the victory they have in Christ over the world, but in the millennium state, in the thousand years' reign with Christ in the new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness; (see <sup>6006</sup>Revelation 20:4-6). The Alexandrian copy, and the Complutensian edition, Syriac and Arabic versions, read “they shall reign”.

**Ver. 11.** *And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels*, etc.]

Immaterial spirits, made by Christ, and worshippers of him, and ministering spirits to him and his, the holy and elect angels, who are confirmed in their state by Christ; these John beheld in a visionary way, and heard the voices and articulate sounds formed by them; and there were many of them; how many there are, or were here, cannot be said; we read of a multitude of heavenly host that appeared at the incarnation of Christ, and of more than twelve legions of angels, that Christ could have had of his Father for a word speaking, at the time of his apprehension, who would have rescued him out of the hands of his enemies; yea, that company is innumerable. The Syriac version reads, “as the voice of many waters”; these were

*round about the throne*; were near to God, stood before him, behind his face, hearkened to his voice, and observed his orders: so with the Jews, the four angels, Michael, Gabriel, Uriel, and Raphael, are said <sup>f155</sup> to be *raskl bybs*, “round about his throne”, the throne of God: it follows here,

*and the beasts and the elders*; the sense is not, that John heard the voice of the living creatures, and of the elders, as well as, and together with, the voice of many angels; for he had heard their voice and song before, but that the angels whose voice he heard, as they were round about the throne, so they were round about the living creatures, and round about the elders: the angels are near unto, and encompass the ministers of the Gospel; they are about them, and give them intimations and discoveries of the mind and will of God, as an angel did to John, (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 1:1), and another to Paul, (<sup><427></sup>Acts 27:23,24), and sometimes direct them where to go and preach the Gospel, as in (<sup><440></sup>Acts 16:9,10), and surround them for their safety and protection: so horses and chariots of fire, by whom angels are meant, were round about the prophet Elisha, (<sup><216></sup>2 Kings 6:16,17), and they were also round about the elders, the churches, and particular believers; angels and saints are near to one another; and angels are very friendly to the saints, and so them many good offices; they all belong to the same family, and are social worshippers of God; the angels are the guards that encamp round about them that fear the Lord, and often protect them from enemies and dangers; and it may be observed, that the saints are nearer the Lamb and the throne than the angels be; according to this account, there was a throne, and one that sat on it, who is the living God; nearest to the throne stood the Lamb; next to the Lamb stood the four living creatures, the ministers of the Gospel; next to them the elders, or churches, and members thereof; and in the outermost ring, and as encompassing all, stood the ministering angels, they being servants; whereas the saints are the heirs of salvation, and the bride, the Lamb's wife, and therefore nearer him:

*and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands*; that is, an innumerable company of them; a like number is mentioned in (<sup><207></sup>Daniel 7:10) to which this seems to refer; (see <sup><987></sup>Psalms 68:17). The Jews speak of nine hundred and six thousand millions of ministering angels, that stand constantly before the Lord <sup>f156</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *Saying with a loud voice*, etc.] To signify their zeal, fervour, and affection for Christ, and to make a free, open, and public acknowledgment of him, and that all might hear of his worthiness, and of the praise and glory that were due unto him:

*worthy is the Lamb that was slain*; they address him as the Lamb, and not as the Lord of lords, and their Lord; and speak of him as having been slain, and celebrate the virtue and efficacy of his sufferings and death, and ascribe

his worthiness to receive glory and honour thereunto; but do not add, as the living creatures and elders do, “and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood”; because, though they were the subjects and objects of confirming grace by Christ, yet not of redeeming grace: it follows,

*to receive power and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing*; as the book has seven seals to be unloosed, and Christ had seven horns of power and ability to loose them, and fulfil the things contained in it, and seven eyes to look into it, and discover and reveal what is in it, so here are “seven” words made use of, to express the praise that was due unto him; a like number is used by the angels in (<sup>46712</sup> Revelation 7:12); and when he is said to be worthy to receive these, it is not to be understood of his receiving the things themselves, but of the praise of them; and that these are to be observed in him, and to be ascribed to him: power belongs to him, as he is the mighty God; and as the Saviour and Redeemer of his people; and as risen from the dead, and as exalted at God's right hand, and made or declared Lord and Christ; having all power in heaven and in earth: “riches” may well be ascribed to him, who has all the perfections of deity in him; whose are the heavens and the earth, and the fulness thereof; and who, as Mediator, is heir of all things, and has both the riches of grace and glory in his hands: “wisdom” also is his; he is wisdom itself, he is the only wise God; and he is the author of all wisdom, natural and spiritual; and, as Mediator, he has the spirit of wisdom and knowledge resting on him, and the treasures of both hid in him: and “strength” may be well attributed to him, which he has shown in making and supporting all things; in saving and redeeming his people with a mighty hand and outstretched arm; and in subduing and vanquishing all his and their enemies; and in giving strength to them to discharge their duty, resist temptations, oppose corruptions, and do their generation work: “honour” is due to him, as the Son of God, he being to be honoured equally as the Father; and who, as man and Mediator, is crowned with glory and honour: “glory” is what ought to be ascribed unto him, even the glory of true and proper deity, and also the glory of salvation; and who, as Mediator, had a glory promised him, and which was due unto him upon his having finished his work, and which he now enjoys: wherefore “blessing” is to be given to him, who is God over all, blessed for evermore, in himself and the perfections of his nature; in whom all spiritual blessings are, and in whom all the nations of the earth are blessed; and to whom praise and thanks are



to be rendered, for the blessings of pardoning, justifying, and redeeming grace, and for all other.

**Ver. 13.** *And every creature which is in heaven*, etc.] Animate or inanimate, angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect, sun, moon, and stars, and the fowls of the air:

*and on the earth*; men and beasts, and every creeping thing, mountains, hills, fruitful trees, and all cedars: and under the earth: in the bowels of it, metals, minerals, and everything of that kind:

*and such as are in the sea*; that sail in ships upon the mighty waters, and fishes great and small that are therein:

*and all that are in them*; in heaven, earth, and sea:

*heard I saying, blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever*; all creatures in their way praise God, and are subservient to the glory and interest of Christ, and are the occasion of glorifying of both; and even the enemies of Christ, wicked men and devils, will be obliged to own Christ to be Lord, to the glory of God the Father, as well as angels and saints; and the same glory and honour which are given to the one are ascribed to the other, which shows the proper deity of Christ, and his equality with the Father. The Syriac version reads, “and I heard him who sitteth upon the throne, saying, to the Lamb be given blessing and honour”, etc. with which compare (<sup>Ⓡ172</sup>John 5:22,23).

**Ver. 14.** *And the four beasts said, Amen*, etc.] Giving their assent to what the angels and every creature said, and expressing their desires and wishes that so it might be, and also their faith, that so it was, and would be:

*and the four [and] twenty elders fell down and worshipped him that liveth for ever and ever*; either God the Father, who sat upon the throne, and is so described, (<sup>Ⓡ173</sup>Revelation 4:9,10); or else the Lamb who had been slain, and was now alive, and lives for evermore; or both of them, for the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac and Arabic versions, omit the words “him that liveth for ever and ever”; and leave it to be understood of either of them, or both; and the Ethiopic version reads, “and the elders worshipped him”; as the four living creatures and four and twenty elders led the chorus, and begun the song, so they close it, as being the persons more immediately concerned in the death and sufferings of the



Lamb, and redemption by him, and in the sealed book, and in the things contained in it; the seals of which are next opened, and an account is given of them in some following chapters.

# CHAPTER 6

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 6

This chapter contains the vision of the opening six of the seals of the sealed book, by the Lamb, and of the events following thereupon. The preparation to the vision of the first seal is in (~~([v.1](#))~~ Revelation 6:1); the Lamb opens it, John hears a noise like thunder, and one of the living creatures bids him come and see; upon which he saw a horse, of a white colour, and a rider on it, who is described by a bow and crown given him, and by the victory he obtained, (~~([v.2](#))~~ Revelation 6:2); at the opening of the second seal, the second living creature invites him as before; and he sees a horse, of a red colour, with a rider on it, described by his power, to take peace from the earth, and suffer men to kill one another, and by a great sword given him, (~~([v.3,4](#))~~ Revelation 6:3,4); at the opening of the third seal, the third living creature addresses him in like manner as the other; and he sees a horse, of a black colour, and a rider on it, with a pair of balances in his hands; and hears a voice from among the four living creatures, expressing dearness of provisions, and a charge not to hurt the oil and wine, (~~([v.5,6](#))~~ Revelation 6:5,6); at the opening of the fourth seal, the fourth living creature speaks to John, as the rest; and he sees a horse, of a pale colour, and a rider on it, described by his name, Death, by his follower, hell, or the grave, and by his power to destroy a fourth part of the earth with the sword, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts, (~~([v.7,8](#))~~ Revelation 6:7,8); at the opening of the fifth seal, John saw the souls of the martyrs, under the altar; hears their cry for vengeance; observes that white robes were given them, and that they were bid to be quiet until the slaying and suffering time of their brethren was over, (~~([v.9-11](#))~~ Revelation 6:9-11); at the opening of the sixth seal follow an earthquake, strange changes in the heavens, the sun becomes black as sackcloth, the moon becomes as blood, the stars fall, and the heaven itself departs, and every island and mountain are moved out of their places, (~~([v.12-14](#))~~ Revelation 6:12-14), the kings and great men of the earth, and even all sorts, of men, upon this, fly to the rocks and mountains to hide them from the face of God the Father, that sits upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb, the opener of the sealed book; giving this as a reason for it, that

the time of his great wrath was come, and none could stand before him, (<sup>665</sup>Revelation 6:15-17).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw, when the Lamb opened one of the seals,* etc.] Of the sealed book; one of the seven seals of it, as read the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and the Oriental versions, and the Complutensian edition; that is, the first; so “one” is used for first in (<sup>0005</sup>Genesis 1:5 <sup>400</sup>Matthew 28:1); and as appears from the following seals being called second, third, fourth, etc. These seals express events to be fulfilled; and therefore cannot respect the steps towards, and the signs of Jerusalem's destruction, and that itself, which had been accomplished some years before the vision of the seals; and which vision would have been needless: and these are called seals, because they were sealed among God's treasure, or were resolved on, and decreed by him; and because they were hidden and unknown until they came to pass; and when they were come to pass, they were pledges of what God would do in the destruction of Rome Papal, as here in the destruction of Rome Pagan: for these seals, at least the first six of them, concern the Pagan empire, and the state of the church in it; and are so many gradual steps to the ruin of it, and to the advancing and increasing of the kingdom of Christ; and these, with the seven trumpets, which the last seal introduces, reach from the times of the apostles to the end of time, as appears from (<sup>6005</sup>Revelation 10:6,7). Now the opening of these seals is the revealing of the events signified by them, and expressed in the hieroglyphics here made use of, and the fulfilment of them;

*and I heard as it were the noise of thunder;* a voice very loud and sonorous, exciting the attention of John:

*one of the four beasts saying, come and see;* this was the of the four living creatures, for the word one is used in the same sense as in the foregoing clause; and this creature was like to a lion, (<sup>6007</sup>Revelation 4:7); wherefore his voice was loud, as when a lion roars, (<sup>6003</sup>Revelation 10:3), and is fitly compared to thunder: there is no need to look out for any particular person, as intended by this living creature; or to conclude him to be Peter, as Grotius, who was dead before this seal was opened; or Quadratus, Aristides, and Justin Martyr, who courageously appeared in the Christian cause, and made very excellent apologies for it, with success, since these lived under the second seal; it is enough in general to understand the ministers of the Gospel, who, as sons of thunder, loudly and publicly preached the Gospel, and, as lions, boldly and bravely defended, and took

notice of the power and providence of God in succeeding their ministry, and in weakening the kingdom of Satan in the Gentile world, and particularly in the Roman empire; and therefore are represented as calling to John to “come and see”; observe and take notice of the following hieroglyphic, representing the success of the Gospel ministry, *yzj at*, “come and see”, is a phrase often used by the Jews, to stir up attention to what is about to be said; (see Gill on “~~4046~~John 1:46”).

**Ver. 2.** *And I saw, and behold a white horse*, etc.] Representing the ministration of the Gospel in the times of the apostles, which were just now finishing, John being the last of them, who saw this vision; and the “horse” being a swift, majestic, and warlike creature, and fearless of opposition and war, may design the swift progress of the Gospel in the world, the majesty, power, and authority with which it came, and opposition it met with, and which was bore down before it; and its “white” colour may denote the purity of Gospel truths, the peace it proclaims, the joy brings, and the triumph that attends it, on account of victories obtained by it, and which is afterwards suggested: white horses were used in triumphs, in token of victory <sup>f157</sup>; a white horse, in a dream, is a good sign with the Jews <sup>f158</sup>; and Astrampsyclus says <sup>f159</sup>, a vision of white horses is an apparition of angels; and so one of those angels which the Jews suppose to have the care of men, and the preservation of them, is said <sup>f160</sup> to ride by him, and at his right hand, upon a white horse; but the rider here is not an angel, but the head of all principality and power:

*and he that sat on him had a bow*; with arrows; the bow is the word of the Gospel, and the arrows the doctrines of it; (see ~~3809~~Habakkuk 3:9 ~~4955~~Psalms 45:5); so called for their swift motion, sudden and secret striking, piercing, and penetrating nature, reaching to the very hearts of men; laying open the secret thoughts and iniquity thereof; wounding, and causing them to fall, and submit themselves to the sceptre of Christ's kingdom:

*and a crown was given unto him*; by God the Father; expressive of Christ's regal power and authority, of his honour and dignity, and of his victories and conquests:

*and he went forth, conquering and to conquer*; in the ministration of the Gospel, which went forth, as did all the first ministers of it, from Jerusalem, to the several parts of the world; from the east, on which side of the throne was the first living creature, who called upon John to come and see this

sight, as the standard of the tribe of Judah, which had a lion upon it, was on the east side of the camp of Israel; and out of Zion went forth the word of the Lord, which was very victorious, both among Jews and Gentiles, to the conversion of thousands of them, and to the planting of a multitude of churches among them, and to the setting up and advancing the kingdom of Christ; but inasmuch as yet all things are not made subject to him, he is represented as going forth in the Gospel, still conquering, and to conquer, what remain to be conquered: that Christ is designed by him that sat on the white horse, and is thus described, is evident from (~~691~~ Revelation 19:11-13); with which compare (~~195B~~ Psalm 45:3,4), though as this emblem may respect the Roman empire, the white horse may be an emblem of the strong, warlike, and conquering state of it; and the rider which a bow and crown may design Vespasian, whom Christ made use of as an instrument to conquer his enemies the Jews, and who, in consequence thereof, had the imperial crown put upon him; and it may be further observed, that though his conquest of them was a very great one, yet they afterwards rose up in the empire, in great numbers, rebelled, and did much mischief, when they were entirely conquered by Trajan and Hadrian, who seem to be intended in the next seal.

**Ver. 3.** *And when he had opened the second seal*, etc.] Of the sealed book; that is, the Lamb, as before:

*I heard the second beast say, come and see*; this living creature was the ox, whose situation was on the west side of the throne, as the standard of Ephraim, on which was an ox, was on the west of the camp of Israel; no mention is made of the noise of thunder, as before, the voice of the ox being lower than that of the lion; and this perhaps may point out a decrease in the Gospel ministry; to fix on any particular person, as, with Grotius, the Evangelist Matthew, because he says, (~~1247~~ Matthew 24:7), nation shall rise against nation, which carries in it some likeness to what is said at the opening of this seal; or, as with Brightman, Justin Martyr, whose second apology was not regarded by the emperor, is mere conjecture; the ministers of the Gospel are intended who lived under this seal, who, though they might not be strong and courageous like the lion, or their predecessors, yet were like the ox, laborious in preaching, and patient in suffering; and these are represented in this vision as inviting John to behold and observe the following hieroglyphic.

**Ver. 4.** *And there went out another horse, [that was] red,* etc.] Which may be an emblem either of the suffering state of the church, being answerable to the Smyrnaean one, as the purity and power of the Gospel, represented in the former seal, may answer to the Ephesine church; or else of those contentions and divisions occasioned among men through the Gospel, which, though of a peaceable nature, yet, through the corruption and depravity of men, brings not peace, but a sword; or rather of those bloody wars within the period of time signified by this seal, which came as punishments on the enemies of the Gospel:

*and [power] was given to him that sat thereon;* not the Lord Jesus Christ, who is said to ride on a red horse, (<sup><3008></sup>Zechariah 1:8); though indeed he presides over his church and people, and takes the care of them when the most desolating judgments are in the earth, and causes all things to work together for good; nor Satan, the red dragon, who was a murderer from the beginning, and delights in effusion of blood, and in stirring up of men to destroy one another, whenever he is permitted; but Trajan the Roman emperor, in whose reign John died; and who came from the west, and was a Spaniard, as was Hadrian his successor, who may be joined with him; which was the side, or quarter, on which the living creature was that spoke to John; and in the times of these emperors were very bloody and civil wars: wherefore power is said to be given him,

*to take peace from the earth;* that is, from the Roman empire, which is sometimes called the whole world; and which could not have been done, if power had not been given from him who makes peace, and creates evil:

*and that they should kill one another:* which refers not to the havoc and slaughter which the Jews made one of another at the destruction of Jerusalem, but to the Jews murdering of the Greeks and Romans, and the Romans the Jews, in the times of the above emperors. In Trajan's time, the Jews who dwelt about Cyrene, under the conduct of one Andrew, fell upon the Romans and Greeks, and killed many, fed on their flesh, ate their bowels, besmeared themselves with their blood, and covered themselves with their skins; many of them they sawed asunder, from the crown of the head down to the middle; many of them they threw to the wild beasts, and many of them they forced to fight among themselves, till they had destroyed above two hundred and twenty thousand men; in Egypt and Cyprus they committed the same kind of outrages, their leader being one Artemion, where two hundred and forty thousand men perished<sup>f161</sup>; Lybia

was almost emptied of men by them; so that Hadrian, the successor of Trajan, was obliged to send colonies to repeople the places they had made desolate. But at length they were overcome by Lupus, governor of Egypt, and by Marcius Turbo, and by Lucius, whom Trajan sent against them <sup>f162</sup>, and destroyed great numbers of them; and for the space of about fourteen years they were quiet; but in Hadrian's time they rose again, and set one Bar Cochab, a false Messiah, at the head of them, whom they proclaimed king: when Hadrian sent forces against them, and with great difficulty subdued them, took the city Bither, where they were, and destroyed at times five hundred and eighty thousand of them <sup>f163</sup>; the Jews say, that he put men, women, and children to death in such numbers, that their blood ran down into the main sea, yea, that a horse might go up to his nose in blood <sup>f164</sup>; they say that he destroyed in Bither double the number of those that came out of Egypt, even twelve hundred thousand men <sup>f165</sup>; some of their accounts are very extravagant, and exceed all bounds <sup>f166</sup>; however, the slaughter was very great, that it may well be said,

*and there was given unto him a great sword*; to slay men with; though Hadrian on his death bed, amidst his pains, would fain have had a sword given to him to have dispatched his own life, and could not obtain one <sup>f167</sup>; the Jews say he destroyed all the land of Judea <sup>f168</sup>.

**Ver. 5.** *And when he had opened the third seal*, etc.] Of the sealed book:

*I heard the third beast say, come and see*; this living creature was that which was like a man, who was on the south side of the throne, as the standard of Reuben, which had the figure of a man, was on the south side of the camp of Israel; this was not the Apostle Paul, as Grotius thinks, to whom was made a prophecy of a famine in the days of Claudius Caesar; nor Tertullian, who made an apology for the Christians in the times of this seal, as Brightman conjectures; but the ministers of the Gospel, whose voice was neither the voice of the lion nor of the ox, but of a man, which was still lower, but yet they retained their humanity, reasoning prudence, and wisdom; and these are represented as calling upon John to come and see, and take notice of the following hieroglyphic:

*and I beheld, and lo a black horse*; an emblem either of the afflicted state of the church, still answering to the Smyrnaean one, being black with persecutions, schisms, errors, and heresies, which were many; or particularly of the heresies and heretics of those times, who might be compared to a horse for their pride and ambition, speaking great swelling

words of vanity, and to a black one, for their hidden things of dishonesty, and works of darkness, for the darkness in themselves, and which they spread over others; or rather of a famine, not in a spiritual sense, of hearing of the word, but in a literal sense; (see <sup><2007></sup>Lamentations 4:7,8 5:10); not what was at the siege of Jerusalem, or in the times of Claudius Caesar, (<sup><4118></sup>Acts 11:28); but in the times of the Emperor Severus, and others, as the historians of those times <sup>f169</sup>, and the writings of Tertullian show; when the Heathens ascribed the scarcity that was among them to the wickedness of the Christians <sup>f170</sup>, whereas it was a judgment upon them for their persecution of them:

*and he that sat on him had a pair of balances in his hand*; by whom is meant not some noted heretic, or heretics, who had balances of deceit in their hands to prove their tenets by, such as spurious writings, etc. or who made pretensions to the Scriptures, the balance of the sanctuary, to weigh doctrines in; nor Christ, whose name heretics shrouded themselves under, and professed, and who overruled and made use of their heresies for the good of his people, that they might be made manifest. Mr. Mede thinks that Septimius Severus, the Roman emperor, who came from Africa, from the south, on which side was the living creature that spoke to John, is intended, and in which country black horses were in great esteem; and he was the only African that ever was emperor of Rome before <sup>f171</sup>: and the same author thinks, that his having a pair of balances in his hand expresses the strict justice that emperor was famous for; but rather it signifies famine, and such a scarcity as that bread is delivered out by weight to men; (see <sup><1836></sup>Leviticus 26:26).

**Ver. 6.** *And I heard a voice in the midst of the four beasts say*, etc.] Not the voice of Agabus to the Apostle Paul, (<sup><4118></sup>Acts 11:28); but rather of Christ, who was in the midst of them, (<sup><1806></sup>Revelation 5:6); the Ethiopic version adds, “as the voice of an eagle”:

*a measure of wheat for a penny, and three measures of barley for a penny*; “Choenix”, the measure here used, signifies as much as was sufficient for a man for one day, as a penny was the usual hire of a labourer for a day, (<sup><4118></sup>Matthew 20:2); so a choenix of corn was allowed to each man in Xerxes's army for a day, according to Herodotus <sup>f172</sup>; the same quantity for a day was given by the Romans to their shepherds and servants, and is generally said to be about two pounds; according to Agricola it was two pounds and a quarter <sup>f173</sup>. This measure was very different; the Attic



choenix was a measure that held three pounds, the Italic choenix four pounds, and the military choenix five pounds, and answers to the Hebrew Kab<sup>f174</sup>; and in the Septuagint version of (<sup>2680</sup>Ezekiel 45:10,11); it answers to the Bath; and some make it to be the fourth part of a bushel, and others half a bushel<sup>f175</sup>; the first account of its being about two pounds, and the allowance of a man for a day, seems best to agree with this place: so that this phrase expresses such a scarcity, as that a man's daily wages would be but just enough to buy himself bread, without any thing to eat with it; and when he would have nothing left for clothes, and other things, nor anything for his wife and children:

*and [see] that thou hurt not the oil and wine*; signifying that this scarcity should fall not upon the superfluities, such as oil and wine, which may be spared, and men can live without; but upon the necessities of life, particularly bread: some render the words, “and be not unjust in the oil and wine”; and so think they refer to the laws of the Roman emperors, in relation to wine and oil, and to the just execution of them, that there might be plenty of them; and others understand them in an allegorical sense, of the principal doctrines of the Gospel, comparable to oil and wine, and which Christ takes care of, that they shall not be hurt and destroyed by heretics and false teachers, even when they prevail the most, and bring on a famine of the word, and when the church is blackened and darkened with them; and indeed these may much better be applied to the Gospel, than, as they are by the Jews, to the law; who frequently say<sup>f176</sup> that the law is called “oil”, and speak of *hrwt l ç hnyy*, “the wine of the law”<sup>f177</sup>:

**Ver. 7.** *And when he had opened the fourth seal*, etc.] Of the seven seals of the sealed book; that is, when the Lamb had opened it, or took it off, as in (<sup>6688</sup>Revelation 6:1);

*I heard the voice of the fourth beast say, come and see*; this living creature was that which was like an eagle, and was on the north side of the throne, answerable to the standard of Dan, which was on the north of the camp of Israel, and had the figure of an eagle upon it; and the opening of this seal begins with Maximinus the Roman emperor, who came from Thrace, far north. This living creature was not James, the brother of our Lord, who had been dead long ago, as Grotius imagines; nor Cyprian, as Brightman thinks, though he lived under this seal; but the ministers of the Gospel in general in the times referred to are intended: and it may denote some decline in the Gospel ministry, that they had not the courage and strength

of the lion, as the first Gospel preachers; nor the patience and laboriousness of the ox, the next set of ministers; nor the solidity and prudence of the man, the ministers that followed them; and yet they retained some degree of light and knowledge, sagacity and penetration, and contempt of the world, signified by the eagle; these invite John in a visionary way to come and see the following hieroglyphic.

**Ver. 8.** *And I looked, and behold a pale horse*, etc.] An emblem either of the state of the church, pale not with persecution, as some think, for through that it was red; but with the hypocrisy and superstition of many of its members, who were paving the way for the man of sin, and on account of whom the church was grown sickly and dying; or rather this is an emblem of the sickly and dying state of the Pagan Roman empire, through a complication of judgments upon it, hereafter mentioned, as war, famine, pestilence, and wild beasts:

*and his name that sat on him was Death*; not Satan, who has the power of death, but death itself; who is represented as a person, as he elsewhere is, sometimes as a king, (~~4614~~ Romans 5:14); and as an enemy, (~~4652~~ 1 Corinthians 15:25); (see ~~2385~~ Isaiah 28:15); and this was a very ancient way of speaking of death among the Heathens; in the theology of the Phoenicians, according to Sanchoniathon<sup>f178</sup>, who wrote before the Trojan wars, a son of Saturn by Rhea was called Muth, whom the Phoenicians sometimes called Death, and sometimes Pluto; which is manifestly the same with the Hebrew word **twm**, “death”; the name of the rider of this horse may well be called Death, both with respect to the various kinds of death under this seal, and with respect to the short lives of the emperors; for in less than fifty years' time, which is the period of this seal, namely, from Maximinus, A. D. 235, or 237, to Dioclesian, A. D. 284, or 286, there were more than twenty emperors, and who most of them were cut off by violent deaths; besides the thirty tyrants who sprung up under one of them, as so many mushrooms, and were soon destroyed. This is the only rider that has a name given him; and from hence we may learn what to call the rest, as the rider of the white horse “Truth”, or Christ, who is truth itself; the rider of the red horse “War”; and the rider of the black horse “Famine”; and because both the last, with other judgments, meet together under this seal, the rider of this horse is emphatically called “Death”:

*and hell followed with him*: that is, the grave, which attended on death, or followed after him, and was a sort of an undertaker, to bury the dead killed by death; so these two are put together, (<sup>f118</sup>Revelation 1:18 20:13,14);

*and power was given unto them*; to death and hell, or the grave, or rather to death only, for the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “to him”: and the power that was given him reached

*over the fourth part of the earth*; not of the church, which is never called the earth in this book, but is distinguished from it, (<sup>f126</sup>Revelation 12:16); nor the land of Judea, but the Roman empire; some understand it of Europe, the fourth part of the world:

*to kill with the sword*; Maximinus, with whom this seal begins, was of a very barbarous disposition, and a more cruel creature, it is said, was not upon earth; and besides his persecution of the Christians, he acted a most inhuman part to the Pagan Romans themselves, so that the senate dreaded him; and the women and children at Rome, having heard of his barbarities, deprecated his ever seeing that city; and he was called by the names of the worst of tyrants; more than four thousand men he killed without any charge or judicial process against them, and yet his blood thirsty mind was not satisfied <sup>f179</sup>: Gallienus, another emperor after him, emptied many cities entirely of men, and killed three or four thousand a day of his own soldiers, whom he understood had thoughts of a new emperor <sup>f180</sup>; under him thirty tyrants sprung up together in the empire, who made great havoc before they were cut off; and in his time the Alemanni (a people in Germany) having wasted France, broke into Italy; Dacia, which beyond the Danube was added by Trajan (to the Roman empire) was lost; Greece, Macedonia, Pontus, and Asia, were destroyed by the Goths; Pannonia was depopulated by (the people called) Sarmatae and Quadi; the Germans penetrated into Spain, and took the famous city of Tarracon; the Parthians having seized Mesopotamia, began to claim Syria to themselves; so that, as the Roman historian observes <sup>f181</sup>, things were now desperate, and the Roman empire was almost destroyed: not to take notice of the multitudes that were killed in after wars and persecutions, under other emperors, during this seal:

*and with hunger*; or famine; there was a grievous famine in the times of Gallus and Volusianus, which Dionysius bishop of Alexandria makes mention of <sup>f182</sup>; and Cyprian, who lived under this seal, also speaks of famine, and indeed of all these three, war, famine, and pestilence, as then

imputed to the Christians, and to their irreligion, which charge he removes <sup>f183</sup>.

*and with death*; that is, with the pestilence, which, by the Targumist <sup>f184</sup>, and other Jewish writers <sup>f185</sup>, is commonly called *antwm*, “death”, because it sweeps away and carries off such large numbers with it: now in the reign of the last mentioned emperors was a very noisome pestilence, which raged most cruelly; the Roman historian says <sup>f186</sup>, that their reign is only known, or was famous, for the pestilence, diseases, and sicknesses; Hostilianus, who was created emperor by the senate, died of it <sup>f187</sup>; Dionysius of Alexandria has given a most shocking account of it, who lived at the same time <sup>f188</sup>; it began in Ethiopia, and went through the east, and through all parts of the Roman empire, and lasted fifteen years; to which perhaps, for its large extent and long duration, there never was the like:

*and with the beasts of the earth*; by which many of the Christians were destroyed in the persecutions of those times; and is also one of God's four judgments, and which goes about with the sword, famine, and pestilence, (<sup>-3402-</sup>Ezekiel 14:21), and may be literally understood of destruction by wild beasts, as Arnobius, who lived at this time, observes <sup>f189</sup>; or allegorically, of men comparable to wild beasts, as Herod is called a fox, and Nero a lion; and such savage creatures were most of the Roman emperors, and particularly the thirty tyrants under Gallienus: so the Targum on (<sup>-3402-</sup>Jeremiah 3:12); interprets “the beasts of the field”, *aymm[ ykl m*, “the kings of the nations”. The Alexandrian copy reads, “and upon the fourth part of the beasts”, as if the power of death reached to them as well as to men. Under this seal all the judgments of God on Rome Pagan meet together; and it is observable that Maximinus, a Roman emperor, and one of the last of the Pagans, boasted, that for worshipping of the gods, and persecuting Of the Christians, neither pestilence, famine, nor war, were in his times, when on a sudden all these three came together at once <sup>f190</sup>; to which may be added the following observation, that though the several steps and methods which God took to punish, weaken, and destroy the Roman Pagan empire, were remarkably seen in the distinct periods to which these first four seals belong, yet they must not be entirely restrained and limited to these periods, as if they were not made use of in others; so though the Gospel proceeded with remarkable success under the first seal, in the times of the apostles, to the subduing of multitudes in the Roman empire, it was also preached with great success under the following seals;

and though there were most grievous wars under the second seal, in the times of Trajan and Adrian, so there were also in after times; that was not the only period of war, though it was remarkably so; likewise there was a famine in the times of Claudius, under the first seal, (<sup><4112></sup>Acts 11:28); and in the time of Trajan, under the second seal <sup>f191</sup>, and of Commodus <sup>f192</sup> as well as under the third; and there were pestilences also in those times, as well as under the fourth seal; and because God did by each of these weaken, break, and at last bring to ruin that empire, they are showed to John one after another.

**Ver. 9.** *And when he had opened the fifth seal*, etc.] Of the seven seals of the sealed book; here is no beast speaking here, nor horse and rider presented to view; it was now a very dark time both with respect to the church of God and ministry of the word, and the Roman empire. This seal refers to the times of Dioclesian, and the persecution under him; and instead of the voice of one of the living creatures, John hears the voice of martyrs:

*I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain*; these include not only all the martyrs that were put to death in the persecution of Dioclesian, but all those that suffered in all the persecutions preceding; for this, being the last, involves them all. “Souls”, being immaterial and incorporeal, are invisible to the bodily eye; these therefore were either clothed with corporeal forms, as angels sometimes are, or rather John saw them in a visionary way, as he saw the angels: and these were the souls of such as “were slain”; their bodies were dead, but their souls were alive; which shows the immortality of souls, and that they die not with their bodies, and that they live after them in a separate state: *yl wj qd ^ytmçn*, “the souls of them that are slain”, is a phrase used by Jewish writers <sup>f193</sup>, and who have a notion that the souls of those that are slain are kept in certain palaces, under the care of one appointed by God <sup>f194</sup>: and these were seen “under the altar”; either this is said in allusion to the blood of the sacrifices, which was poured out at the bottom of the altar, (<sup><4047></sup>Leviticus 4:7 5:9), in which the life and soul of the creature is; or because that martyrdom is a sacrifice of men's lives, and an offering of them in the cause of God and truth, (<sup><3807></sup>Philippians 2:17 <sup><3807></sup>2 Timothy 4:7); or with some reference to a common notion of the Jews, that the souls of the righteous are treasured up under the throne of glory <sup>f195</sup> they have also a saying, everyone that is buried in the land of Israel is as if he was buried “under the altar” <sup>f196</sup>; for they think that being buried there expiates their sins <sup>f197</sup>; to which they add,

that whoever is buried “under the altar”, is as if he was buried under the throne of glory<sup>f198</sup>; yea, they talk of an altar above, upon which Michael the high priest causes the souls of the righteous to ascend<sup>f199</sup>. Christ may be meant by the altar here, as he is in (<sup>3810</sup>Hebrews 13:10), who is both altar, sacrifice, and priest, and is the altar that sanctifies the gift, and from off which every sacrifice of prayer and praise comes up with acceptance before God; and the souls of the martyrs being under this altar, denotes their being in the presence of Christ, and enjoying communion with him, and being in his hands, into whose hands they commit their souls at death, as Stephen did, and being under his care and protection until the resurrection morn, when they shall be reunited to their bodies which sleep in Jesus: and they were slain

*for the word of God*; both for the essential Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose faith they professed; and for the written word, they made the rule of their faith and practice, and which Dioclesian forbid the reading of, and sought utterly to destroy; and for the Gospel principally, which is contained in it:

*and for the testimony which they held*; the Syriac and Arabic versions read, “for the testimony of the Lamb”; and so the Complutensian edition; either for the Gospel, which is a testimony of the person, office, and grace of Christ, the Lamb, which they embraced, professed, and held fast; or for the witness they bore to him, and the profession which they made thereof, and in which they continued.

**Ver. 10.** *And they cried with a loud voice*, etc.] With great ardour and fervency, being very pressing and importunate; and which shows that they were awake, and not asleep, and that the soul does not sleep with the body in the grave, or is after the death of that in a state of insensibility and inactivity, as some imagine:

*saying, how long, O Lord, holy and true*; the person they address is either the Lamb in the midst of the throne, with whom they were, and under the shelter of whom they were safe and happy; or God the Father, who sat upon the throne, whom they call “holy”, because being so in his nature, and as appears in all his works, he could not but hate, and so revenge the evil that was done to them by their cruel persecutors; and whereas he is “true” to all his threatenings, as well as his promises, and faithful to every word of his, they doubted not but he would judge and avenge them of their

enemies; but they seem desirous to know how long it would be first: saying,

*dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?* the men of the world, idolatrous persons, earthly princes, who had shed their blood; and which they desire not out of any sinful or malicious affection, but that the holiness and justice of God might appear, and also his truth and faithfulness in his promises to them, and threatenings to his enemies; and that God in all things might be glorified, and his church and people on earth might be supported and delivered; (see <sup><182412></sup>Job 24:12).

**Ver. 11.** *And white robes were given to everyone of them,* etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read in the singular number, “a white robe”, and so does the Syriac version; as a token of their innocence, that they did not suffer, or were slain, for any capital crime or immorality they were guilty of; and of their purity and perfection they now enjoyed; as also of that spiritual delight and pleasure, which was unspeakable and full of glory, they now had in the presence of God and Christ; and in short, of that happiness and glory which souls in a separate state, before the resurrection morn, are partakers of; who besides the righteousness of Christ, comparable to fine linen clean and white, walk with Christ in white, in the shining robes of bliss and glory:

*and it was said unto them, that they should rest;* or have rest; eternal rest from all their toil and labour, from all their sorrows and sufferings of every kind, which rest remains for the people of God, and into which these were now entered; or that they should cease from expostulating and inquiring after the above manner, and rest satisfied and contented, exercising the graces of faith, hope, and patience, believing, looking, and waiting:

*yet for a little season;* either until the end of this persecution by Dioclesian, when vengeance would be taken of the Roman empire, and it would be no more as Pagan; or until the day of judgment, when full vengeance will be inflicted on the persecutors of the saints; and which is but a little while with God, with whom a thousand years is as one day, and in comparison of that eternity of blessedness glorified saints are partakers of:

*until their fellow servants also, and their brethren, that should be killed as they [were], should be fulfilled;* meaning either the rest of the saints that should suffer martyrdom in the following part of this persecution; or those who should suffer under the Arian persecution, when the empire would



become Christian; or under Rome Papal, and in all the persecutions of the apostasy, unto the end of that state: these are called “fellow servants” and “brethren” of the saints in heaven; for they all worship and serve the same God, and belong to the same family, in heaven and in earth; and the selfsame reason that is made use of to animate the saints below to courage, faith, and patience in suffering, (<sup><118></sup>1 Peter 5:9), is used to keep up the expectation of the saints in heaven, of that vengeance that will be executed on their enemies, and to point out the time when it will be; and it may be observed, that the number of martyrs, or of those that shall suffer and die in the cause of Christ, and for his Gospel, is fixed and determined by God; and that number shall be perfected and completed, and when that is done, he will pour out all his wrath on them that have persecuted them and put them to death: and so the Arabic version renders it, “that the number of their companions and brethren, and of those who are to be killed as they have been killed, is fulfilled”; In the Apocrypha is written:

“39 Which are departed from the shadow of the world, and have received glorious garments of the Lord. 40 Take thy number, O Sion, and shut up those of thine that are clothed in white, which have fulfilled the law of the Lord. 41 The number of thy children, whom thou longedst for, is fulfilled: beseech the power of the Lord, that thy people, which have been called from the beginning, may be hallowed.” (2 Esdras 2)

Now though this seal does not introduce any judgment to be executed on the Roman empire, as the others do; yet since it introduces all the martyrs with one united voice requiring vengeance on their blood, it may very well be considered as a step towards, and as making way for, the utter ruin of that empire: and which the next seal being opened brings on, and is a full answer to the cry of these souls.

**Ver. 12.** *And I beheld when he had opened the sixth seal,* etc.] Of the sealed book which the Lamb took out of the hand of him that sat upon the throne, in order to open it, and unloose its seals. About this seal interpreters much differ; some refer this to the destruction of Jerusalem, because of the likeness of expressions here used, and in (<sup><124></sup>Matthew 24:7,29 <sup><125></sup>Luke 21:25,26 23:29,30); but this was past many years before this seal was opened; and besides, though that time was a day of wrath to the uttermost upon the Jewish people, and it was the Lamb's day of wrath, taking vengeance on them for their unbelief and rejection of him as the



Messiah; yet they had no sense of the Lamb, nor any apprehension of his wrath at that time, nor have they now, but imputed their calamity to their divisions and quarrels among themselves. Others think this seal belongs to the destruction of the Roman empire by the Goths, Huns, Vandals, etc. but it should be observed, that the empire stood some hundreds of years after the end of the fifth seal and the opening of this; and it was after the seventh seal, and at the sounding of the trumpets, that that destruction came on; moreover, that calamity was by the savageness of some barbarous nations which overrun the empire, but this here spoken of comes from the wrath of the Lamb; add to which, that that calamity distressed the Christians in the empire, and them chiefly, whereas this falls only upon the enemies of the Lamb, and the persecutors of his people. Others are of opinion that this has respect to the strange change of affairs in the church of Christ, through the rise, power, and tyranny of antichrist; by “the earthquake” they suppose is meant the shaking of both church and state by the man of sin; who shook the doctrines, ordinances, and discipline of the church, and threw all into confusion, and introduced a new face of things; and also shook the kingdoms of the earth, and the thrones and crowns of princes: by the “sun” becoming “black”, they think is meant the sun of righteousness, Jesus Christ, who was obscured in the doctrines concerning him, as the one and only Mediator, and justification by his righteousness, and pardon through his blood, by introducing the mediation of angels and saints, the doctrine of justification by works, and the doctrine of merit, works of supererogation, indulgences, pardons, penance, and purgatory: by the “moon” they understand the church, which receives all its light, grace, righteousness, and holiness, from Christ, and which, like the moon, is changeable as to its outward form and circumstances; and this became “as blood”, through the persecutions, massacres, and cruelties of the Romish antichrist, who has been made drunk with the blood of the saints and martyrs of Jesus: the “stars” they take to be the ministers of the word; either hypocritical ones, who were like unripe figs, destitute of true grace, and so were easily shaken with the wind of Papal power, and fell into the earth, and apostatized from the faith, and conformed to the corruptions of antichrist; or the true ministers of the Gospel, who were put to death, and that to an untimely and violent one, signified by the shaking of untimely figs by a mighty wind: by the “heaven” departing as a scroll rolled up, they suppose is designed either the church, which fled into the wilderness, and remained invisible during the Papal power and cruelty; or else the Scriptures, which the pope made himself sole judge and interpreter of and shut up from the

common people in an unknown language, and forbid the laity the reading of them: by “mountains” they think are intended the kings and princes of the earth, who were obliged to submit to the Romish antichrist, and give their kingdoms to him, and receive their crowns and kingdoms from him, and be his vassals: and by “the islands”, the people their subjects, who were forced to acknowledge him as the supreme head, and receive his mark in their right hand or forehead, or they could not buy and sell: and by all ranks and degrees of men, as “kings”, etc. hiding themselves in rocks and mountains, and calling upon them to fall on them and cover them, they apply either to their invoking the virgin Mary, and other saints, to intercede for them, and screen them from the wrath of God and Christ, on account of their sins; or else to the persecutors of the saints, of every rank and in every age, and to the punishments that shall fall upon them. But however feasible this interpretation may seem to be, it is certain that this was not the face of things at the close of the fifth seal, or the Dioclesian persecution, and at the opening of the sixth, when Constantine came to the imperial throne, for then the church appeared as she is described in (~~Rev~~ Revelation 12:1); which is just the reverse of this. There are others, who because of the very awful things here spoken of, and the very awful language in which they are expressed, conclude that this seal respects the day of judgment; not considering that the fifth seal ends about the year 313, at the close of the last of the ten persecutions, and that the sixth seal begins where that ends; and though above 1750 years have elapsed since that time, yet the day of judgment is not come, and we know not when it will; besides, here is another seal, a seventh seal, which follows, and introduces punishments on the Roman empire, and seven vials follow, which pour out plagues upon antichrist, all which can never be thought to be after the day of judgment; moreover, the account of the day of judgment stands in its proper place in (~~Rev~~ Revelation 20:12); after the destruction of Babylon, the first resurrection, and the saints' thousand years' reign with Christ. But to proceed; the business which is the subject of this seal is the removing of Paganism, and Pagan governors out of the Roman empire; this was the thing the rider upon the white horse, under the first seal, set out upon to effect, and never ceased until he had accomplished it; and this is what ensued upon the close of the fifth seal, when Pagan persecution ceased, on Constantine, a Christian emperor, having the reins of power in his hands; and it cannot be thought, that so wonderful a change of things as this should be omitted in this prophetic history; and it is easy to observe that changes in kingdoms and governments, both as to the polity and religion of

them, are sometimes expressed in such like figurative terms as here; (see <sup><313></sup>Isaiah 13:9,10,13,17,19 34:4,5 <sup><312></sup>Haggai 2:21,22); and which may be accommodated to this event as follows:

*and, lo, there was a great earthquake*; or “shaking”, both of the heavens and earth, and which, as it denotes in (<sup><316></sup>Haggai 2:6,7); compared with (<sup><315></sup>Hebrews 12:26,27); the removing of Jewish worship and ordinances, in order to make way for the Christian ordinances and institutions, which were to remain; so here it intends the removing of Pagan worship and idolatry, and of Pagan magistrates, that the Christian religion and Christian magistrates might take place. This, with what follows, concerning the darkness of the sun and moon, might be literally true; and it seems by historians, that there were such phenomena about those times; for it is asserted <sup>f200</sup>, that a very great earthquake in Syria followed the Dioclesian persecution, which shook and caused to fall the tops of houses at Tyre and Sidon, and killed many thousands; and some such like happened at Rome, and at Spoletum, where above three hundred and fifty Pagans perished, as they were serving their idols. It is also observed <sup>f201</sup>, that the moon was turned into blood in the times of Galerius, who succeeded. Dioclesian; and that the sun failed, and the stars shined for four hours, when Licinius was conquered by Constantine; but then these may be considered as symbols of the change in the empire.

*And the sun came black as sackcloth of hair*; which is made of black hairs; (see <sup><318></sup>Isaiah 50:3); as when eclipsed. The sun was the chief deity worshipped by the Heathens, under various names, and this becoming black, may design the removing of their principal gods from their honour and glory, or the downfall of idolatry, which the Jews <sup>f202</sup> call *hrz hdwb* [ *l ç hçmç*, “the sun of idolatry”, which they suppose is meant in (<sup><216></sup>Song of Solomon 1:6). And Satan, the god of this world, who was worshipped in different forms, now fell, as Lucifer, the son of the morning, and as lightning from heaven, and was cast down from all his dignity, influence, and power, to the earth; for the casting out of the red dragon, the old serpent, and Satan, after his combat with Michael and his angels, in (<sup><613></sup>Revelation 12:3,7-9), refers to this very time; likewise the chief magistrate, the Heathen Roman emperor, may be included; and it is remarkable, that Dioclesian the emperor, who had now retired from the imperial government, and was under a cloud, under disgrace, and in

distress, had, in the zenith of his glory, caused himself to be worshipped as a god, and as the brother of the sun and moon.

*And the moon became as blood*; as when obscured; the Alexandrian copy and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, “the whole moon”; this may design the next Heathen deity, or class of deities, for the moon was also worshipped by the Heathens under different names; and may likewise include the Pagan priesthood, which was next, and was annexed to the imperial dignity; and which was disused by, Constantine and his successors; and even the very title, and the robe which was a symbol of it, were laid aside as unworthy of Christian princes; see Mede upon the place.

**Ver. 13.** *And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth*, etc.] All the other inferior deities lost their esteem, worship, and honour; for the idol temples being now opened, the idols and statues were exposed to the common people, and were found to be stuffed with hay and straw, which brought them into great contempt <sup>f203</sup>. Moreover, as stars sometimes signify the ministers of the Gospel in the Christian church, (~~f113~~ Revelation 1:20), and sometimes the priests in the Jewish church, (~~2080~~ Daniel 8:10); so they may here likewise include the idolatrous priests among the Heathens, who were discharged and removed by Constantine, and had their posts and profits taken away from them; yea, Maximinus, an Heathen emperor, or tyrant, being beaten by Licinius, who was then Constantine's colleague, killed many of the priests and prophets of his gods, which were formerly had in great admiration by him, as deceivers and betrayers of him, by whose oracles he was animated to the war <sup>f204</sup>. And in like manner Licinius put to death the priests and prophets of the new idol at Antioch <sup>f205</sup>.

*Even as a fig tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind*; which figs being young and green, and not fixed, fall off easily, and in great numbers, when a blustering wind beats upon them; and so the rabble of Pagan deities, and idolatrous priests, were easily, and in great numbers, removed through the power of Constantine, which carried all before it.

**Ver. 14.** *And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together*, etc.] The manner of writing formerly was on rolls of parchment; hence the word volume is used for a book, which, when rolled up, the writing within could not be seen, not a syllable nor letter of it. In like manner the Roman empire, as Pagan, which was like a large sheet, or rather like the expanse

or firmament of the heaven, stretched out over all the earth, was now, as to the Paganism of it, rolled up together, so that there were no more Heathen gods, nor Heathen priests; no more idolatry, and idolatrous worship of that kind were to be seen, and not so much as the names of Heathen gods to be heard of in the empire.

*And every mountain and island were moved out of their places*; by “every mountain” may be meant the places of idolatrous worship, which were usually upon mountains; (see <sup>24R6</sup>Jeremiah 3:6,23); which were now shut up, or demolished, or used for Christian worship; and “every island” being moved also may show, that Paganism was not only rooted out of the provinces of the empire upon the continent, but out of the islands also; and the ecclesiastical history of these times informs us, that there were Christian churches in the isles, which enjoyed the Gospel free of persecution and distress; as in the isles of Cyprus, Crete, the Cyclades, Sardinia, Siciiy, Corsica, and in ours of England, Scotland, and Ireland <sup>f206</sup>. Mr. Daubuz thinks, that as “mountains” design the temples of idols, “islands” signify the revenues of them, which were now taken away, and applied to other uses.

**Ver. 15.** *And the king's of the earth, and the great men*, etc.] The Roman emperors, and other principal magistrates, governors of provinces and cities:

*and the rich men*; among the commonalty; these three may design perhaps more particularly the emperors, nobles, and senate of Rome: and

*the chief captains*; or captains of thousands, that had the command of the Roman legions

*and the mighty men*; the soldiers that were under them, men of strength, courage, and valour;

*and every bondman, and every freeman*; which takes in all the inhabitants of the Roman empire, of every state and condition, and which was an usual distinction among the Romans: these

*hid themselves in the dens, and in the rocks of the mountains*; where, through their cruel persecutions, they had forced multitudes of Christians to flee, and therefore, “lex talionis”, the law of retaliation was righteously inflicted on them; and not to take notice of any other, this was remarkably true of their kings or emperors Dioclesian and Herculus Maximianus, who

were emperors together, in the height of their imperial glory and grandeur, the one being at Nicomedia, and the other at Milan, did, on one and the same day, of their own accord, abdicate the empire, and divested themselves of their imperial crown and government, and retired to a private life; pretending in public, that old age, and the weight of business, were the cause, but to their friends they owned, that it was through despair, because they could not extinguish the Christian religion <sup>f207</sup>. Some ascribed this to frenzy and madness <sup>f208</sup>; but the true reason was, that the wrath of the Lamb was let into their consciences, and which they could not bear, and which obliged them to take this step, to the amazement of the whole world. Maximinus, who succeeded them, being overcome by Licinius, laid aside his imperial habit, and hid himself among the common people, and skulked about in fields and villages <sup>f209</sup>. Maxentius, another emperor, fled from Constantine, the instrument of the wrath of the Lamb, and the pouring it out upon his enemies, and fell into the river Tiber, from the Mylvian bridge, where he perished; and which was the very place in which he had laid snares for Constantine <sup>f210</sup>.

**Ver. 16.** *And said to the mountains and rocks, fall on us,* etc.] They chose death rather than life. Dioclesian being invited by Constantine to a marriage feast, excused himself by reason of his old age; but receiving threatening letters, the historian <sup>f211</sup> says, in which he was charged with having favoured Maxentius, and with favouring Maximinus, he poisoned himself; and others of the emperors are said to lay violent hands upon themselves:

*and hide us from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb;* thus they owned the proper deity, and almighty power of God, and Christ, which they dreaded; so Maximinus being afflicted with a most horrible disease, of which he died, asked pardon of the God of the Christians, and owned that he suffered justly, for his reproaches of Christ <sup>f212</sup>. Licinius, who sometimes pretended to be a Christian, and joined with Constantine, but afterwards revolted and fought against him, being conquered and taken, was put to death; at which time he, and they that suffered death with him, confessed that the God of Constantine was the only true God <sup>f213</sup>. This passage shows, that Christ, God's firstborn, is higher than the kings of the earth; yea, that he is equal with him that sits upon the throne, with God his Father, since his wrath is equally dreaded as his; and that, though he is a Lamb, mild, meek, and gentle, yet there is wrath, fury, and indignation in him, against his enemies, which is very dreadful and intolerable; (see <sup><4922></sup>Psalm 2:12).

**Ver. 17.** *For the great day of his wrath is come*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, “of their wrath”; both of him that sits upon the throne, and of the Lamb, against the Heathen gods and Heathen persecutors, in answer to the cry of the martyrs in (~~the~~ Revelation 6:9,10).

*And who shall be able to stand?* against either of them, or in their presence, and so as to bear their wrath and displeasure; all which expresses guilt, shame, fear, and despair.

# CHAPTER 7

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 7

This chapter contains a vision seen at the end of the sixth, and at the opening of the seventh seal, which expresses the security of the saints in all ages following, the praises of angels and men on that account, and the happiness of all the people of God in the millennium state. First, a vision of four angels is seen restraining the winds from blowing on the earth, sea, and trees, (<sup><6601></sup>Revelation 7:1); then of another angel, described by the place from whence he came, the east; by what he had, the seal of the living God, and by his cry to the four angels not to hurt the earth, sea, and trees, until the servants of God were sealed, (<sup><6602></sup>Revelation 7:2,3), and then follows the number of the sealed ones in general, (<sup><6604></sup>Revelation 7:4), and the particular number of them out of each tribe of Israel, (<sup><6605></sup>Revelation 7:5-8). After which is another vision of all the elect of God together, described by the numberless multitude of them; by their descent from all nations; by their position and situation before the throne, and the Lamb; by their habit and attire, and by their loud cry, ascribing salvation to God, and to the Lamb, (<sup><6609></sup>Revelation 7:9,10), who are joined by all the angels around them, worshipping God, and ascribing glory to him, (<sup><6611></sup>Revelation 7:11,12). And next is described the happiness of this numerous company, in the thousand years' reign, introduced by some discourse which passed between John, and one of the elders, (<sup><6613></sup>Revelation 7:13,14), who are said to be before the throne, to serve God continually, and to have his presence, (<sup><6615></sup>Revelation 7:15), to be free from everything troublesome and distressing, (<sup><6616></sup>Revelation 7:16), and to be fed by the Lamb, and to be led by him to fountains of living water, and to have all their tears wiped away from them, (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 7:17).

**Ver. 1.** *And after these things*, etc.] After the opening of six of the seals of the sealed book, and after the demolition of Heathen deities, and of Heathen worship, and of Heathen magistrates, in the Roman empire, and the representation of these to John, he had the following vision; and which therefore does not refer to the preservation of the Christians, before and at the destruction of Jerusalem, which was under the first seal; nor to the



security of the saints from the wrath of the Lamb, when it fell upon the Pagan worshippers, of all ranks and degrees, which was under the sixth seal, and was now over; but rather it respects an intermediate space of time between the sixth and seventh seal, as reaching from Constantine to Theodosius; for upon Constantine's being sole emperor, the church enjoyed great peace and tranquillity after the blustering storms of Pagan persecution ceased; and great numbers of God's elect were converted and sealed, and the winds of Heathen persecution were held, and blew no more, unless for a short time under the Emperor Julian; though the church was not free from the wind of error and heresy; and the storms of contention which arose about them, nor from the tempest of Arian persecutions, which were very grievous; wherefore this refers to what should be between the sixth and seventh seal, which brings on the seven trumpets: and now, before John sees that seal opened, a pause is made, and this vision is shown him, to fortify his mind, and all other saints, that are observers of these things, who by the opening of the following seal would see what judgments and plagues would come upon the empire, now become Christian, and what changes and revolutions would be made in it, and might fear that the church of God would be wholly swallowed up and lost; wherefore this vision is exhibited to show, that notwithstanding the devastations by the Goths and Vandals, and the rise, progress, and power of Mahomet, and the dreadful apostasy of the church of Rome, and all the miseries of it, and the plagues that should come upon the church for it; yet God would have throughout all this, and in, every age of time, a sealed number, a true church, hidden and secured, even until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet, and time shall be no more, and the mystery of God will be finished.

*I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any trees.* Four angels are mentioned, in allusion to the four spirits of the heavens, in (<sup>3085</sup>Zechariah 6:5); and though the earth is not a plain square with angles, but round and globular, yet it is said to have four corners, with respect to the four points of the heavens; and though there is but one wind, which blows sometimes one way, and sometimes another, yet four are named with regard to the above points, east, west, north, and south, from whence it blows. These are commonly called “the four winds of heaven”, (<sup>2708</sup>Daniel 8:8 11:4); but here, of the earth, as in the Targum on (<sup>2311</sup>Isaiah 11:12), and he shall bring near the captivity of Judah, a[ra

yj wr [bram, “from the four winds of the earth”. And such things as are chiefly affected with winds are particularly observed, as the earth, upon which buildings are thrown down by them; and the sea, in which ships are wrecked; and trees, which by the violence of them, are blown down, and torn up by the roots. Some by these angels understand evil angels, who are sometimes called angels, without any additional epithet to distinguish them, and that because a desire of hurting seems to have been in them, as well as a power, (<sup><661D></sup>Revelation 7:2,3); and who are, in every part of the world, seeking to do all the mischief they can; and may be said to hold the winds, not in a literal sense, for God only gathers the wind in his fist, and holds it there, and lets it loose at his pleasure; but in a mystical sense, as these may refer to the word, and the ministers of the word, whose progress and success are often hindered by Satan and his emissaries; and some particularly understand by them the four monarchies of the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian, and Roman; others the four emperors, after that Dioclesian and Maximianus had resigned, as Maximinus, Galerius, Maxentius, and Licinius; others Mahomet, or the Turk, in the east, who hindered the Gospel by his wars and devastations, as well as by false worship; the kings of France and Spain on the west, by fire, and faggot, and sword; and the pope in the south, by bulls and excommunications; and the empire and emperors of Germany on the north, by public edicts; or, in general, all the Popish tribe, popes, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, by their decrees, anathemas, sermons, writings, and lying miracles, did all they could that the Gospel might not be preached neither in the earth, on the continent, nor in the sea, or in the islands of it; or that any of the saints, the trees of righteousness, who lived in woods and mountainous places, or were forced to fly into woods, might have any advantage by it. But, after all, rather this is to be understood of good angels, and either of their restraining evil angels from doing mischief, (see <sup><270B></sup>Daniel 10:13,20,21) (<sup><661D></sup>Revelation 12:4,7); or keeping back the winds of false doctrines and heresies from the churches of Christ, in the several parts of the world; or rather, and which is the true sense, of their holding in the storms of calamities and war to the destruction of kingdoms, provinces, islands, and the several inhabitants of them, and intends a general peace throughout the world; (see <sup><248B></sup>Jeremiah 49:36 51:1,2). This mystical way of speaking seems to agree with the notions of the Jews, who speak of angels standing at the gates of the four winds, j wr yj tpmw “and the keys of the wind in their hands”, whose names they give us <sup>f214</sup>; and make

mention of *aj wr ykal m*, “the angels of the wind”<sup>f215</sup>; and the Magi among the Persians call the angel of the wind “Bad”, or “Badran”<sup>f216</sup>.

**Ver. 2.** *And I saw another angel*, etc.] Not Constantine, who came from the eastern parts to the empire, with the true knowledge of God, and the authority of God to propagate it; and who repressed the four angels, or evil spirits, contention, ambition, heresy, and war, from doing the mischief they otherwise would; and sealed the saints, by giving them a platform of doctrine at the council of Nice, as Brightman and others think. But the uncreated angel, the angel of the covenant, the Lord Jesus Christ; for who but he should have the privy seal of heaven, who is the angel of the great council, as the Septuagint render (<sup><3806></sup>Isaiah 9:6) and who could speak in such an authoritative manner to the four angels, “saying, hurt not the earth”, etc. but he who is the head of all principality and power? and who should seal the servants of the Lord, but he who has them in his hands, and keeps them by his power, so that none of them shall perish? And to him agrees all that follows:

*ascending from the east*; from Judea, from Zion, from whence Christ, as the salvation, or Saviour of Israel, came, (<sup><3947></sup>Psalms 14:7); and whose name is the east, as some render (<sup><3808></sup>Zechariah 3:8); he is the dayspring from on high, the sun of righteousness, who rose from the east, the place of the rising sun, and brought light, life, and joy to his people, when he came to seal them. Compare with this (<sup><3601></sup>Ezekiel 43:1,2,4 44:1-4 46:1,2) (<sup><3601></sup>Ezekiel 47:1).

*Having the seal of the living God*; having the impress of deity upon him, being the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image or character of his person; having a testimony, an authentic proof and demonstration of his being the Son of God, of his being the true and living God; as also a commission from God, as Mediator, being sealed by him; and having all power and authority from him, to seal and secure the people which were given unto him, and for which purpose he now came: to which may be added, that Christ has the Spirit, with his gifts and graces, without measure, by which the saints are sealed unto the day of redemption; and moreover has likewise the seal of the book of life, or of eternal election, in his hands; the elect are chosen in him, and the book of life, in which their names are written to eternal life, is in his keeping, and is therefore called the Lamb's book of life. The Jews speak<sup>f217</sup> of the east gate of one of the palaces they suppose above, which they say is shut all the six days, and on

the sabbath day is opened, and the governor of this palace has two ministers, one on his right hand, and one on his left, and two seals in their hands,  $\mu\upsilon\upsilon\eta\ \mu\tau\omega\eta$  , “the seal of life”, and the seal of death, and all the books of the world, before them; an, some are sealed to life, and some to death, with which this passage may be compared. They speak also of an angel that presides at the eastern part of the heavens, who receives the prayers of the Israelites, whose name they call “Gazardia”<sup>f218</sup>, as this same angel is said to offer up the prayers of the saints, (~~affRB~~ Revelation 8:3).

*And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels*; to show his power and authority over them, they being his creatures and ministers; and to express his great concern for his people, his care of them, and affection for them; and to signify the danger they were in through the calamities that were coming on, should they not be sealed:

*to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea*: they had a commission from God to let loose the winds, or to bring on wars, devastations, calamities, and plagues, of various sorts, upon the Roman empire, now Christian; and on the seat of the beast, not only on the continent, but upon the islands also, even upon all the nations, tongues, and people subject to the see of Rome.

**Ver. 3.** *Saying, hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees*, etc.] That is, as yet, for their commission was not contradicted, nor taken away by Christ; and at the time appointed, at the blowing of the several trumpets, they let loose the winds, and let in the Goths, Hans, and Vandals, the Saracens and Turks into the empire, and after that poured out the vials of God's wrath upon the Romish antichrist: this retarding of them was but in appearance, that there might be an opportunity to show to John what care would be taken all along of the church of Christ, and true servants of the living God:

*till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads*; the servants of sin, Satan, and the beast of Rome, were took no notice nor care of; they were the persons to be hurt by the winds, signified by the earth, sea, and trees, even idolaters, small and great; but “the servants of our God”, who serve him with grace in their hearts, from a principle of love, in the exercise of faith, without servile fear, and with reverence and godly fear, in righteousness and true holiness, and with a view to his glory; and are worshippers of him in spirit and in truth, being followers of the Lamb,

whithersoever he goes; and so are the servants of his God, and their God; the sealing of them does not design the sealing of them with the seal of election, this was done in eternity; nor with the seal of the Spirit, which is common to all the saints in all ages; but it denotes the hiding and concealing, and so securing the saints amidst all the calamities of the empire, and throughout the whole time of the Romish apostasy, from first to last; and respects the time when the church fled into the wilderness, and was hid, and nourished with the hidden manna, for a time, and times, and half a time, (<sup>f124</sup> Revelation 12:14). Christ set a mark upon them, as was upon the houses of the Israelites, when the destroying angel passed through Egypt, and destroyed the firstborn in it; and as was upon the foreheads of those that sighed and cried in Jerusalem, when orders were given to slay young and old, (<sup>f123</sup> Exodus 12:23 <sup>f104</sup> Ezekiel 9:4). Christ will have a people in the worst of times; he knows who are his, and he will take care of them; he has his chambers of protection to hide them in, till the indignation is over past: the sealers, “we”, are either Father, Son, and Spirit, who are all jointly concerned for the welfare of the elect; or Christ and his ministering angels that attend him, whom he employs for the good and safety of the heirs of salvation: the seal with which these are sealed is the seal of the living God, the foreknowledge, love, care, and power of God; and the name of God, even Christ's Father's name, and their Father's name, in their foreheads; the new name of children of God, by and under which they are known and preserved by him: and this is said to be “in their foreheads”, in allusion to servants, who used to be marked in their foreheads; hence they are called by Apuleius <sup>f219</sup> “frontes literati”; and by Martial, a servant is called “fronte notatus” <sup>f220</sup>: but then these were such who had committed faults, and this was done by way of punishment <sup>f221</sup>; wherefore it can hardly be thought that the servants of God should be sealed, in allusion to them: but rather with reference to the mitre on the high priest's forehead, as some think; or it may be to (<sup>f104</sup> Ezekiel 9:4), and shows, that though these persons were hid and concealed from men, they were well known to God and Christ; nor were they ashamed to make a public and open confession of Christ before men, as did the true and faithful witnesses of Christ, the Waldenses and Albigenes, in the midst of the greatest darkness of Popery, and of danger from men; and who seem to be chiefly intended.

**Ver. 4.** *And I heard the number of them which were sealed*, etc.] And therefore could be sure of the exact number, which did not depend upon

his sight, and telling them, in which some mistake might have been made, but he heard the number expressed:

*[and there were] sealed an hundred [and] forty, [and] four thousand:* which is a square number arising from twelve, the square root of it, being just twelve times twelve thousand; and may denote their being the true and genuine offspring of the twelve apostles of the Lamb, holding their doctrine, and being built on their foundation; (see <sup><6214></sup>Revelation 21:14); and these were

*of all the tribes of the children of Israel;* not that these were all Jews in a literal sense, for the time of their conversion in great numbers is not yet come. Dr. Goodwin thinks these sealed ones design the believers of the Greek and Armenian churches, and his reasons are not despicable; but this is to limit and restrain them to a particular part of the church of Christ; whereas they take in all the saints within this long tract of time, even all that are the true Israel of God, who are Jews inwardly, of what nation, kindred, tongue, and people soever; and is a certain and determinate number for an uncertain and indeterminate one; and only intends a large number of persons known to God and Christ; see the Apocrypha: ``Arise up and stand, behold the number of those that be sealed in the feast of the Lord;’’ (2 Esdras 2:38)

**Ver. 5.** *Of the tribe of Judah [were] sealed twelve thousand,* etc.] Judah is mentioned first, because Christ sprung from that tribe, and the pure worship of God was preserved in it; and that itself was preserved a distinct tribe until the coming of Shiloh; its name signifies “praise God”, (<sup><0235></sup>Genesis 29:35); and shows, that it becomes all the sealed ones, all true believers, and every member of the church of God, to praise him for all favours and blessings, temporal, spiritual, and eternal.

*Of the tribe of Reuben [were] sealed twelve thousand;* Reuben was Jacob's firstborn, but by his sin he lost the honour and privilege of birthright, and therefore is mentioned after Judah, who prevailed above him and the rest of his brethren; his name signifies “see the Son”, (<sup><0232></sup>Genesis 29:32); and shows that the Son of God is to be looked unto for righteousness, life, and salvation, by all that expect to be saved, and to him does the true church look for eternal life and happiness.

*Of the tribe of Gad [were] sealed twelve thousand;* his name signifies a “troop”, (<sup><0311></sup>Genesis 30:11), and may denote that there would be a

numerous company of saints and faithful witnesses during the time of sealing, and amidst all the troubles and afflictions that would attend the church and people of God, and who in the issue would be conquerors, and more than conquerors, through Christ; (see <sup><0409></sup>Genesis 49:19).

**Ver. 6.** *Of the tribe of Aser [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] “Asher”, which the Septuagint pronounce “Aser”, as here, signifies “blessed”, (<sup><0303></sup>Genesis 30:13); as all the sealed ones are, blessed with all spiritual blessings, with grace here, and glory hereafter.

*Of the tribe of Nephthalim [were] sealed twelve thousand*; the name of this tribe signifies “wrestlings”, (<sup><0308></sup>Genesis 30:8); and may design the wrestlings of saints, both with God in prayer, and with their enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, and also their strivings together for the faith of the Gospel.

*Of the tribe of Manasses [were] sealed twelve thousand*; this word signifies “forgetting”, (<sup><0451></sup>Genesis 41:51); and shows that the followers of Christ should forget the things that are behind, their sinful lusts and pleasures, the onions and garlic in Egypt, and their former company and acquaintance, their own people, and their father's house, and all their labours and sufferings for the sake of Christ.

**Ver. 7.** *Of the tribe of Simeon [were] sealed twelve thousand*, etc.] The name of this tribe signifies “hearing”, (<sup><0283></sup>Genesis 29:33); and such an hearing as is attended with obedience; and denotes the spiritual and practical hearing of the Gospel by those who hear, and understand, and believe, and practise what they hear, and yield the obedience of faith unto it.

*Of the tribe of Levi [were] sealed twelve thousand*; this name signifies “joined”, (<sup><0284></sup>Genesis 29:34); and denotes, that these sealed ones were not only joined one to another in love and holy fellowship, but to Christ, and were one spirit with him, and were members of his body, flesh, and bones, and cleaved to him with full purpose of heart.

*Of the tribe of Issachar [were] sealed twelve thousand*; the interpretation of this name is “hire” or “reward”, (<sup><0305></sup>Genesis 30:18); and may design those rewards of grace which God bestows upon his faithful servants, in times of tribulation.



**Ver. 8.** *Of the tribe of Zabulon [were] sealed twelve thousand, etc.]*

Which signifies “dwelling”, (<sup><0630></sup>Genesis 30:20); and was the tribe in which Christ had his dwelling, and where he much conversed; and may denote his gracious inhabitation, as well as that of God the Father, and of the Spirit, among the saints and sealed ones.

*Of the tribe of Joseph [were] sealed twelve thousand;* whose name signifies “adding”, (<sup><0634></sup>Genesis 30:24); and may intend the additions both of numbers, and of gifts and graces to the churches of those times.

*Of the tribe of Benjamin [were] sealed twelve thousand;* this word signifies “the Son of the right hand”, (<sup><0518></sup>Genesis 35:18); showing, that these sealed ones are as a signet on God's right hand, and are as near and dear unto him as a man's right hand is to him; (see <sup><4907></sup>Psalms 80:17). Now twelve thousand out of each tribe make just the number of a hundred forty and four thousand, (<sup><6704></sup>Revelation 7:4); the tribe of Dan is not mentioned, it may be because of the apostasy of that tribe, one of Jeroboam's golden calves being set up there; showing that God had no sealed ones of that sort, and instead of him Levi is reckoned; though that tribe had no part in the division of the land of Israel, yet had a part in Christ, and is therefore mentioned in this mystical account. Nor is the name of Ephraim used, it may be for the same reason; there having been a great defection in that tribe from the pure worship of God, and instead of him the name of Joseph appears.

**Ver. 9.** *After this I beheld, etc.]* What follows is a distinct vision from the preceding one, and is not a continuation of that, as if the sealing of the Jewish believers was designed by the former, and the sealing of the Gentiles in this latter; whereas in this vision there is no mention made of sealing, nor was there, or will there be any need of it in the time it refers unto; and which is not the time of the Reformation; nor when the vials began to be poured out upon the seat of the beast; for though there were great numbers converted in many nations, kindreds, people, and tongues, yet not in all; nor do the characters of this great multitude, and the happiness they shall enjoy, seem to suit with persons in a state of mortality and imperfection, (<sup><6714></sup>Revelation 7:14-17); wherefore many interpreters understand this vision of the saints in heaven: but it rather respects the millennium state, or thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints on earth, with which all that is here said agrees; compare (<sup><6714></sup>Revelation 7:14) with (<sup><6104></sup>Revelation 20:4); and (<sup><6715></sup>Revelation 7:15) with (<sup><6213></sup>Revelation 22:3);



and (~~617~~ Revelation 7:16,17) with (~~620~~ Revelation 21:4,6). And the design of this vision is to show to John, and every diligent observer, that after the seventh seal is opened, the trumpets are blown, and the vials poured out; during which time there will be a number sealed that will profess Christ; and at the close and winding up of all things, in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, Christ will descend, and all the saints with him; their bodies will be raised, and the living saints changed, and make one general assembly, who are shown to John here, as in (~~620~~ Revelation 21:9,10); to relieve his mind, and support his spirits, in a view of the calamities ushered in by the opening of the seventh seal.

*And lo, a great multitude, which no man could number*; which design all the elect of God in the new Jerusalem church state, the bride, the Lamb's wife, or the new Jerusalem descending from God out of heaven; these will appear to be a great multitude, not in comparison of the inhabitants that shall have dwelt upon earth, nor of the professors of religion in one shape or another; for, with respect to each of these, they are but a few, a seed, a remnant, a little flock; but as considered in themselves, and so they are many who are ordained to eternal life, whose sins Christ has bore, for whom his blood has been shed, and whom he justifies, and who are called by his grace, and are brought to glory; and who make up such a number as no man can number: God indeed can number them, but not man; for they are a set of particular persons chosen by God, and redeemed by Christ, and who are perfectly and distinctly known by them; their number and names are with them; their names are written in the Lamb's book of life; and God and Christ can, and do call them by their name; and when they were given to Christ, they passed under the rod of him that telleth them; and he will give an exact account of them, of every individual person, another day. But then they are not to be numbered by men; and they will be

*of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues*, and therefore must consist both of Jews and Gentiles; these were not all nations, etc. but "of" all nations, some of all nations; and such God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit calls; God has not chosen all the Jews, but a remnant, according to the election of grace, nor all the Gentiles, but has taken out of them a people for his name; and so Christ has redeemed, by his blood, some out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation, of Jew and Gentile: and hence the Gospel has been sent into all the world, and to all nations, for the gathering of these persons out of them; and when they

are all gathered in, they will all meet together in the new Jerusalem church state, and make up the body here presented to view.

*Stood before the throne and before the Lamb*; the throne of God, and of the Lamb, will be in the midst of the new Jerusalem church; the tabernacle of God will be with men, and he will dwell, among them; and before the presence of his glory will all the saints be presented; and the Lamb will then present to himself his whole church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; and they will behold his glory, and see him as he is: and as they are described before by their number, and their descent, so here by their position and situation, and, as follows, by their habit and attire,

*clothed with white robes*; agreeably to their princely and priestly characters: it was usual for princes and noblemen to be arrayed in vestures of linen, as Joseph was in Pharaoh's court; and the Jewish priests wore garments of linen, in their daily ministry and service; and in the thousand years' reign the saints will appear to be kings and priests, (<sup>6650</sup>Revelation 5:10 20:6); and accordingly will be clothed as such: and this may also be expressive of their entire freedom from sin by the blood of Christ, (<sup>6074</sup>Revelation 7:14); and their complete justification by his righteousness, which is sometimes compared to white raiment, and is called fine linen, clean, and white; and likewise their spotless purity and holiness, sanctification in them being now perfect, which was before imperfect: and these robes may also design their shining robes of glory and immortality; for they will now be clothed upon with their house from heaven, and will have put off mortality and corruption, and have put on immortality and incorruption, and appear with Christ in glory; for such will be the then state of things:

*and palms in their hands*; or branches of palm trees, as in (<sup>6123</sup>John 12:13) as an emblem of their uprightness and faithfulness, which they had shown in the cause of Christ, even unto death, the palm tree being a very upright tree, (<sup>2405</sup>Jeremiah 10:5 <sup>2171</sup>Song of Solomon 7:7); or of their bearing up under a variety of pressures and afflictions, by which they were not cast down and destroyed, but bravely stood up under them, and were now come out of them; the palm tree being of such a nature, as is reported, that the more weight is hung upon it, the higher it rises, and the straighter it grows; (see <sup>1922</sup>Psalms 92:12); and chiefly as an emblem of victory and triumph over their enemies, as sin, Satan, the world and death, which they had been struggling with, in a state of imperfection, but were now more

than conquerors over them; the palm tree is well known to be a token of victory. So Philo the Jew <sup>f222</sup> says, the palm tree is *συμβολον νικης*, “a symbol of victory”. Conquerors used to carry palm tree branches in their hands <sup>f223</sup>: those who conquered in the combats and plays among the Greeks, used not only to have crowns of palm trees given them, but carried branches of it in their hands <sup>f224</sup>; as did also the Romans in their triumphs; yea, they sometimes wore “toga palmata”, a garment with the figures of palm trees on it, which were interwoven in it <sup>f225</sup>: and hence here palms are mentioned along with white garments; and some have been tempted to render the words thus, “clothed with white robes”, and “palms on their sides”; that is, on the sides of their robes <sup>f226</sup>. The medal which was struck by Titus Vespasian, at the taking of Jerusalem, had on it a palm tree, and a captive woman sitting under it, with this inscription on it, “Judaea capta”, Judea is taken. And when our Lord rode in triumph to Jerusalem, the people met him with branches of palm trees in their hands, and cried, Hosanna to him. So the Jews, at the feast of tabernacles, which they kept in commemoration of their having dwelt in tents in the wilderness, carried “Lulabs”, or palm tree branches, in their hands, in token of joy, (<sup>f227</sup>Leviticus 23:40); and in like manner, these being come out of the wilderness of the world, and the tabernacle of God being among them, express their joy in this way; (see Gill on “<sup>f228</sup>John 12:13”).

**Ver. 10.** *And cried with a loud voice*, etc.] To show the strength of their affection, and the greatness of their joy, and how sensible they were of the favour they enjoyed, and how hearty they were in the following ascription of glory to God, and the Lamb.

*Saying, salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb*; by “salvation” is meant, not only temporal salvation, and those many deliverances, which God had wrought for them, and particularly in bringing them out of great tribulation, (<sup>f229</sup>Revelation 7:14); but spiritual and eternal salvation, which is the salvation of the soul, and is owing to the free grace of God, and the blood of Christ; and the sense is, that God and the Lamb are the sole authors of it, and the glory of it ought to be given to them, and to no other: God the Father, who sits upon the throne, resolved upon it in his eternal purposes and decrees, and contrived and formed the scheme of it in the council of peace, and he made sufficient provision for it in the covenant of grace; and as he from eternity appointed his Son to be his salvation to the ends of the earth, so in the fulness of time he sent him to be the Saviour of the world, and delivered him up for all his people, unto

death itself, and spared him not, but awoke the sword of justice against him, and sheathed it in him; and since he had such a concern in salvation, the glory of it in right belongs to him: and the Lamb, the Son of God, he engaged to do the will and work of God, and from everlasting became the surety of the better testament; and in time he came to seek and to save lost sinners, and he is become the author of eternal salvation to them; his own arm has brought it, and it is in him, and no other, even a salvation from sin, Satan, the law, the world, hell, and death, and wrath to come; and it will be the employment of the saints, both in the new Jerusalem church state, during the thousand years' reign, and in heaven to all eternity, to ascribe the glory of all this, not to themselves, to their merits and works of righteousness, or to any creature whatever, but to God and the Lamb only.

**Ver. 11.** *And all the angels stood round about the throne*, etc.] The holy and elect angels, even all of them, the ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, the innumerable company of them, who are represented in the same position; (see Gill on “<sup>(661)</sup>Revelation 5:11”);

*and [about] the elders, and the four beasts*; the churches and ministers; yea, round about the great multitude before mentioned, the camp of the saints, and the beloved city; whose guardians they will be, and to whom they will always be ministering spirits.

*And fell before the throne on their faces*: in token of submission and reverence:

*and worshipped God*; by celebrating the perfections of his nature, and ascribing to him the glory of all his works.

**Ver. 12.** *Saying, Amen*, etc.] As approving and confirming what the great multitude of men had said in (<sup>(670)</sup>Revelation 7:10); in ascribing the glory of salvation to God, and the Lamb: the angels, though they have no part in it themselves, yet highly approve of it as right and just, that men should give the glory of it where it is due.

*Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, [be] unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.* Here a seven fold praise is given to God by the angels, as to the Lamb, in (<sup>(682)</sup>Revelation 5:12), and in words much the same they rightly ascribe blessing to God, who is blessed in himself, and is the source of all blessedness to his creatures, angels and men. And also “glory”; the glory of his divine perfections, who is the God of glory; and of all his works of

nature and providence, and especially of the salvation of men by Christ. “And wisdom”; he being the only wise God, whose wisdom is to be seen in all the works of creation, and in the government of the world, and in nothing more than in the scheme of redemption by the Son of God: “and thanksgiving”: for all mercies and favours, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, enjoyed by angels, or by men: “and honour”; which is due to him from all his creatures, as he is the Creator of them; and from all his children, as he is their Father; and from all his servants, as he their master: “and power”: which he has exerted, in making all things out of nothing, in supporting the whole universe in its being, and in saving and preserving his own people: “and might”; or “strength”, he being the almighty God, the strength of Israel, and the rock of ages, in whom is everlasting strength; and the praise and ascription of all this, the angels wish to be given him by themselves and others, to all eternity; and as desiring that so it might be, and as believing that so it would be, they add their to it.

**Ver. 13.** *And one of the elders answered, saying unto me,* etc.] This elder was not the Apostle Peter, as some Popish interpreters have thought; and still less Pope Silvester, who lived in the times of Constantine; he is much more likely, according to others, to be Constantine himself, the first of the elders, or the chief magistrate when the church sprung out of its troubles, and enjoyed rest and peace; though some have thought of the prophet Isaiah, since many things said by this elder are to be found in his prophecy; compare (~~6174~~ Revelation 7:14,16,17); with (~~2118~~ Isaiah 1:18 49:10 25:8); but it is needless to inquire who the particular person was; it is enough to say, that he was one of the four and twenty elders about the throne, one that belonged to the church, perhaps the same as in (~~6185~~ Revelation 5:5); who, in a visionary way, is represented as accosting John upon the above sight. The word “answered” is a common Hebraism of the New Testament, which is often used when nothing goes before, to which a return is made; and only signifies here, that the elder opened his month, began to speak, and called to John, and said as follows:

*what are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?* This he said, not as being ignorant of them, or of the reason of their being clothed in this manner, nor of the place and state from whence they came, as appears by the account afterwards given of them by him; but to stir up John to take more notice of them, as being a body of men that were worthy of observation and contemplation, and were worth his while to consider well who they were, and from whence they came; and also to try him

whether he knew them or not, and to bring him to a confession of his ignorance; and that he might have an opportunity of giving him some hints about them, which might be useful to him, and to the churches, and for the explanation of this vision, and other parts of this prophecy.

**Ver. 14.** *And I said unto him, sir, thou knowest,* etc.] John replies in a very humble, modest, and respectful manner, to the elder, calling him “sir”, according to the usage of the eastern people; and it is observable, that this word is much used in his Gospel, and more than in any other book; (see ~~EB11~~ John 4:11,15,19,49 5:7 12:21 20:15). Some copies, and the Complutensian edition, read, “my Lord”; and so do the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions. John confesses his ignorance, and ascribes knowledge to the elder, and desires information of him; for the sense is, that the elder knew who they were, and from whence they came, but he did not, and therefore desires that he would inform him; and so the Arabic version renders it, “and my Lord, thou art more learned”; that is, than I am, and therefore instruct me, as he accordingly did;

*and he said to me, these are they which came out of great tribulation:* seeing this company designs all the elect of God, that ever were, are, or shall be in the world; “the great tribulation”, out of which they came, is not to be restrained to any particular time of trouble, but includes all that has been, is, or shall be; as all the afflictions of the saints under the Old Testament; from righteous Abel to Zechariah; and all the troubles of the people of God in the times of the Maccabees, (~~SB15~~ Hebrews 11:35-38); all the persecutions of the Christians by the Jews, at the first publication of the Gospel; and the persecutions under the Roman emperors, both Pagan and Arian; and the cruelties and barbarities of the Romish antichrist, during the whole time of the apostasy; and particularly the last struggle of the beast, which will be the hour of temptation, that will come upon all the world; and in general all the afflictions, reproaches, persecutions, and many tribulations of all the saints, and every member of Christ in this world, who in the new Jerusalem church state will be come out of them; which supposes them to have been in them, and yet were not overwhelmed by them, and lost in them; but, by divine support and assistance, waded through them, and were now quite clear of them, and never more to be annoyed with them; (see ~~EB14~~ Revelation 21:4).

*And have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb;* not in the blood of bulls and goats, which could not take away sin;

nor in their own blood, their sufferings for Christ, on which they did not depend, knowing there is no comparison between them, and the glory revealed in them; nor in any works of righteousness done by them, which are imperfect and filthy, and need washing; but in the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. The “robes” which they washed in his blood may either design themselves, their consciences, which this blood purges from dead works; or their outward conversation garments, which have their spots, and need continual washing; or else the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, or their justification, which is by the blood of Christ, (<sup>([Eph](#))</sup> Romans 5:9). The act of washing from sin, by the blood of Christ, is sometimes ascribed to Christ himself, as in (<sup>([Rev](#))</sup> Revelation 1:5); but here to the saints, and designs the concern which faith has in the blood of Christ, which deals with it for justification, peace, and pardon, for the removing of sin from the conscience, and for cleansing from all impurity, both of flesh and Spirit: and the effect of this is, that their robes were “made white”; that is, that they were freed from all sin, were without fault before the throne, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing. This shows that these persons had no trust in themselves, or dependence on their own merits, and works of righteousness, but wholly trusted to, and depended on the blood and righteousness of Christ; which is the only way to come out of tribulation, and enter the kingdom.

**Ver. 15.** *Therefore are they before the throne of God*, etc.] (See Gill on <sup>([Rev](#))</sup> Revelation 7:9”); not because of their great tribulations, but because they were brought through them, and out of them, by the grace and power of God; nor because of their robes, or conversation garments, but because those were washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; or because of the blood of the Lamb, and their justification, pardon, and cleansing by it:

*and serve him day and night in his temple*; not in any material temple, but in the new Jerusalem, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, the temple of the living God; for in this state there will be no material temple, or place of worship, but God and the Lamb will be the temple thereof, (<sup>([Rev](#))</sup> Revelation 21:22); nor will there be any night there, (<sup>([Rev](#))</sup> Revelation 22:5); wherefore this phrase, day and night, only denotes the constancy and uninterrupted of their service, there being nothing to obstruct them in it, or break them off from it, as now; in allusion to the priests and Levites, who were, one or other of them, night or day in the service of the temple: and the service of these persons in the new Jerusalem state will not lie in attending on the word and ordinances, or in the ministration of them, as in



the present state; but in praising God, singing Hallelujahs to him, adoring the perfections of his nature, and admiring his wonderful works of providence and grace, and ascribing the glory of salvation to him, and to the Lamb; and this their service will be the glorious liberty of the children of God. Hence the Ethiopic version renders it, “and they praise him day and night”; this will be the employment of the saints in the millennium state, and to all eternity:

*and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them*; or “tabernacle over them”; for the tabernacle of God shall be now among men, and he will dwell among the saints; they shall enjoy his presence, and have the most intimate communion with him; it will appear most manifest that he is their covenant God, and they are his covenant people; and he will be a tabernacle, not only of inhabitation, but of protection for them; and the name of this city, this new Jerusalem, will be “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is there.

**Ver. 16.** *They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more*, etc.] The words are taken out of (<sup>2390</sup>Isaiah 49:10), and will be true in a literal and corporeal sense. Now the saints are often in hunger and thirst, then they shall be so no more; and in a mystical and spiritual sense, there will be no famine of the word; for though there will not be the outward ministration of the word, as now, the substance of it will be enjoyed, to full satisfaction; nor will there be any uneasy desires after spiritual things, and much less any hungerings and thirstings, or lusting after carnal, sensual, and earthly things.

*Neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat*; not the sun of persecution, (see <sup>4036</sup>Matthew 13:6,22); nor the heat of Satan's temptations, or his fiery darts; nor of any fiery trial, or sore affliction; nor of the divine displeasure, or any fearful sense and apprehension of it; nor of toil and labour, called the burden and heat of the day, from all which they will be now free.

**Ver. 17.** *For the Lamb, which is in the midst of the throne*, etc.] (see <sup>4016</sup>Revelation 5:6); not before the throne, as the great multitude are said to be, (<sup>4010</sup>Revelation 7:9); nor round about it, as the angels in (<sup>4071</sup>Revelation 7:11); but in the midst of it, being equal to him that sits upon it; sitting on the same throne with him, and having the same power and authority, he



*shall feed them* as a shepherd his flock; for this Lamb is a Shepherd, and this great multitude are his flock; whom he will feed in this state, not by his ministers, word, and ordinances, as now; but in person, and with the rich discoveries of himself, and of his love, signified by a feast, by new wine in his Father's kingdom, and his own, and by eating and drinking at his table, in the kingdom appointed by him to his followers; and hence it is they shall never hunger more: or “shall rule them”, as the Vulgate Latin version renders it; for the same word signifies “to feed”, and “to rule”, as a king rules his subjects; Christ will now be visibly King of saints, and King over all the earth, and will reign before his ancients gloriously; and, in these days of his, Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely under his power and protection:

*and shall lead them unto living fountains of water*; by “water” is meant the grace, love, and free favour of God in Christ, that pure river of water of life, which proceeds from the throne of God, and of the Lamb, from divine sovereignty; and with which the saints in this state shall be sweetly and fully solaced and refreshed; and hence they shall never thirst more: and this is said to be “living”, because not only refreshing and reviving, but because it will last for ever; the love of God is from everlasting to everlasting; and it is signified by “fountains”, to denote the abundance of it, even as it will be perceived and enjoyed by the saints now; for these waters will not be only up to the ankles, and knees, but a broad river to swim in, which cannot be passed over; and hither will Christ lead his people, which is, one branch of his office as a Shepherd; and which shows his care of them, and affection for them.

*And God shall wipe away all tear, from their eyes*; or “out of their eyes”, as the Alexandrian copy reads; (see <sup><2358></sup>Isaiah 25:8). The sense is, that that which is now the occasion of tears will cease, as the sin and corruptions of God's people, which now are the cause of many tears; as also Satan's temptations, the hidings of God's face, and the various afflictions of this life, and the persecutions of the men of the world; there will be no more of either of these; all will be made to cease; (see <sup><6204></sup>Revelation 21:4); and in the room of them full and everlasting joy will take place, (<sup><2350></sup>Isaiah 35:10). Mr. Daubuz thinks, that the whole of this chapter belongs to the sixth seal, and that the promises in it are such as were to be accomplished at the opening of the seventh, and do not belong to the millennium state; but had their fulfilment in the times of Constantine, who he supposes is the angel that came from the east, who restrained the persecutors of the church, and

introduced a general peace in church and state; and as he came with the seal of the living God, which he understands of the cross of Christ, he put upon his standard, and on the shields of his soldiers, so he sealed the servants of God on their foreheads with it, by allowing them to make a public profession of a crucified Christ, and by protecting them in that profession, even men of all nations, Jews and Gentiles; and particularly he thinks the innumerable palm bearing company may design the council of Nice, gathered by him, which consisted of the representatives of the whole Christian church in the several nations of the world, who had great honour, freedom, and immunities conferred upon them; and that the angels are the Christian magistrates, submitting to the Christian religion, and defending the church, which was now come out of the great tribulation of Heathen persecution, and had temples and places of public worship opened for them; in which they had full liberty to serve the Lord continually, without interruption; and were secure from all affliction and persecution, and were filled with joy and gladness; and the Lamb, by the means of Constantine, as Christ's vicar and servant, he declared himself to be, fed and protected the church in peace and quietness; all which are accomplished during the rest, or "silence", under the next seal; and which I should very readily agree to, since this interpretation carries on the thread of the prophetic history without any interruption, were it not for the description of the palm bearing company, both as to quantity and quality, and the declaration of the happy state of those come out of great tribulation, which I think cannot be made to suit with any imperfect state of the church on earth, without greatly lowering the sense of the expressions used; however, if anyone prefers this exposition to what is given, I am not much averse unto it.

# CHAPTER 8

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 8

This chapter contains the opening of the seventh seal, and the things that followed on it, and particularly the sounding of the first four trumpets. Upon the opening of the seventh seal there was silence in heaven for half an hour, ([Revelation 8:1](#)); then follows a vision of seven angels, who stood before God, and had seven trumpets given to them, ([Revelation 8:2](#)); then of another angel, described by his position, standing at the altar; by his having a golden censer, and by much incense being given him, the end of which was to offer up the prayers of all saints, which with it went up to God, and were acceptable to him; and by filling his censer with the fire of the altar, and casting it to the earth; the effects of which were voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake, ([Revelation 8:3-5](#)), after which the seven angels prepare to sound their trumpets, ([Revelation 8:6](#)); the first blows his, which brings hail and fire, mingled with blood, upon the earth, which burns up the third part of trees and all green grass, ([Revelation 8:7](#)); the second blows, upon which a burning mountain is cast into the sea, and a third part of it becomes blood, a third part of the creatures in it die, and a third part of the ships upon it are destroyed, ([Revelation 8:8,9](#)); the third angel blows; upon which a star, like a burning lamp, falls upon the third part of rivers and fountains, whose name is Wormwood, and embitters them, so that many men die of them, ([Revelation 8:10,11](#)); the fourth angel blows, and the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, is smitten, and becomes dark, so that there is no light for a third part of the day and night, ([Revelation 8:12](#)); and the chapter is concluded with the vision of another angel flying through the midst of heaven, proclaiming three times woe to the inhabitants of the earth, on account of what would be uttered by the three following angels, who were yet to blow their trumpets, ([Revelation 8:13](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *And when he had opened the seventh seal*, etc.] That is, when the Lamb had opened the seventh and last seal of the scaled book:

*there was silence in heaven about the space of half an hour*; not in the third heaven, the seat of the divine Being, of angels and glorified saints,

where are hallelujahs without intermission; but in the church, which is oftentimes signified by heaven in this book, and where now the throne of God was placed, in that form as described in (~~600~~ Revelation 4:4-8), or rather in the Roman empire: nor is this silence the sum of this seal, or the only thing in it; for it includes the preparation of the seven angels to take their trumpets, though none of them were sounded during this period. This space of time some think refers to the time which elapsed, while the angel, who had incense given him to offer it with the prayers of saints, did so, and took fire off the altar with his censer, and cast it on the earth: and while the seven angels had their trumpets given them, and they were preparing to sound. Others are of opinion that this was only a pause, a breathing time for John between the former visions and seals, and the following; nothing being said or done, or anything exhibited to him during this interval; but he was at leisure to reflect on what he had seen, and to prepare for what was to come. Others understand it of the amazement of the saints at the judgments of God, which were coming upon the Christian empire, and of their quiet and silent preparations for these troubles and combats, both within and without, they were to be exercised with; (see ~~303~~ Zechariah 2:13). Others have thought that this refers to the state of the saints after the day of judgment, when there will be an entire cessation from persecution and trouble, and when the souls under the altar will have done crying for vengeance; but this will be not for half an hour only, but to all eternity; nor will angels and saints be then silent. Rather this is to be understood of that peace and rest which the church enjoyed upon Constantine's having defeated all his enemies, when he brought the church into a state of profound tranquillity and ease; and this lasted but for a little while, which is here expressed by about, or almost half an hour, as the Syriac version renders it; for in a short time the Arian heresy broke out, which introduced great troubles in the church, and at last violent persecutions. The allusion is, as in the whole of the following vision of the angel at the altar, to the offering of incense; at which time the people were removed from the temple, from between the porch and altar <sup>f227</sup>, to some more distant place; and the priest was alone while he offered incense, and then prayed a short prayer, that the people might not be affrighted lest he should be dead <sup>f228</sup>: and who in the mean while were praying in a silent, manner without; (see ~~400~~ Luke 1:9,10); hence the Jews say <sup>f229</sup>, that the offering of incense atones for an ill tongue, for it is a thing that is introduced **yaçj b**, “silently”, and it atones for what is done silently, such

as whisperings, backbitings, etc. and they call <sup>f230</sup> silence the best of spices, even of those of which the sweet incense was made.

**Ver. 2.** *And I saw the seven angels*, etc.] Not the seven spirits of God, (<sup><6604></sup>Revelation 1:4 5:5); their names, as well as their office, differ; nor the ministers of the word, though these are often called angels in this book, and blow the trumpet of the Gospel, and lift up their voice like a trumpet; but the angelic spirits, and these either evil ones, since they are the executioners of wrath and vengeance, and bring judgments on the earth; and who, are sometimes said to stand before God, (<sup><1221></sup>1 Kings 22:21,22 <sup><8006></sup>Job 1:6); or rather good angels, who are sometimes ministers of divine wrath; (see <sup><1046></sup>2 Samuel 24:16,17 <sup><1295></sup>2 Kings 19:35); “seven” of them are mentioned, as being a proper number for the blowing of the seven trumpets, which would complete all the woes that were to come upon the world, and in allusion to the seven princes the eastern monarchs used to have continually about them, (<sup><7014></sup>Esther 1:14), as it follows:

*which stood before God*; and denotes their nearness to him, and familiarity with him, they always behold his face; and their service and ministrations, and their readiness to execute his will: the allusion is to the two priests standing at the table of fat, with two silver trumpets in their hands, with which they blew, and another struck the cymbal, and the Levites sung, which was always done at the time of the daily sacrifice <sup>f231</sup>:

*and to them were given seven trumpets*: everyone had one; and which were an emblem of those wars, and desolations, and calamities, which would come upon the empire, and upon the world, at the blowing of each of them; the trumpet being an alarm, preparing for, proclaiming, and introducing these things; (<sup><2049></sup>Jeremiah 4:19 <sup><2088></sup>Hosea 5:8); these are said to be given them; either by him that sat upon the throne, about which they were; or by the Lamb that opened the seal; and shows that they did nothing but what they had a commission and order to do. Here is manifestly an allusion to the priests and Levites blowing their trumpets at the close of the daily sacrifice, and at the offering of incense <sup>f232</sup> as before observed.

**Ver. 3.** *And another angel came*, etc.] The Ethiopic version adds, “from the east”, as in (<sup><6602></sup>Revelation 7:2); pointing to the same angel, and who is intended: for not a created angel, as Gabriel, or any other, is meant; nor any mere man, at least not Pope Damasus, who lived in Constantine's time, as Lyra thought; nor Constantine himself, which is the opinion of Brightman, who thinks that his, and the desires of other good men to make

peace, and compose the differences occasioned by the Arian heresy, are designed by the incense and prayers; and this being brought about at the counsel of Nice, when the Arian blasphemy was condemned, and truth confirmed, is intended by the ascent of the smoke of the incense with the prayers, out of the angels hands; when there followed upon this great contentions, heart burnings, and persecutions, signified by fire, voices, thunderings, etc. and others, have been of opinion that the Emperor Theodosius is designed, and that respect is had to his prayer both in the church, and at the head of his army, before the battle with Eugenius, the saints in the mean while putting up united prayers to God for success, and which was obtained; and this victory was attended with a miraculous tempest, and gave a deadly blow to the Pagan religion. Yet neither of those, but Christ himself, the Angel of the covenant, and of God's presence, is here intended, who appeared in an angelic form; so the high priest in the day of atonement was called *j yl ç*<sup>f233</sup>, “an angel”, or messenger, to which the allusion is;

*and stood at the altar*; either of burnt offerings, and may be rendered “stood upon it”; and so may represent his sacrifice, which had been lately offered up for the sins of his people, he being both altar, sacrifice, and priest; or rather the altar of incense, since mention is made of a censer and of incense, and the smoke of it; and seeing this altar is a golden one, as that was, and is before the throne, as that was before the vail by the ark of the testimony; (<sup>f231</sup>Exodus 30:1,3,6); and so Christ is here introduced as the high priest, advocate, and intercessor for his people, though both altars may be respected in this verse: “the altar” may design the altar of burnt offering from whence the coals were taken in the censer; and the “golden altar” the altar of incense where the coals being brought the incense was put upon them, and offered; and here he “stood” as everyone concerned in the service of the sanctuary did<sup>f234</sup>:

*having a golden censer*; the Ethiopic version adds, “of fire”: for this was a vessel in which were put burning coals of fire taken from off the altar before the Lord (<sup>f232</sup>Leviticus 16:12), and which may denote the sufferings of Christ, he pains he endured in his body the sorrows of his soul, and the wrath of God which was poured like fire upon him; the altar from which they were taken off was typical of Christ: in his divine nature which is the altar that sanctifies the gift, and gave virtue to his blood and sacrifice; and all this being before the Lord may show that Christ's sufferings were according to the will of God, were grateful to him, and always before him;

for these burning coals in the censer were also carried within the vail, representing heaven, where Christ entered by his own blood and where he is as a Lamb that had been slain, the efficacy of whose death always continues; and this being a golden censer shows the excellency and perpetuity of Christ's sacrifice and intercession. In the daily service the priest used a silver censer, but on the day of atonement a golden one <sup>f235</sup>; though at the daily sacrifice there was a vessel used, called Pkh, like to a large golden bushel, in which was a smaller vessel full of incense <sup>f236</sup>, and may be what is here designed:

*and there was given unto him much incense*; the intercession of Christ is meant by “the incense”, which, like that, is sweet and fragrant, very grateful and acceptable to God and also pure and holy; for though it is made for transgressors, yet in a way of righteousness, and consistent with the holiness and justice of God; nor is there any like it, nor should there be any besides it; the intercession of angels, and saints departed, ought to be rejected: and it is perpetual, or will be for ever; (see <sup><OR10></sup>Exodus 30:7,8,34-38); and whereas it is said to be “much”, this is an allusion either to the many spices used in the composition of the incense, (see <sup><OR34></sup>Exodus 30:34); the Jews say <sup>f237</sup>, that eleven sorts of spices were ordered to Moses, and the wise men have added three more, in all fourteen; or to the priest's handfuls of incense, which he took and brought within the vail on the day of atonement, (<sup><OR12></sup>Leviticus 16:12); and which were added to, and were over and above the quantity used every day <sup>f238</sup>; and even in the daily service the pot of incense was not only filled, but **çwdg**, “heaped up” <sup>f239</sup>; now this may denote the fulness of Christ's intercession, which is for all his elect, called and uncalled, greater or lesser believers, and for all things for them, as their cases be; for conversion, discoveries of pardon, preservation, perseverance, and glorification; and to support this, he has a fulness of merit, which makes his intercession efficacious; for incense was put upon the burning coals in the censer, or upon the fire before the Lord, (<sup><OR13></sup>Leviticus 16:13), signifying that Christ's intercession proceeds upon his sufferings and death: his blood and sacrifice, from whence all his pleas and arguments are taken in favour of his people, and which always prevail: and this is said to be given him, as his whole work and office as Mediator, and every branch of it is; he is appointed to this work, is allowed to do it, and is accepted in it, by him that sits upon the throne: in the daily offering of the incense, one took the incense and gave it into the hand of his friend, or the priest that was next him; and if he wanted instruction how to offer it, he

taught him, nor might anyone offer incense until the president bid him <sup>f240</sup>; to which there seems to be an allusion here: now the end of this was,

*that he should offer [it] with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne*; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions add, “of God”; the prayers of the saints, rightly performed, are themselves compared to incense, being very grateful and acceptable to God, (~~<BEB>~~Psalm 141:2); and the Arabic version here renders it in connection with the preceding clause, and explanative of that, “and there was given unto him much incense and much spice, which are the prayers of the saints”, as in (~~<BEB>~~Revelation 5:8); and at the time of incense the people prayed; (see ~~<BEB>~~Luke 1:10); and these are spiritual sacrifices, which Christ the high priest presents for the saints, perfumes with the incense of his mediation, and makes acceptable to God, being offered upon, and coming up from that altar which is before him, and which gives value to everything that is put upon it: and they are the prayers of saints, who are set apart by God the Father, whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and who are sanctified by the Spirit of God; who draw nigh to God with a true heart, and call upon him out of a pure heart, and in sincerity and truth; the prayers of such righteous ones, through faith in Christ, avail much with God; and the prayers of all saints are regarded by Christ, and presented by him, whether they be rich or poor, high or low, greater or lesser believers. The Jews often speak of an angel, whose name is Sandalphon, who is appointed over the prayers of the righteous, and takes them and presents them to God <sup>f241</sup>: so Raphael in the Apocrypha:

“I am Raphael, one of the seven holy angels, which present the prayers of the saints, and which go in and out before the glory of the Holy One.” (Tobit 12:15)

says he was one of the seven holy angels that carry up the prayers of the saints; and the heretic Elxai, who was originally a Jew, talked of the holy angels of prayer <sup>f242</sup>: so the Jews say, that God “by”, or “through his Word”, receives the prayers of Israel, and has mercy on them <sup>f243</sup>. In the Greek text it is, “that he should give”, etc. that is, the “incense”, agreeably to the Hebrew phrase in (~~<BEB>~~Numbers 16:47), and elsewhere.

**Ver. 4.** *And the smoke of the incense*, etc.] For the incense being put, as it was used to be, upon burning coals of fire, caused a smoke to arise like a cloud, (~~<BEB>~~Leviticus 16:13 ~~<BEB>~~Ezekiel 8:11); so that the whole house, or temple, was filled with it <sup>f244</sup>:



*[which came] with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God out of the angel's hand*; alluding to the incense the priest took in his hand, and cast upon the burning coals; and shows how that by the smoke of the incense, or the virtue of Christ's mediation, the imperfections of the prayers of the saints are covered; and how they are it perfumed and made acceptable to God; and so are said to ascend up before him, and to be regarded by him, as the prayers of Cornelius were, (~~400~~ Acts 10:4); now all this is expressive of the wonderful affection of Christ for his church and people, and care of them; that before the angels sound their trumpets, and bring on wars and desolations into the empire, Christ is represented as interceding for them, and presenting their prayers both for deliverance for themselves, and vengeance on their enemies.

**Ver. 5.** *And the angel took the censer*, etc.] The golden one before mentioned, the use of which was to take and carry in it burning coals of fire:

*and filled it with fire of the altar*; of burnt offering, for upon that, and not upon the altar of incense, fire was; the allusion is to the priest

“that was worthy to use a censer <sup>f245</sup>; who took a silver censer, and went to the top of the altar (of burnt offering), and having removed the coals there, and there took them in his censer, and went down and emptied them into a golden one, and there was scattered from it about a kab of coals;”

for the golden one held a kab less than the silver one <sup>f246</sup>;

*and cast [it] into the earth*: the Roman empire: by “fire” some understand the Spirit of God, and his gifts and graces, which sat upon the apostles as cloven tongues of fire on the day of Pentecost; and which they suppose were now plentifully bestowed on the ministers of the word, to enlighten them, inspire them with zeal, and abundantly fit them for the work of the ministry, in consequence of Christ's mediation and intercession: and others think the Gospel is intended, which is sometimes compared to fire, (~~200~~ Jeremiah 20:9 23:29), or else those contentions and quarrels which, through the corruptions of men, arise on account of the Gospel, (~~200~~ Luke 12:49); though rather by fire here are meant the judgments of God, and his wrath and fury poured forth like fire upon the Roman empire, now become Christian; and so was an emblem of those calamities coming upon it at the sounding of the trumpets; and shows that as Christ prays and intercedes for

his, own people, for their comfort and safety, so he will bring down, his judgments upon his and their enemies; (see <sup><2301E></sup>Ezekiel 10:2); and the Targum on it:

*and there were voices, and thunderings, and lightnings, and an earthquake*; which may be understood either of the nature, use, and effects of the Gospel, speaking to the hearts of men by the sons of thunder, enlightening their minds, and shaking their consciences; the like were at the giving of the law, (<sup><2916></sup>Exodus 19:16); or rather of those terrors, distresses, and commotions in the world, because of God's righteous judgments, and which particularly will be at the sound of the seventh trumpet, and the pouring out of the seventh vial, (<sup><6115></sup>Revelation 11:15 16:17,18); the allusion is to the sounds that were heard at the time of the daily sacrifice; for besides the blowing of the trumpets by the priests, and the singing of the Levites, of which (see Gill on "<sup><668D></sup>Revelation 8:2"); there was a musical instrument called *hprgm*, "magrephah" <sup>f247</sup>, which being sounded, a man could not hear another speak in Jerusalem: yea, they say it was heard as far as Jericho.

**Ver. 6.** *And the seven angels which had the seven trumpets*, etc.] Given them, (<sup><668D></sup>Revelation 8:2);

*prepared themselves to sound*; they stood up, took their trumpets in their hands, and put them to their mouths; this was giving notice of what was coming upon the earth, and a kind of warning to men, and a call upon them to repentance, and to prepare to meet God in the way of his judgments. The time when these trumpets began to blow was after the opening of the seventh seal, and so after the destruction of the empire as Pagan, which was under the sixth seal; and after that peace and rest from persecution in Constantine's time, signified by the half hour's silence in heaven; and after the prayers of the saints for vengeance, because of their blood shed in the time of Rome Pagan, were offered up, heard, taken notice of, and accepted; and therefore cannot regard, nor have any concern with the state of the church before Constantine's time, as some have thought the three first trumpets had; the first introducing the contradictions and blasphemies of the Jews, and their persecutions of the Christians, and the effusion of their blood by them; the second the ten persecutions under the Heathen emperors; and the third, the errors and heresies which pestered the churches of those times: nor indeed do they concern the state of the church at all; though it seems much more likely that the first four trumpets should

bring in; as others have thought, the several heresies of Arius, Macedonius, Pelagius, and Eutyches, which sprung up before the rise of Mahomet, who appears under the fifth trumpet. But all the six trumpets have to do with the empire as Christian; for as the six seals are so many steps towards the destruction of the empire as Pagan, and the vials bring on the ruin of Rome Papal; so the six trumpets are so many gradual advances to the ruin of the empire, now Christian: and it must be observed, that the Emperor Theodosius, at his death, left the empire divided between his two sons, Arcadius and Honorius, the eastern part of it, which had Constantinople for its seat, to the former, and the western part of it, which had Rome for its seat, to the latter; now the first four trumpets bring in a barbarous people out of the north, the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the western part, who, by various incursions and wars, at last utterly destroy it; and the fifth and sixth trumpets bring in the Saracens under Mahomet, and the Turks into the eastern part, who took possession of that, and have kept it unto this day. (This was published in 1747, Ed.) A preparation being made, the angels begin to sound their trumpets.

**Ver. 7.** *The first angel sounded*, etc.] Or blew his trumpet:

*and there followed hail and fire, mingled with blood*; somewhat like one of the plagues of Egypt, (<sup>1823</sup>Exodus 9:23-25); in which was hail mingled with fire, only no blood, but what was caused by its fall on man and beast. Some have thought the Arian heresy is here intended, which may well enough agree with the time; and which may be compared to “hail”, for the mischief it did to the vines, the churches; and because of the violence with which it came, and the chillness of affection to Christ and his people, which it brought on professors of religion; and the barrenness which followed upon it, it making men barren and unfruitful in the knowledge of Christ Jesus; and to “fire”, because of the wrath, contentions, animosities, and divisions it occasioned among those who were called Christians: and “blood” may be brought into the account, since the like persecutions under Constantius and Valens were raised against the orthodox on account of it as were against the Christians under the Heathen emperors: and this storm fell upon “the earth”; the whole Roman empire; for even all the world was once said to be Arian, except one Athanasius; and particularly upon the carnal and earthly part of the church, who were seeking places and preferments under the Arian emperors: “and burnt up the third part of trees”; the trees of righteousness, the saints, particularly the doctors of the church, the tall cedars in Lebanon; who either seemed to be such, and were infected with

this heresy, and destroyed by it, as many were; or were truly such, and were greatly oppressed, afflicted, and persecuted for not embracing it: and also “all green grass”; the common people, private Christians, weak believers, who had the truth of grace in them, and suffered much for not giving into this heresy; or who seemed to have it, but had it not, but withered away, being scorched up and destroyed with this pernicious notion: but rather this trumpet regards not the church, but the empire; and this storm of hail, fire, and blood, designs the irruption of the Goths into it, from the year 395, in which Theodosius died, to the year 408, under Radagaisus their general; with two hundred thousand of them, some say four hundred thousand, he entered and overrun all Italy, but was stopped and defeated by Stilicho; also Alaricus, king of the Goths, penetrated into Italy, came to Ravenna, and pitched his camp not far from Polentia, to whom the Emperor Honorius gave up France and Spain to make him easy, and that he might cease from his ravages and depredations <sup>f248</sup>; and these irruptions and devastations may be fitly expressed by hail, fire, and blood, just as the coming of the Assyrian monarch into the land of Israel is signified by a tempest of hail, and a destroying storm, (<sup>238D</sup>Isaiah 28:2); and it is remarkable, as Mr. Daubuz observes, that Claudian the poet <sup>f249</sup>, who lived at the time of Alarick's war, compares it to hail:

*and they were cast upon the earth*; the Roman empire, the continent more especially, as Germany, France, Spain, and Italy, which were particularly affected and distressed with these barbarous people:

*and the third part of trees were burnt up*; by which seem to be meant people of the higher rank, the richer sort of people, who suffered much in these calamities; (see <sup>238B</sup>Isaiah 2:13 <sup>238D</sup>Zechariah 11:2); yea, princes, nobles, and rulers, both civil and ecclesiastical, who suffered much at this time, as Jerom <sup>f250</sup>, who was then living, testifies; and so “trees” are interpreted of kings, rulers, and governors, by the Targum on (<sup>238B</sup>Isaiah 2:13 <sup>238D</sup>Zechariah 11:1,2); “the trees of the field”, in (<sup>238D</sup>Isaiah 55:12); are interpreted of kingdoms <sup>f251</sup>: the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read before this clause, “and the third part of the earth was burnt”; that is, of the Roman empire:

*and all green grass was burnt up*; the common people, who may be compared to spires of “grass” for their multitude, being as it were innumerable; and to “green” grass, for their delightful, comfortable, and

flourishing condition before these calamities came upon them; and for their weakness and impotency to withstand such powerful enemies; (see <sup><8185></sup>Job 5:25 <sup><19216></sup>Psalm 72:16 <sup><23416></sup>Isaiah 40:6,7 37:27 <sup><10214></sup>Numbers 22:4); and these commonly suffer most when a country is overrun and plundered by an enemy.

**Ver. 8.** *And the second angel sounded,* etc.] His trumpet:

*and as it were a great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea;* by which is meant not the devil, as some think; called a “mountain” from his height of pride, a great one from his might and power, and a “burning” one from his great wrath and malice against Christ, his Gospel, and his people; and who may be said to be “cast into the sea” of this world, and the men of it, whom he instigates against the saints, and who are like a troubled sea that cannot rest: but rather some heresy, and, as some have thought, the Macedonian heresy, which was levelled against the deity of the Holy Spirit, as was the Arian heresy against the deity of the Son; the abettors of which looked big, and were supported by power, and showed great zeal for religion, and pretended to great light and knowledge; and which heresy much affected the sea of pure doctrine, particularly the third part of doctrine, in which the third Person, the Spirit of God, is more especially concerned; and was of so pernicious a nature, as to kill many that professed the Gospel, and had a name to live, and destroy many particular churches, comparable to ships; but, as before, it is best to understand this of another incursion of the Goths into the Roman empire, and of the effects of it; and it seems to have respect to the taking and sacking of Rome by Alaricus, king of the West Goths, in the year 410, or 412 <sup>f252</sup>. Rome is very fitly represented by a great mountain, as kingdoms and cities sometimes are; (see <sup><30417></sup>Zechariah 4:7 <sup><23117></sup>Isaiah 13:2); seeing it was built on seven mountains; and its being taken and burnt by Alaricus is aptly expressed by a burning mountain, as the destruction of Babylon, which is another name for Rome, is by a burnt mountain in (<sup><25125></sup>Jeremiah 51:25); the “sea” into which this was cast may signify the great number of people and nations within its jurisdiction which suffered, and were thrown into confusion at this time; so distresses and calamities in nations are expressed by a like figure in (<sup><19412></sup>Psalm 46:2);

*and the third part of the sea became blood;* that is, a third part of the jurisdiction of Rome, signified by the sea, (see <sup><25136></sup>Jeremiah 51:36); was afflicted with wars and bloodshed by this same sort of people; for while

these things were done in Italy, a like calamity fell on France and Spain; the Alans, Vandals, and Sueves, having depopulated France, passed over the Pyraenean mountains, and seized on Spain; the Vandals and Sueves on Gallaecia; the Alans on Portugal; and the Silingi, which was another sort of Vandals, invaded Andalusia<sup>f253</sup>; the Goths under Ataulphus entered France, and the Burgundians seized that part of it next the Rhine<sup>f254</sup>: (see ~~1171~~ Exodus 7:20,21).

**Ver. 9.** *And the third part of the creatures which were in the sea*, etc.] The fishes; by whom men are meant, the inhabitants of the Roman empire; (see ~~3294~~ Ezekiel 29:4,5), where by fish the Targum understands mighty princes and governors:

*and had life, died*; were put to death by these savage and barbarous people, who killed all they met with, men, women, and children, young and old, rich and poor, high and low:

*and the third part of the ships were destroyed*; by which may be designed either the cities and towns within such a part of the Roman jurisdiction, which were burnt or plundered by them; or their goods and effects, which they pillaged, and carried off the wealth and riches of the people, even all their substance, as Austin<sup>f255</sup> and Jerom<sup>f256</sup>, who lived in those times, affirm.

**Ver. 10.** *And the third angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

*and there fell a great star from heaven*; not Mahomet, as some think, for this time is too soon for him, who rose up under the fifth trumpet; nor Arius, for whom it is too late, who lived in the times of Constantine; and still less Origen, who lived before his time; but rather Pelagius, who was a man of great eminence in the church, of much learning, and made great pretensions to religion and holiness, and, like a star and lamp, shone forth awhile, with great lustre and splendour, but fell into very great errors; denying original sin, and asserting the purity of human nature, crying up the power of man's free will, and asserting that human nature, without the grace of God, was able to keep the whole law, even to perfection; and his name, according to his doctrine, was wormwood and gall, which embittered the sweet doctrines of the free grace of God, and affected the fountains and rivers, the sacred Scriptures, from whence these doctrines flow; so that instead of being pleasant and wholesome to men, through his false glosses and perverse interpretations of them, they became bitter and

poisonous; and many souls, that received and imbibed his sense of them, died spiritually, and were lost and perished, as all must inevitably, who depend on the strength and works of nature, and deny and despise the grace of God: but it is best, as the other trumpets, so to understand this of the invasions of the above barbarous people, particularly the Vandals under Genseric, who being turned out of Spain by the Goths, went into Africa, where peace was made, and part of Africa given them to dwell in; after which Genseric, through treachery, seized upon Carthage, and greatly afflicted Sicily: Theodosius made war against them to no purpose, and peace being made between Valentinian and Genseric, Africa was divided between them; and some time after Rome was spoiled by Genseric of all its riches <sup>f257</sup>. Mr. Daubuz thinks Attila, king of the Huns, called the dread of the world, and the scourge of God, is meant by this star; who was a rebel against the Romans, and made sad ravages in the empire; at the beginning of which troubles a great comet appeared; and, according to Cassiodorus <sup>f258</sup>, the Huns were auxiliaries to the Romans against the Goths; but Litorius the Roman general was taken; and after this the Huns rebelled, and depopulated Thrace and Illyricum; and Attila, their king, having slain his brother Bleda, and partner, became sole monarch; and though the Romans under Actius, by the help of the Goths, beat him in the fields of Catalaun, and obliged him to depart, yet afterwards, having got a reinforcement, he entered with great force into Aquileia, with whom Pope Leo made peace:

*burning as it were a lamp*; this star resembled that which is called Lampadias, which Pliny says <sup>f259</sup> imitates, or bears a likeness to burning torches; and he speaks of a spark which fell out of a star, which had such an appearance <sup>f260</sup>: this is expressive of war, and great destruction in the empire:

*and it fell upon the third part of the rivers, and upon the fountains of water*; that is, upon the large provinces and chief cities belonging to the Roman empire, and the governors of them, who suffered very bitterly and severely in these times; compare with this (~~32:2,6~~ Ezekiel 32:2,6). The last clause, “and upon the fountains of waters”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy.

**Ver. 11.** *And the name of the star is called Wormwood*, etc.] Because of the bitter afflictions, sorrows, and distresses which it was the instrument of; just as Naomi called herself Mara, because the Almighty had dealt bitterly with her, (~~1:20~~ Ruth 1:20);



*and the third part of the waters became wormwood*; that is, the inhabitants of the provinces and cities belonging to the Roman empire were afflicted with grievous and bitter afflictions and calamities; so great distresses are called wormwood, and waters of gall given to drink, (<sup>(2495)</sup>Jeremiah 9:15 <sup>(2589)</sup>Lamentations 3:19);

*and many men died of the waters, because they were bitter*; through the barbarities and cruelties of these savage people, who afflicted the empire: there seems to be an allusion to (<sup>(2153)</sup>Exodus 15:23).

**Ver. 12.** *And the fourth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet. Some think this refers to the Eutychian heresy, which confounded the two natures of Christ, and of two made one mixed nature, neither human nor divine; and brought great darkness upon the doctrine of Christ's person, the sun of righteousness and into the church, signified by the moon, and among the ministers of the word, the stars. Others are of opinion that that darkness which preceded the rise of the Papacy, and introduced it, is here intended:

*and the third part of the sun was smitten and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars, so as the third part of them was darkened, and the day shone not for a third part of it, and the night likewise*; when the doctrine concerning the person and offices of Christ, who is the sun and light of the world, was obscured by heresies; and the discipline of the church, which, like the moon, has all its light, beauty, and order from Christ, was sadly defaced by the introduction of Jewish and Paganish rites and ceremonies; and the ministers, the stars, were drawn by the tail of the drag on, and cast to the earth, became corrupt in their principles, and carnal and sensual in their lives; so that it was a time of great darkness and gloominess, night and day: but rather this trumpet has respect to that darkness and ignorance which the above barbarous nations, the Goths, Huns, Vandals, and Heruli, spread, and left throughout the empire; for from this time there was a visible decline, as of evangelical light and knowledge, so of all kind of useful knowledge, and nothing but ignorance, stupidity, and barbarity, took place everywhere; and which were very assisting to the man of sin, antichrist, to fix and settle his dominion over the kingdoms which rose up out of the empire at this time; and it also refers to the entire destruction of the western Roman empire, which is expressed by much the same figures as the ruin of the Roman Pagan empire, in (<sup>(4612)</sup>Revelation 6:12,13); and which the various irruptions of these savage people issued in; compare with this (<sup>(2597)</sup>Ezekiel 32:7,8), where the



destruction of the Egyptian monarchy is signified in like terms: Jerom, who lived about the time of the first inundation of these nations, in very mournful language expresses the inhumanity and impiety of them, and the ruin they threatened the empire with; and, says <sup>f261</sup>, “[Romanus] orbis ruit”, “the [Roman] empire is falling”. About the year 455, when Rome was taken by Genseric the Vandal, the empire was divided into ten kingdoms; and in the year 476, Augustulus, the last of the Roman emperors, was obliged to quit his imperial dignity: the Heruli, a people of the same kind with the Goths, and originally Scythians, as they, under their king and leader Odoacer seized on Italy, took Rome, killed Orestes and his brother Paul, and deposed Augustulus, the last of the Roman emperors, and banished him into Campania; and so the western empire ceased, Odoacer taking upon him the title of king of Italy, and translated the seat of the empire from Rome to Ravenna <sup>f262</sup>; and then might the sun be truly said to be smitten: but still, though Odoacer the Herulian reigned in Italy, the Roman form of government was not altered, the consulship and senate still continued, as they did also under Theodoric the Goth, his successor; but when Italy was recovered by Narses, the Emperor Justinian's general, these, with other magistrates, ceased, and Rome became a dukedom, and was subject to an exarch of Ravenna; and then the moon and stars were smitten also. The phrase of smiting the sun, moon, and stars, is Jewish; for the Jews express the eclipses of the luminaries in this way, and say <sup>f263</sup> that when the luminaries  $\hat{y}qwl$ , “are smitten”, it is an ill omen; when  $hqwl$   $hmj h$ , “the sun is smitten”, it is an ill sign to the nations of the world; and when  $hqwl$   $hnbl$ , “the moon is smitten”, it is a bad omen to the nations of Israel <sup>f64</sup> and so the phrase, “the day shone not”, is also Jewish; it is said <sup>f65</sup> of some Rabbins, that they sat and studied in the law  $amwy$   $ryhnd d[$ , “until the day shone”; and when “the day shone”, they rose up and went on their way.

**Ver. 13.** *And I beheld, and heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, instead of “an angel”, read “an eagle”; and to “fly” agrees with either of them, and the sense is the same let it be read either way; and this angel may design either Christ, or a created angel, or a minister of the Gospel, as in (<sup>f64b</sup> Revelation 14:6); did the next trumpet introduce Popery, as some have supposed, Gregory bishop of Rome might be thought, as he is by some, to be the angel here intended, since he gave notice and warning of antichrist being at hand:

*saying with a loud voice*; that all might hear, and as having something of importance to say, and delivering it with great fervour and affection:

*woe, woe, woe*; three times, answerable to the three trumpets yet to be blown; and which are therefore called the woe trumpets: and these woes are denounced

*to the inhabitants of the earth*; the Roman empire, particularly the eastern part of it, which the fifth and sixth trumpets relate unto; and even the whole world, with which the seventh trumpet is concerned:

*by reason of the other voices of the trumpet of the three angels which are yet to sound!* the design of this loud cry of the angel is to show, that though the distresses and ruin which the barbarous nations had brought upon the western empire were very great; yet those which would come upon the eastern empire by the Saracens and Turks, under the sounding of the fifth and sixth trumpets, would be much more grievous; and especially the judgments which the seventh trumpet would bring upon the whole world, when all the nations of the earth will be judged. From the sounding of the fourth trumpet, to the sounding of the fifth, was a space of a hundred and thirty five years, that is, from the deposition of Augustulus, A. D. 476, to the public preaching of Mahomet, A. D. 612.

# CHAPTER 9

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 9

This chapter gives an account of the blowing of the fifth and sixth trumpets, and of the effects following upon them. The fifth angel blows his trumpet, and a star falls; the key of the bottomless pit is given to him, which being opened by it, out of it comes smoke to the darkening of the sun and air, and out of the smoke locusts, who have power like scorpions, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:1-3); whose power is restrained from using it to the hurt of the grass, or any green thing or tree, only of those who had not the seal of God in their foreheads; but are permitted, though not to kill men, yet to torment them five months, which is worse than death unto them, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:4-6). The shapes of these locusts, which are said to be like horses, are described by their heads, faces, hair, teeth, breastplates, wings, and tails, and are said to have a king over them, whose name is mentioned, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:7-11). The blowing of this trumpet brings on one of the woes mentioned in (~~REV~~ Revelation 8:13), and the two other follow, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:12). The sixth angel blows his trumpet, and a voice is heard from the horns of the altar, directed to the said angel, ordering him to loose four angels bound in the great river Euphrates, where they were prepared, for a determinate time, to slay the third part of men, and they were loosed accordingly, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:13-15). The number of the army, under these angels, is given, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:16), and the horses and horsemen are described; the riders by their breastplates of fire, jacinth, and brimstone; their horses' heads as heads of lions, fire, smoke, and brimstone, issuing out of their mouths, by which the third part of men are killed, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:17,18). The reason of this slaughter is, because they had power both in their mouth and tails, which latter were like serpents, and had heads, with which they did mischief, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:19); and yet such who were not killed by these plagues, but escaped, did not repent of their idolatry, murders, sorceries, fornication, and theft, (~~REV~~ Revelation 9:20,21).

**Ver. 1.** *And the fifth angel sounded,* etc.] His trumpet:

*and I saw a star fall from heaven unto the earth:* some take this star to be Jesus Christ, the bright and morning star; and understand by falling, no other than his descending from heaven to earth, in which sense the word is used in (<sup>Gen 14:10</sup>Genesis 14:10); and that because he is not only said to have the keys of hell and death, (<sup>Rev 1:18</sup>Revelation 1:18); but particularly the key of the bottomless pit, (<sup>Rev 20:1</sup>Revelation 20:1); but then there is a wide difference in the use of the key by the star here, and the angel there, or between the opening of the pit, and letting out smoke and locusts, and the shutting it up, and Satan in it; the one well suits with Christ, the other not: nor is Satan here designed, as others think, who once was a bright star, and shone among the morning stars, but by sin fell from heaven, his first estate; and the fall of this Lucifer, son of the morning, was as lightning from heaven, (<sup>Luke 10:18</sup>Luke 10:18). But then this was a matter over and past, and what was well known to John; nor did he need a vision to represent this unto him: nor is Arius intended, who lived before any of the trumpets were blown; nor the Emperor Valens, who fell from the heavenly doctrine of Christ's divinity into the Arian heresy, which he encouraged and defended; whereby Christ, the sun of righteousness, was obscured, and the air, the church, enlightened by Christ, was darkened; in whose time the locusts, the Goths and Vandals, infected with Arianism, greatly distressed the eastern Christians; but his reign was long before the fifth angel sounded his trumpet, which was after the year 600: wherefore by this star is meant antichrist; but whether the western or eastern antichrist, the pope of Rome, or Mahomet, is a question: some interpreters go one way, and some another: Brightman thinks both are intended, seeing they both are antichrist, and rose to the height of their power much about the same time; and the characters and circumstances in this vision very. Well agree with them both: what is objected to Mahomet is, that he never was a doctor or teacher in the church, or had any dignity in it, which a star in this book most commonly signifies, and therefore could not be said to fall from it; but this may be observed, that the Arabians, among whom he lived, had received the Christian religion before his time; that he himself was conversant with the Scriptures, as appears by his wretched perversion of them in his Alcoran; and certain it is, that his accomplices were such as had professed Christianity, as Sergius, a Nestorian of Constantinople, and John of Antioch, an Arian, and he himself set up for a prophet: others think the pope of Rome is meant by the star, seeing the bishops of that city had shone out in great light and purity of doctrine and practice formerly, but now about this time most sadly apostatized; they had been indeed gradually

declining for some time, but now they may be said openly to fall from heaven, when Phocas, who murdered his master, the Emperor Mauritius, and took the imperial crown to himself, gave to Pope Boniface the Third the title and power of universal bishop, about the year 606, which he and his successors exercised in a most haughty and tyrannical manner:

*and to him was given the key of the bottomless pit*; which shows that this could not be a star in a literal sense, but must design some man, or body of men, and agrees well with the popes of Rome: by “the bottomless pit” is meant hell, out of which the beast arose, and into which Satan will be cast, (~~66107~~ Revelation 11:7 17:8 20:3); and by “the key” is designed the power of it, of opening and shutting it, of saving persons from it, or of casting them into it; and which the popes of Rome take to themselves, even all power in heaven, earth, and hell, signified by their triple crown; and which they arrogate to such a degree as to say, that if the pope should send many thousands into hell, no one ought to say, what dost thou? This is a different key from what were given to Peter; he had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, his pretended successors have the key of the bottomless pit; his were keys of knowledge, theirs of ignorance, and of the depths of Satan, let out of this bottomless pit, of which the antichristian religion, both Popish and Mahometan, consist; his were given by Christ, theirs by Phocas a murderer; or they had their power from the dragon, (~~66120~~ Revelation 13:2,4); from Satan himself, according to whose working and influence they come forth, though by divine permission.

**Ver. 2.** *And he opened the bottomless pit*, etc.] With the key that was given him; he made use of his universal power over all bishops and churches, enacted laws, issued out decrees, made articles of faith, and imposed them on men's consciences, and obliged all to submit to his hellish principles and practices; and this, as it may be applied to Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, may regard the publishing of his Alcoran, and obliging all his followers to receive it as the infallible word of God:

*and there arose a smoke out of the pit, as the smoke of a great furnace*; the Complutensian edition reads, “of a burning furnace”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; which may design false doctrine, and superstitious worship, which sprung from the decrees of popes and councils, and the Alcoran of Mahomet: and smoke being a dark thin vapour, and very troublesome to the eyes and nose, and of a perishing nature, which soon vanishes away, these are fitly expressed by it; for they are the hidden things

of darkness, and the authors and abettors of them are such who darken counsel by words without knowledge; they are empty things, have no solidity and substance in them, are comparable to wood, hay, stubble, smoke, and wind; and are very troublesome and offensive to all enlightened persons, and who have the smell and savour of divine things; and will all perish with the using, being the doctrines and commandments of men, when the true Gospel is an everlasting one. Smoke sometimes designs great afflictions, punishments, and judgments upon men, (<sup>GEN15:17</sup>Genesis 15:17 <sup>ISA14:31</sup>Isaiah 14:31); and here may represent those judgments, both spiritual and temporal, which the antichristian doctrine and worship, brought upon the world, and which have been manifest in all ages since.

*And the sun and the air were darkened by reason of the smoke of the pit;* Christ, the sun of righteousness, was greatly obscured by the Romish antichrist, by his false doctrine and worship, in his offices, merits, and grace, he taking upon him to be head of the church, the infallible interpreter of Scripture, and to give out pardons and indulgences; and particularly by the doctrines of merit, of works of supererogation, and of justification by works, etc. as he also was by Mahomet, who represented him only as a mere man, and exalted himself above him as a prophet; and by both were “the air”, the church which receives its light from Christ, darkened; or the Scriptures, which are the breath of God, are given by inspiration of him, these were most grievously beclouded, and most wretchedly perverted, both by the decrees of popes, and the Alcoran of Mahomet. And it is remarkable what Abulpharagius <sup>f266</sup>, an Arabic writer, reports, that in the seventeenth year of Heraclius the emperor, which was the year 627, and the fifth of the Hegira, in which year Mahomet began to plunder and make war; for in this year was his plundering excursion into Dumato'l Jundal, and the battle of Bani Lahyan, that half of the body of the sun was darkened; and the darkness remained from Tisrin the first, to the month Haziran, so that very little of its light appeared; which might portend that darkness he was introducing by his wretched religion. And frequently the sun and air have been darkened at noonday by the locusts, as Pliny <sup>f267</sup> relates; and of which we have had a late account from Transylvania; (see <sup>EXOD8:15</sup>Exodus 8:15).

**Ver. 3.** *And there came out of the smoke locusts the earth,* etc.] Not literally, for these locusts might not meddle with the grass, nor any green thing, or tree, as locusts do, only men, (<sup>REV9:4</sup>Revelation 9:4); and had a king over them, (<sup>REV9:11</sup>Revelation 9:11); which locusts have not, (<sup>PROV27:17</sup>Proverbs

30:27), though the allusion is to such, which spawn and breed in pits, and may be properly said to come out of them; hence in the Hebrew tongue they are called **ybg**, from **abg**, “a pit”, or “ditch”: nor are devils intended, though they may be compared to locusts for their original, hell, or the bottomless pit; and for their numbers, we read of a legion of them in one man; and for their hurtful and mischievous nature: nor are the Goths and Vandals designed; these, though they harassed some parts of the eastern empire, yet chiefly the western; besides, they appeared under the former trumpets: but these are to be understood of the western and eastern locusts, especially the latter. The western locusts are the clergy of the church of Rome, cardinals, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, of every order; these were not instituted by Christ, but rose out of the bottomless pit, from the antichristian smoke of councils, decrees, and traditions; and are fitly compared to locusts for their number, which have been almost as the sand of the sea innumerable, and have spread themselves all over the nations of the earth, that have gone by the name of Christendom; and for their devouring nature, living in plenty and idleness, upon the fat of the land, in the best commons, glutting themselves with the spoils of others, devouring widows' houses, and impoverishing countries and kingdoms wherever they come. The eastern locusts are the Saracens, and who are chiefly designed; and who were to harass and distress the eastern empire, and prepare for its ruin, which is brought on under the next trumpet by the Turks. These are fitly signified by locusts, because the locusts generally come out of the eastern parts: it was an east wind which brought the plague of locusts into Egypt, (<sup><D1013></sup>Exodus 10:13); and the children of the east, the Arabians, are compared to grasshoppers, or locusts, in (<sup><D1012></sup>Judges 7:12); and one of the names of a locust is **hbra**, “Arbeh”, not much unlike in sound to an Arab. To which may be added, that it is a tradition of the Arabians, that there fell locusts into the hands of Mahomet, on whose backs and wings were written these words;

“we are the army of the most high God; we are the ninety and nine eggs, and if the hundred should be made perfect, we should consume the whole world, and whatever is in it.”

And it was a law established by Mahomet, ye shall not kill the locusts, for they are the army of the most high God; and the Mahometans fancy that the locusts were made of the same clay as Adam was: and besides the

tradition before mentioned, they say, that as Mahomet sat at table a locust fell, with these words on its back and wings;

“I am God, neither is there any Lord of the locusts besides me, who feed them; and when I please I send them to be food to the people, and when I please I send them to be a scourge unto them;”

hence his Saracens may well go by this name. Now these Saracens sprung up in the times of antichristian darkness, both Papal and Mahometan, and may be said to come out of the smoke of the bottomless pit; and the religion of Mahomet, which they embraced, was no other; and like locusts they were innumerable, they went in troops and bands, as locusts do, (<sup><3117></sup>Proverbs 30:27); pillaging and ravaging all they could and their sudden and frequent incursions, the desolations and ravages which they made in the eastern empire, are very aptly expressed by the running to and fro of locusts; (see <sup><2304></sup>Isaiah 33:4 <sup><2419></sup>Joel 2:9).

*And unto them was given power, as the scorpions of the earth have power;* that is, to torment them, by striking them with their stings in their tails, (<sup><6195></sup>Revelation 9:5,10). These are called “scorpions of the earth”, to distinguish them from sea scorpions, which are a kind of fish: so Aristotle <sup>f268</sup> and <sup>f269</sup> Pliny speak of terrestrial scorpions, which are the most hurtful; these are of the serpentine kind have an innocent and harmless look, but are soon angry; have stings in their tails, which they are always striking with, that they may miss no opportunity of doing mischief, and with which they strike in an oblique way <sup>f270</sup>; and which very fitly describes the Saracens, the race of the Ishmaelites, a generation of vipers, a subtle and treacherous sort of people, very furious and wrathful, and who lived by continual robbing and plundering of others at an unawares: and this may be applied to the western locusts, the monks and friars, who are the seed of the serpent; and who by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple, have a form of godliness, and speak lies in hypocrisy, and lie in wait to deceive; and being provoked, are full of wrath and anger, and strike very hard with their anathemas and excommunications, and other sorts of punishment, which they have power to inflict.

**Ver. 4.** *And it was commanded them,* etc.] The locusts, by Christ, who has a sovereign power over all men, and lays them under the restraints of his providence:



*that they should not hurt the grass of the earth:* true Christians, private believers, it may be those of the lower class; who for their numbers, and for their flourishing estate under the dews of heavenly grace, and the distillations of the doctrine of grace, and the clear shining of the sun of righteousness upon them, and for their weakness, may be compared to grass; and yet as these being a company reserved by Christ for himself, who will not break nor bruise them, so neither will he suffer others to hurt them, and resents every offence done to these little ones:

*neither any green thing;* who have the truth of grace in them, are spiritually alive, and in prosperous circumstances, in a fruitful condition, being filled with the fruits of righteousness from Christ, the green fir tree, and whose leaves of profession continue green; and are themselves, as David says of himself; like a green olive tree in the house of God, (<sup><4008></sup>Psalm 3:8).

*Neither any tree;* any trees of righteousness, good and righteous who are often compared to trees planted by rivers of water, (<sup><4008></sup>Psalm 1:3) (<sup><2408></sup>Jeremiah 17:8); it may be the ministers of the Gospel, then of great grace and gifts, the tall cedars in Lebanon, may be intended; and so by these various expressions, Christians of every size, from the lowest to the highest class, may be signified. Green things and leaves of trees are what the locusts generally destroy, as appears from the plague of them in Egypt, (<sup><4008></sup>Exodus 10:5,12,15); and as they did in Syria in the year 1586, as Thuanus reports <sup>f271</sup>. Now as grass, green things, and trees, are what locusts most desire to feed upon and hurt, so real believers, truly godly persons, are those which both the eastern and western locusts, the Mahometans and Papists, have been very desirous of rooting out and destroying; but Christ takes care of these; these are as the apple of his eye, his jewels, his sheep, his sealed ones; none shall hurt them, they shall never perish; he knows them that are his, and he will preserve them amidst fire and smoke, amidst all the corruptions and calamities in the world:

*but only those men which have not the seal of God in their foreheads;* (see <sup><4008></sup>Revelation 7:2,3); the antichristian party, those of the Romish apostasy, the Papists; and these were they that suffered most by the Saracens, who abhorred image worship, and fell foul on the idolaters of this kind: and, on the other hand, the western locusts, the clergy of the church of Rome, had only influence over the reprobate part of mankind, and only wrought with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish, who were giver,

up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, but not upon any of the chosen ones, (<sup>scrib1</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:11-13).

**Ver. 5.** *And to them it was given that they should not kill them*, etc.] As the power of the locusts was limited with respect to the persons they should hurt, so with regard also to the mischief they should do; for even those whom they were suffered to annoy they might not kill, that is, utterly root out and destroy, so as that they were no more: and thus, though the Saracens killed great numbers in the eastern empire, by their frequent incursions and ravages, and made large conquests, yet they could never destroy the empire itself, or bring it in subjection to them; nor did they ever take Constantinople, the metropolis and seat of the empire, though they often besieged it. And as for the western locusts, the months, friars, etc. though they kill the souls, yet not the bodies of men that are under their power and influence:

*but that they should be tormented five months*; that is, not that the locusts should be tormented, but men by the locusts; and so the eastern empire was grievously teased and tormented by the Saracens, and many parts of it were conquered, plundered, and pillaged by them, though it was not killed and put an end to. In the year 628, Mahomet with his Saracens having obtained a place in Arabia Felix to dwell in, died in the year 631; from which time his successors, the Saracens, by little and little, subdued Palestine, Syria, and Egypt; and, in the year 640, took Persis, putting King Hormisda to flight; they laid siege to Constantinople seven years, but without success; in the year 698, Carthage was taken by them; and in following times many countries on the continent, and many of the islands, were grievously infested and distressed by them; though the empire itself did not fall into their hands; it was tormented by them, but not destroyed. And the western locusts have most dreadfully tormented men by their exorbitant dues demanded of them; and by obliging them to confessions, and to attend Mass; by enjoining them whippings, fastings, pilgrimages, and penances, and with the terrors of purgatory, and the like. The time that the locusts should torment men, which is “five months”, seems not to design any determinate time; but only that seeing five months is the time that locusts live, and are in their strength and power, even the five, hottest months in the year, from April to September<sup>f272</sup>, this seems to denote, that as long as the locusts live, the Saracens in the east, and the monks and friars in the west, so long men should be tormented by them; for it is certain that these have had power to torment men longer time than barely

five months; yea, even though these should be understood, according to the prophetic style used in this book, of five months of years, or an hundred and fifty years; and though this should be doubled, seeing they are repeated, (~~419D~~ Revelation 9:10); and so make up in all three hundred ears; for both the Saracens and the Romish clergy have distressed men, either of them, longer time than this: indeed, the flourishing condition of the Saracens was but about three hundred years, or two five months; but their empire or dominion lasted longer, even from the year 622, which was the year of the “Hegira”, or flight of Mahomet, to the year 1057<sup>f273</sup>, when the Turkish empire succeeded it: though it is pretty remarkable, that from the year 612, in which Mahomet began to preach publicly, and so let out the smoke with the locusts, to the year 762, in which the city of Bagdad was built, when and where the Saracens settled, and made no more excursions of any consequence, were just an hundred and fifty years, or five months of years, as Mr. Daubuz observes; and I will not say that this is not intended by this prophecy. Noah's flood prevailed over the earth one hundred and fifty days, or five months, (~~100724~~ Genesis 7:24).

*And their torment [was] as the torment of a scorpion when he striketh a man;* which gives great pain, is very distressing, and their stings are poisonous and mortal: it signifies how troublesome and afflictive those locusts were; to be among them was to live among scorpions, as in (~~3116~~ Ezekiel 2:6). As these locusts are like scorpions, so scorpions have been seen sometimes with wings like locusts; such an one, Pausanias<sup>f274</sup> relates, was brought into Ionia by a Phrygian.

**Ver. 6.** *And in those days men shall seek death,* etc.] Or desire to die, as Job did:

*and shall not find it;* or shall not die:

*and shall desire to die, and death shall flee from them;* death will be preferred to a miserable life; it will be chosen rather than life, (~~2488~~ Jeremiah 8:3). The ravages of the Saracens, their incursions, and the invasions by them, struck such terror into the inhabitants of divers parts of the empire, that they made death more eligible to them than life.

**Ver. 7.** *And the shapes of the locusts [were] like unto horses,* etc.] The heads of locusts, especially of some of them, are very much like the heads of horses: and here they are compared to horses

*prepared unto battle*; as they are in (<sup>2016</sup> Joel 2:4). The horse is a warlike creature, swift, strong, and courageous, (<sup>1832b</sup> Job 39:21-25). Locusts sometimes have appeared in the form of armies, and have marched in great order with their leaders before them, and have pitched their camps very regularly; (see <sup>2017</sup> Joel 2:7); of which we have lately had an account from Transylvania in our public papers. (This was published in 1747, Ed.) This part of their description may denote the wars of the Saracens, and the rapidity, force, and power with which they overran great part of the empire; and as it may be applied to the western locusts, the disputes, contentions, and quarrels raised by the Romish clergy.

*And on their heads [were], as it were, crowns like gold*; and in this shape some locusts have appeared, to which the allusion seems to be in, (Na 3:17), “thy crowned men are as the locusts”. In the year 1542, it is said <sup>f275</sup>, that locusts came out of Turkish Sarmatia, into Austria, Silesia, and other places, which had on their heads “little crowns”; (see <sup>2030</sup> Ezekiel 23:42). And the Arabians, as Pliny observes, go “mitrati” <sup>f276</sup>, with mitres, turbans like crowns, on their heads. This may design the several victories and conquests which the Saracens obtained in Arabia, Persia, Syria, Egypt, Africa, Spain, and many other places; and supposing this to have any reference to the western locusts, it may respect the triple crown of the head of then, the caps of the cardinals, the mitres of the bishops, and the shaven pates of the priests, in form of crowns.

*And their faces [were] as the faces of men*; which may be expressive of the affable carriage of Mahomet, and his followers, especially to the Christians, and of his great pretensions to holiness and religion, and of the plausible and insinuating ways, and artful methods, used by him, to gain upon men; and being applied to the clergy of the church of Rome, may denote their show of humanity, and their pretended great concern for the welfare of the souls of men, their flatteries, good words, and fair speeches, with which they deceive the simple and unwary.

**Ver. 8.** *And they had hair, as the hair of women*, etc.] Some locusts have smooth, others hairy heads <sup>f277</sup>: this fitly points at the Arabians or Saracens, who, as Pliny says <sup>f278</sup>, used to wear long hair without cutting it, and attired as women, and have their names also from women: they were called Hagarenes, from Hagar, Abraham's handmaid, by whom he had Ishmael, the father of these people; afterwards they took the name of Saracens, from Sarah, the wife of Abraham, whose posterity they would be thought to be;

though they may have the latter name, either from *qrs*, to “rob” and “steal”, with the Arabians, or from the same word, as it signifies to “comb”, from the combing and plaiting: of their hair. This may also point at the effeminacy of the western locusts, the monks and friars, who dress more like women than men; and many of them claim the virgin Mary for their patroness; and may in general design the votaries of the church of Rome, who are under the vow of a monastic life, as those among the Jews, under a Nazarite's vow, wore long hair.

*And their teeth were as [the teeth] of lions*; so in (<sup>f2006</sup>Joel 1:6); which may denote the ravages and devastations of the Saracens in the empire, robbing, pillaging, and destroying all they met with; and is applicable enough to the devouring jaws of the Romish clergy, their plundering the estates of men, their cruelties and barbarities exercised by their Inquisition, etc. Pliny says <sup>f279</sup>, that locusts will gnaw the doors of houses.

**Ver. 9.** *And they had breastplates, as it were breastplates of iron*, etc.] Alluding to the hard skin of the locusts, with which nature has fenced it <sup>f280</sup>; (see <sup>f2118</sup>Joel 2:8); and denotes the armour with which the Saracens were accoutred: and if to be understood of the western locusts, the hardness of their hearts, their seared consciences, or their protection by the princes of the earth, the many privileges they are possessed of, the laws made in their favour, and for their security; their breastplates were not breastplates of righteousness, faith, and love, nor in defence of truth, but against it. And some think the iron colour may denote the colour of their habit, their black garments:

*and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle*; (see <sup>f2118</sup>Joel 2:5). The sound of locusts, when they fly or march in large companies, is very great. Pliny says <sup>f281</sup>, they make such a noise with their wings, when they fly, that they have been thought to have been other winged creatures; hence a locust, in Hebrew, is sometimes called **ל x ל x**, the same name that is given to the high sounding cymbal. The sound of them is said to have been heard six miles <sup>f282</sup>. Aristotle <sup>f283</sup> ascribes it to the rubbing of their legs or thighs one against another; and so the Ethiopic version here renders it, “the sound of their feet”: this may be expressive of the swift and rapid incursions of the Saracens, and of the dreadful alarms to the nations which their invasions made; and may be applied to the noisy declamations, anathemas, excommunications, and interdicts of the Romish clergy.

**Ver. 10.** *And they had tails like unto scorpions*, etc.] Locusts are said to have the tail of a serpent, and of the vipers of the earth <sup>f284</sup>; (see Gill on “<sup>69B</sup>Revelation 9:3”), (see Gill on “<sup>69B</sup>Revelation 9:5”). And there were stings in their tails; either in the baser sort of them, the Saracens and Papists; or in their doctrines, the prophet being the tail, (<sup>295</sup>Isaiah 9:15); with which both Mahomet, who set himself up for a prophet, and the Romish clergy, who set up their decrees and unwritten traditions above the word of God, have poisoned and destroyed multitudes of souls:

*and their power [was] to hurt men five months*; (see Gill on “<sup>69B</sup>Revelation 9:5”).

**Ver. 11.** *And they had a king over them*, etc.] Which natural locusts have not, (<sup>307</sup>Proverbs 30:27); by whom is meant the false prophet Mahomet, who was at the head of the Saracens, and led them on to commit the outrages they did; and is believed in by the Turks to this day, as the great prophet of God, and by them preferred to all prophets, not only to Moses, but to Jesus Christ; he is the king of the eastern locusts, as the pope of Rome is the king of the western ones; for the Romish antichrist reigns, or at least has reigned, over the kings of the earth, (<sup>677</sup>Revelation 17:17,18);

*[which is] the angel of the bottomless pit*; to whom the key of it was given, (<sup>69B</sup>Revelation 9:1);

*whose name in the Hebrew tongue [is] Abaddon, but in the Greek tongue hath [his] name Apollyon*; both which signify a “destroyer”; and are very applicable both to Mahomet, who by his imposture has been the cause of the destruction of multitudes of souls, as well as by his wars, and those of the Saracens and Turks, of the lives of millions, and of the ruin of many kingdoms, countries, cities, and towns. Abulpharagius <sup>f285</sup>, an Arabic writer, relates, that in the times of the Chalif Al-walid, there was one Hejajus, who had caused to be slain, of the chief and illustrious men, an hundred and twenty thousand, besides others of the common people, and that fell in war; moreover, that there died in his prison fifty thousand men, and thirty thousand women: and the same writer reports <sup>f286</sup>, that the famous Abu Moslem put to death six hundred thousand men, who were known, besides those that were unknown, and whom he slew in wars and battles: both these instances are taken notice of by Mr. Daubuz, who justly observes, that surely nothing can come near this “Abaddon”, but the beast, the son of perdition, (<sup>311B</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:3). And to him, the pope of Rome, may the name be truly applied, who has led thousands into

perdition, and will go into it himself; and both he, and the false prophet, with the devil, will be east into the lake, which burns with fire and brimstone, and will be tormented for ever and ever, (<sup>2</sup>Thessalonians 2:4 <sup>6678</sup>Revelation 17:8,11 20:10). “Abaddon”, with the Jews, is one of the habitations or apartments of hell <sup>f287</sup>, because it destroys all; “Apollyon” is the same with “Apollo”, the god of the Heathens, who has his name from destroying <sup>f288</sup>.

**Ver. 12.** *One woe is past*, etc.] One of the three woe trumpets, the first of them; that is, in the vision which John had of it, not the thing itself designed by it:

*[and] behold there come two woes more hereafter*; under the blowing of the sixth and seventh trumpets.

**Ver. 13.** *And the sixth angel sounded*, etc.] His trumpet:

*and I heard a voice from the four horns of the golden altar, which is before God*; the allusion is not to the altar of burnt offering, which was covered with brass, but to the altar of incense covered with gold; and hence here, and elsewhere, it is called “the golden altar”, and was a figure of the intercession of Christ; for on this altar incense was offered, which was typical of the prayers of the saints offered by Christ, through his mediation: the matter of this altar was shittim wood, a wood that is incorruptible, and of long duration, denoting the perpetuity of Christ's intercession; and its being covered with gold expresses the glory and excellency of it; its form was foursquare, as is the city of the new Jerusalem, and shows that Christ's intercession avails for all his people in the four parts of the world: and on it were “four horns”, which some think represent the four evangelists, or the Gospel sent into the four parts of the world, and which is the power of God unto salvation; and for the contempt of which, in the eastern empire, the judgments signified under this trumpet came upon it; though rather these may point at the large extent and fulness of Christ's intercession, for all his people, in the four corners of the earth, as well as his power to protect and defend them, and to scatter and destroy his and their enemies. This altar is said to be “before God”, in a visionary way, as the altar of incense was before the vail, and the mercy seat, and by the ark of the testimony, (<sup>6206</sup>Exodus 30:1-3,6); suggesting that Christ continually appears in the presence of God for all the saints. Now from hence was a “voice heard” by John, and which seems to be the voice of Christ, the advocate and intercessor. In the Greek text it is, “one voice”;



not the voice of many angels round about the throne, nor of the souls under the altar, but of the one and only Mediator between God and man, the Lord Jesus Christ; and this was a voice, not supplicating, but commanding, being addressed to one of his ministering spirits.

**Ver. 14.** *Saying to the sixth angel which had the trumpet*, etc.] The sixth trumpet, which was given him, and he had prepared himself to sound, and had sounded:

*loose the four angels which are bound in the great river Euphrates*; not the four angels in (~~600~~ Revelation 7:1); they stood upon the four corners of the earth; these were in, or at the river Euphrates; they held the four winds, that they should not blow, or restrained the savage nations, that they should not hurt; these are bound themselves, that they might not do mischief; nor are angels by nature at all intended; not evil angels, though they are bound in chains of darkness, and are reserved to judgment, they are admitted indeed to rove about in the air and earth, but are under the restraints of the power and providence of God; nor good angels, who are at the divine beck, and go in and out, and are detained and sent forth according to the pleasure of God, and are sometimes employed in killing great numbers of men; (see ~~1245~~ 2 Samuel 24:15,16 ~~2195~~ 2 Kings 19:35); but men are here meant, as appears from (~~6016~~ Revelation 9:16,17), and particularly the Turks, as most interpreters agree; who dwelt on the other side the river Euphrates, and were let loose, or suffered to pass over that river into the eastern empire, to ruin and destroy it, as they did: these are called “angels”, because of their might and force, their power and strength, with which they bore all before them; and for their great swiftness and rapidity in the victories and conquests which the Ottoman family obtained; who, from very small beginnings, raised themselves, in a very little time, to a large monarchy, and founded the Turkish empire, which, from them, is to this day called the Ottoman empire. Ottoman the First subdued great part of Bithynia, and fixed the seat of his kingdom at Prusa; or rather his son Urchanes, who conquered Mysia, Lycaonia, Phrygia, Caria, and the rest, to the Hellespont, and the Euxine sea. Amurath his son took Callipolis, Hadrianople, and the adjacent provinces. Bajazet added to the empire Thessalia, Macedonia, Phocis, Attica, Mysia, and Bulgaria; and Mahomet the Second took Constantinople itself, and thereby put an end to the eastern empire; and all this was done in a very few years: it is said of this last, that he conquered two empires, and twelve kingdoms, and above two hundred cities <sup>f289</sup>. And these Ottoman Turks may be called angels, or



messengers, because they were the messengers and executioners of God's wrath upon the eastern empire: they are signified by "four angels", either, as some think, because of the four names of Saracens, Turks, Tartars, and Arabians, though all Mahometans, under which they went, before they were united under one emperor, Ottoman; or rather because of the four principalities, or governments, into which they were divided, while they were upon the banks of, or near to the river Euphrates; the seat of one being at Iconium, another at Bagdad, a third at Aleppo, and a fourth at Damascus; and chiefly because, when they passed the river Euphrates, they had four princes at the head of them, Soliman Shak, and his three sons. Soliman himself, as he passed, not knowing the fords of the river, was drowned in it; at which his sons being so affrighted, two of them, Sankur Zengi, and Gun Tugdi, returned to Persia, but the third, Ortogrules, with his three sons (which made "four" again) Condoz, Sarubani, and Othman, or Ottoman, continued, to whom Aladdin, sultan of Iconium, gave them some land among the mountains of Armenia <sup>f290</sup>; and from hence, by degrees, as before observed, a large empire was raised. Now these are said to be "bound in the great river Euphrates"; which river is to be literally understood, and is the same with that which is so called in (~~Gen~~ Genesis 2:14 15:18), and ran through Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and was the boundary of the Roman empire; so it was fixed by Hadrian <sup>f291</sup>; and beyond which the Turks, before this time did rarely go, and if they did, retired again: for till this time, as the historian says <sup>f292</sup>, the Turks had Asia, **εντος του ευφρατου**, "within Euphrates", and the Arabians Coelo-Syria and Phoenicia. Now here these were bound; they were not suffered to pass the river, or to make any inroads of any consequence further into the Roman empire; they were restrained, by the decree of God, from proceeding any further till this time; which, as he fixes a decreed place for the sea, that its waves should come thus far, and no further, so he restrains princes from their enterprises, and settles the bounds of empires, as long as he pleases; and they were kept back by the power of God from pouring in upon the empire, and pouring forth their fury upon it, who causes the wrath of men to praise him, and restrains the remainder of it; and they were also prevented from coming any further, as yet, through the internal divisions among themselves, and by the victories of the Christians in Palestine.

**Ver. 15.** *And the four angels were loosed*, etc.] The time being come, fixed by the decrees of God, making use of the Turks for the destruction of the eastern empire, the restraints of divine Providence were taken off from

them, and they were suffered to pass the river Euphrates; they were let loose like so many furies, and in a little time overran and destroyed the whole empire, and settled their own, now called the Turkish or Ottoman empire; and which was done about the year 1301.

*Which were prepared for an hour and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men;* which may in general denote their readiness, vigilance, and quick dispatch: they lay for a good while hovering over the banks of the river Euphrates, as if they were waiting for an order, or a commission to go over it: they were ready not only at a year's, a month's, a day's, but at an hour's warning, and all of them together; and as soon as ever they had the divine permission, they lost no time; they improved every opportunity, every year, every month, every day, every hour, to settle and enlarge their dominions to the ruin of others; and in a very short time did they accomplish what they desired: though others think this refers to a certain time fixed by God, in which they should be employed in killing men; and the sense is, that these people were prepared in the purposes and decrees of God, or were appointed for such a length of time here signified, by several dates, in which they should destroy a large multitude of men, by way of punishment for their idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornication, and thefts, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 9:20,21). An hour, which is the twenty fourth of a day or year, in the prophetic style, is fifteen days, and a day is a year, and a month is thirty years, and a year is three hundred sixty five years and a quarter, or ninety one days; in all, three hundred and ninety six years, and a hundred and six days; which is the precise time between A. D. 1057, when the Turkish empire begun, the empire of the Saracens being entirely demolished by Togrul Beg, or Tangrolipix, and A. D. 1453, in which year Constantinople was taken by the Turks, and an end put to the eastern Roman empire, signified by the third part of men; or else this space of time may be reckoned from the date of Ottoman's reign, May 19, 1301, which, to September 1, 1697, is just this term of time, when Prince Eugene obtained a remarkable victory over the Turks, the effect of which was the peace at Carlowitz the next year, since which time the Turks have done but little in Europe: and by this it should seem that their time of killing men here is over, and that their own destruction is hastening on. Mr. Daubuz rejects these computations, since a prophetic year consists of 360 days or years, and not 365, as those suppose; and thinks there is no mystery in these dates, and only signify the angels' unanimous execution of their commission at once.

**Ver. 16.** *And the number of the army of the horsemen*, etc.] This shows that the four angels before mentioned were men, and design generals of armies, or armies of men, even of horsemen; and manifestly point at the Turks, who were not only originally Persians, and had their name, as some say <sup>f293</sup>, from Turca in Persia, and **᠘ᠷᠫ**, from whence the Persians have their name, signifies an horseman; but the armies of the Turks chiefly consisted of horse, and what for show and for use, they had generally double the number of horses and mules as of men <sup>f294</sup>; and they are very good horsemen, and very dextrous at leaping on and off <sup>f295</sup>; and the horse's tail is still carried before the general, and principal officers, as an ensign expressive of their military exploits, and showing where their main strength lies. And the number of this mighty army, it is said,

*[were] two hundred thousand thousand*; or “two myriads of myriads”; two hundred millions, or twenty thousand brigades of ten thousand each; that is, a very large and prodigious number, almost infinite and incredible, like the army of Gog and Magog, as the sand of the sea, (<sup>f296</sup> Revelation 20:8). The Turks used to bring, and still do bring vast armies into the field: in the year 1396, Bajazet, with three hundred thousand men, fell upon sixty thousand Christians, killed twenty thousand of them, and lost sixty thousand of his own: against him afterward, in the year 1397, came Tamerlane the Tartar, with four hundred thousand horse, and six hundred thousand foot, and having killed two hundred thousand Turks, took Bajazet prisoner, and carried him about in a cage, in golden chains. In the year 1438, Amurath entered into Pannonia, with three hundred thousand horsemen: and in the year 1453, Mahomet took Constantinople with the like number <sup>f296</sup>; yea, it is said, that the army at the siege of that city consisted of forty myriads, or four hundred thousand men <sup>f297</sup>. It is reported, that the great Turk contemptuously sent to the emperor of the Romans a camel, or a dromedary, loaden with wheat, with this vow by a message, that he should bring against him as many fighting men as there were grains of wheat therein <sup>f298</sup>. And it is related <sup>f299</sup>, that when Ladislaus, king of Hungary, went out against Amurath with four and twenty thousand horse, Dracula, governor of Walachia, advised him not to attack the emperor of the Turks with so small an army, since he went out every day a hunting with more men than such a number:

*and I heard the number of them*; expressed by some angel, and therefore John was certain of it, otherwise he could not have told them.

**Ver. 17.** *And thus I saw the horses in the vision, and them that sat on them*, etc.] In such numbers, and with horsemen on them, and in such order, and in appearance, as follows:

*having breastplates of fire, and of jacinth and brimstone*; which may be understood either literally of their external breastplates, which being of polished iron, according to the custom of these people, looked at a distance like sparkling fire, and seemed to be of the colour of hyacinth, or of a sky colour, and appeared as flaming sulphur; though some think that their breastplates were of different colours, some looked like fire, others like jacinth, and others like brimstone; or it may denote that they would be accoutred in scarlet, blue, and yellow, which are the colours the Turks have commonly wore; or this may be understood of their internal breastplates, and the disposition of their minds, having in their breasts nothing but wrath, fury, desolation, and destruction; a fire devoured before them, and behind them a flame burned:

*and the heads of the horses [were] as the heads of lions*: gaping and roaring for their prey, or all bloody with it, and looked fierce, and savage, and terrible: this designs not so much the strength, boldness, and intrepidity of their horses, which are warlike creatures, and very undaunted in battle, as of the men that sat upon them, who were like David's heroes and warriors, (<sup><318></sup>1 Chronicles 12:8).

*And out of their mouths issued fire, and smoke, and brimstone*; which may be referred either to the horses, or to the horsemen, or both: some interpret this allegorically, and by "fire" understand either the tyranny of the Turks over their own people, or their fury against others, or their blasphemy against God, and Christ, and his people, being like so many railing Rabshakehs against the God of the Christians; and by "smoke" the false doctrine of Mahomet, which came out of the same bottomless pit the doctrine of the Romish antichrist did; and is fitly compared to smoke for its disagreeableness, darkness, levity, and duration; (see Gill on <sup><390></sup>Revelation 9:2"); and by "brimstone" the immorality and sad corruption of manners among the Turks, and what is allowed of, or winked at, as fornication, polygamy, sodomy, etc. but rather this is to be taken more literally, and represents the firing of guns on horseback in battle. Guns are a late invention, and the use of them was found out in the age this trumpet refers to; and were much made use of by the Turks in their wars, and particularly great guns or cannons; these were used by Amurath at the

sieges of Belgrade, and of Constantinople<sup>f300</sup>; and by Mahomet the Second at the taking of Constantinople, where a gun or cannon was used of that size, as to be drawn by seventy yoke of oxen, and two thousand men<sup>f301</sup>. Gunpowder set on fire is fitly signified by fire, smoke, and brimstone, which is made of nitre, charcoal, and brimstone; and the firing of guns on horseback is most aptly described by these coming out of the mouths of horses and horsemen: nor could it well appear to John to be otherwise, who could never have seen a gun, and one fired off in his life; nor could he well represent to others what he saw in vision, than in this manner.

**Ver. 18.** *And by these three was the third part of men killed*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “by these three plagues”: as the western Roman empire is in the preceding chapter frequently expressed by the third part of several things, (see ~~688E~~ Revelation 8:7-12); so here the eastern Roman empire by the third part of men; vast numbers of the inhabitants of which were destroyed by the Turks, through the use of guns, out of which issued fire, smoke, and brimstone; and Constantinople, the metropolis of it, was taken in this way, as before observed, with the taking of which the empire ceased.

*By the fire, and by the smoke, and by the brimstone, which issued out of their mouths*; that is, by the firing of guns.

**Ver. 19.** *For their power is in their mouth*, etc.] In what proceeded out of their mouth, or seethed to do so; in their guns, and what came out of them:

*and in their tails*; which may design their foot soldiers, which were as the tail to their horse, and who sometimes did great service; or their way of fighting when they fled, by casting up arrows into the air, which would fall upon the heads and horses of those that pursued them; or their ambushments, by which they destroyed many; or their perfidious violation of treaties; or it may be their tails may intend the doctrine of Mahomet, the false prophet, who is the tail, (~~239E~~ Isaiah 9:15),

*for their tails [were] like unto serpents*; crooked, crafty, poisonous, and, pernicious:

*and had heads*; every tail had a head to it; which may be understood of the officers of the foot soldiers, or of the priests and teachers of the Mahometan religion:

*and with them they do hurt*; with their guns, the power in their mouth, they did hurt to the bodies of men; and with their false doctrines, their tails, they did hurt to the souls of men; the Ethiopic version here adds, “five months”; which seems to be taken from (~~690~~) Revelation 9:10).

**Ver. 20.** *And the rest of men which were not killed by these plagues*, etc.] By whom are meant the western antichristian party; and such of them as were not plagued, harassed, and destroyed by the Turks, as in Germany, at least some parts of it, France, Spain, Italy, etc.

*yet repented not of the works of their hands*: their idols, their images of saints departed, which their hands had made; the goodness of God in saving them from the depredations of the Turks, should have led them to repentance for their idolatrous worship of images, but it did not:

*that they should not worship devils*; or demons, a sort of deities with the Heathens, that mediated between the superior gods and men; and here design angels and saints departed, which the Papists worship, and use as mediators of intercession for them; and this is no other than worshipping of devils, in God's account, and is downright idolatry, and the doctrine of it is the doctrine of devils:

*and idols of gold, and silver, and brass, and stone, and of wood*; which are the several materials of which the Popish images are made: and what aggravates the stupidity of the worshippers of these images, and of the persons represented by them, is, that these are such

*which neither can see, nor hear, nor walk*; can neither see their persons, nor hear their prayers, nor stir one foot to their help and assistance; (see ~~480~~ Psalm 115:4-7).

**Ver. 21.** *Neither repented they of their murders*, etc.] Of the saints and martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood the western antichrist is made drunk, and which will be found in her, and for which she is answerable. Now, though the western parts of the empire escaped the scourge of the Turks, yet this did not bring them to repent of their murderous practices, but they went on to take away the lives of godly men; witness the persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the murders of John Huss and Jerom of Prague, the burning of the martyrs here in Queen Mary's days, and the massacres in Paris and in Ireland, and their butcheries elsewhere; and which they have continued unto this day, where the Inquisition obtains:

*nor of their sorceries*; Jezebel the whore of Rome has been famous for, by which she has deceived all nations; many of the popes of Rome have been necromancers, given to the magic art, and have entered into covenant, and have had familiarity with the devil; and one part of the Romish service lies in exorcisms, conjurations, and enchantments, and which they still continue:

*nor of their fornication*; all sorts of uncleanness; not only simple fornication, but adultery, incest, sodomy, and all unnatural lusts; brothel houses have been set up and licensed by authority, which have yielded to the popes a yearly revenue of forty thousand ducats; the Romish clergy, popes, cardinals, priests, monks, and friars, have been dreadfully guilty of all manner of uncleanness, and still are; whence Rome is called Sodom, (~~6108~~ Revelation 11:8);

*nor of their thefts*; who under pretence of granting indulgences and pardons, and praying souls out of purgatory, with other tricks, cheat men of their money, pillage and plunder their estates, and devour widows' houses; rob men of their substance, and make merchandise of their souls: now all these iniquities the Papists in the eastern empire were guilty of, for which the Turks as a scourge were let in upon it, and destroyed it; and yet the western papacy, who did not suffer in these calamities, took no warning by them, did not repent of their sins, and reform their practices; but went on, and still go on in the same wicked way, and by their hardness and impenitence treasure up wrath against the day of wrath.

# CHAPTER 10

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 10

This chapter contains a vision of an angel of a wonderful appearance, the voices of the seven thunders, and an order to John to take the book in the hand of the angel, eat it, and prophesy. The angel is described by his strength, a mighty one; by his descent from heaven; by his attire, being clothed with a cloud; by a rainbow on his head; by his face being like the sun; by his feet, which were as pillars of fire, the one foot set on the sea, and the other on the earth; by having a little book open in his hand, and by the loud cry he made, like the roaring of a lion, (<sup><66015></sup>Revelation 10:1-3), upon which seven thunders uttered their voices, which John was going to write, but was forbid, (<sup><66015></sup>Revelation 10:4); next follows a solemn oath of the angels; the gesture he used, lifting up his hand to heaven; the person by whom he swore, the living God; what he swore to, that time should be no more, and that the mystery of God would be finished at the beginning of the seventh trumpet, (<sup><66015></sup>Revelation 10:5-7); then several orders are given to John, as to take the open book in the hand of the angel, which he did, to eat it, as he accordingly did; when he found it to be as it was told him it would be, namely, sweet in his mouth, but bitter in his belly; and then to prophesy again before people, nations, tongues, and kings, (<sup><66015></sup>Revelation 10:8-11).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw another mighty angel*, etc.] Not any mere man, as Justin the emperor, as some have thought, who sent letters abroad in favour of the orthodox doctrine, against the Arians, which they suppose is meant by the little book open in his right hand; and still less the pope of Rome, whether in the sense of Papists or Protestants, which latter represent him as a tyrant, treading upon men both in the islands and in the continent, and holding forth the book of canons and decrees; rather, as Mr. Daubuz thinks, Luther, with the rest of the reformers, is intended, and especially since the prophecy of this chapter respects the Reformation, which began before the end of the sixth trumpet; and the epithets given to this angel may denote his strength and courage, his divine authority, the protection of him, and the clear doctrine of peace and reconciliation he brought: however, a



created angel is not intended: not the angel that made proclamation for the opening of the book, and unsealing it, (<sup><66R2></sup>Revelation 5:2); between which, and having the book in his right hand open, is a wide difference; nor any other, though the epithet “mighty” belongs to angels in common; and though this angel swears by the living God; and though it was an angel by whom Christ signified the things contained in this book to John; but the uncreated Angel, the Lord Jesus Christ, seems rather designed, as appears both by comparing this with (<sup><27B7></sup>Daniel 12:7 10:5,6); and from the power he gave to the two witnesses, (<sup><66I03></sup>Revelation 11:3); which cannot agree with a created angel; and besides, who so proper to hold the book open as he who unloosed the seals, and opened it, and to whom the epithet “mighty” may be applied in the highest sense, as God; and who as man may be said to swear by the living God, and to whom the whole description well agrees? he is sometimes called an Angel simply, (<sup><0486></sup>Genesis 48:16 <sup><0230></sup>Exodus 23:20 <sup><4075></sup>Acts 7:35,38); sometimes the Angel of the Lord, and who appears to be Jehovah himself, the second Person, (<sup><0167></sup>Genesis 16:7, 10 18:1,2), compared with (<sup><0190></sup>Genesis 19:1 22:11,12); and sometimes the Angel of God's presence, (<sup><2360></sup>Isaiah 63:9); and the Angel of the great council in the Septuagint on (<sup><2306></sup>Isaiah 9:6); and the Angel, or messenger, of the covenant, (<sup><3001></sup>Malachi 3:1); and may be so called, because he is a messenger from God as man and Mediator, being sent by him to declare his will and redeem his people: and he is a “mighty” one; not only as God, being the mighty God, the Almighty, which appears by his creation of all things, and upholding them in their beings; but as Mediator, having all power in heaven and in earth, and being far above all principality, power, and might; and, as man, made strong by God for himself, and for his people: he appears now as “another” angel, distinct from the seven angels who had trumpets given them to sound, and six of which had already sounded; and particularly from the angel of the sixth trumpet, who had just sounded; though some copies, and the Complutensian edition, leave out the word *ἄλλον*, “another”; and very opportunely does he appear for the comfort of his church, when the trumpets that had been blown had brought such desolations upon the empire, western and eastern, and when both the western and eastern antichrists had appeared, and before the seventh trumpet sounds, and brings in the last and greatest woe: and he is said to *come down from heaven*; which does not design his incarnation, that was long before this time; nor his spiritual presence with his people, which is common to them in all ages; nor his second coming to judgment, which

will be by a descent from heaven, and in the clouds of heaven, for that is yet future; but in a visionary way, his appearance to and for his church and people in the dark times of antichrist, when afflicted by the Turk on the one hand, and the pope on the other:

*clothed with a cloud*<sup>f302</sup>; which is expressive not of the human nature of Christ, with which his divinity was veiled in his state of humiliation, so that few saw the glory of his divine Person and the greater part esteemed him a mere man; but rather of the obscurity of him, his person, offices, and grace, in those times of antichristian darkness, and even of the dim light and knowledge which his true and faithful followers had of him in those times; it was a dark and cloudy day with them, as well as the whole earth was covered with the gross darkness of Popery and Mahometanism; though it seems best of all to interpret this phrase of the majestic presence of Christ in his appearances to his people, who went before the people of Israel in a cloud by day in the wilderness, descended in one on Mount Sinai, dwelt in one both in the tabernacle and temple, was overshadowed by one on the Mount when transfigured, ascended in one to heaven, and will return in one, or more: moreover, the cloud may denote the power and protection of God attending the Reformation; (see <sup><0983></sup>Psalm 68:34 <sup><2045></sup>Isaiah 4:5);

*and a rainbow [was] upon his head*; which was a token of the covenant; (see <sup><0013></sup>Revelation 4:3); and the note there: this, with its blessings, is upon the head of Christ, the antitypical Joseph, and who is the head of his church and people; and Christ appearing in this form at this time when the world was overflowed with Popery and Mahometanism, shows that God was still mindful of his covenant, even in those worst of times, and would not suffer his church to be overwhelmed, and sunk in the general deluge of antichristianism, or the gates of hell to prevail against it; Christ, at such a tirade as this, very seasonably appeals with the rainbow of the covenant on his head, as a messenger of peace, and bringer of good tidings, to let his people know that ere long it would be halcyon days with them, and there would be times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, who was ever mindful of his covenant with them; and that the Gospel of peace and reconciliation would be preached unto them:

*and his face [was] as it were the sun*; or looked like the sun, as it did at the time of his transfiguration on the and as he is described in (<sup><0016></sup>Revelation 1:16), and may denote clearness and purity of Christ; both as God, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express of his person; and as

man, who is holy, harmless, up defiled; and is also expressive of that fight of nature, grace, and glory, which he imparts unto the sons of men; as well as of that beauty, loveliness, and amiableness in his person, which renders him as the sun, delightful to behold; and of the majesty of his person, and the manifestations of himself, to the great comfort, pleasure, and refreshment of his saints:

*and his feet as pillars of fire*; which may refer to the state of the church of Christ at this time, which was in the fire of afflictions, when many of its members were called to the stake, and burnt there for the sake of the Gospel, and yet were like “pillars”, firm and unshaken; the church was like the bush that Moses saw, which was on fire, but not consumed; Christ was with his people as they passed through it, that it could not kindle upon them so as to destroy them; and their faith, which was tried by it, was found to be much more precious than of gold that perisheth: or this may show what Christ then was, both to his people and to his enemies; to his people his feet were as “pillars” of brass and marble, to bear them up, and support them under all their trials and afflictions; his goings forth towards them in a way both of providence and grace, were in such a manner, as to strengthen and confirm them in the faith of him against all the powers of hell and earth; and they were like “fire”, to consume his and their enemies; with his feet he trod upon them, and subdued them under him, who were as stubble, briers and thorns, easily consumed by him, when at the same time he was a wall of fire to his people, and the glory in the midst of them.

**Ver. 2.** *And he had in his hand a little book open*, etc.] By which is meant not the Bible, the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament; or the book of the Gospel, the substance of which lies in a little room, and is no other than the preaching of Christ, and him crucified, as God's way of salvation; and which is now more open and manifest, and more clearly made known unto the sons of men, under the Gospel dispensation, than it was before, and especially since the time of the Reformation, to which this book, and the prophecies of it, may have respect; but the same book is here designed, which in (<sup>REV</sup> Revelation 5:1) is represented as in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, as shut and sealed; but the lion of the tribe of Judah, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, having taken it out of his hand, unloosed its seals, and opened it; and whereas we never read of his laying this book down, or of his delivering it to any other, he may be well supposed to be this mighty angel, who held it open in his hand: it may be said to be “a little book”, because now not only many of the scenes and visions in it were

exhibited, upon the opening of the seals; but because, at the time this vision refers to, many of its prophecies were accomplished, so that the bulk of it was greatly reduced; and it may be represented as “open”, because the seals of it were unloosed, and the things in it revealed; and it is to be observed, that as the several seals of this book, and the opening of them, refer to the state of the empire, both as Pagan and as Christian, as has been seen; so the little book itself, clear of these seals, sets forth the state and condition of the church in the empire, under its different revolutions and appearances:

*and he set his right foot upon the sea, and [his] left [foot] on the earth;* which signifies that he was Lord and possessor of both, of the whole terraqueous globe, being the Maker and supporter of it; and that his Gospel should be spread all over the world, both on the continent and in the islands of the sea; and that his kingdom should be from sea to sea, and from the rivers to the ends of the earth; that the abundance of the sea should be converted to him, or the maritime parts of the world should be subject to the sceptre of his grace and government; and that the earth, and the uttermost parts of it, should be his possession, though it was now almost wholly in the hands of the Turk and pope; and it may be observed, that he set his foot upon both earth and sea, out of which the two beasts arise, (<sup><663E></sup>Revelation 13:1,11), which shall be destroyed by him.

**Ver. 3.** *And cried with a loud voice,* etc.] That all might hear, and to show earnestness and affection, and that it was a matter of great importance, as well as to denote the certainty of it; what he said is not expressed, but seems to be the book of prophecy, or what regarded the state of his church and kingdom, in the several periods of time to the blowing of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world shall become his: and this voice of his was

*as [when] a lion roareth;* loud and terrible; and indeed it was the voice of the lion of the tribe of Judah, which was heard far and near, throughout the whole world, by his people, and is terrible to his enemies:

*and when he had cried, seven thunders uttered their voices;* which some understand of the ministers of the Gospel in the times of the Reformation, who were “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder, and think that they are the same with the angels in (<sup><664E></sup>Revelation 14:6), etc. or rather these may signify the denunciations of God's judgments, and of his wrath, both upon the eastern and western antichrist, the Turk and pope, signified by the seven vials,

hereafter to be poured out, mentioned in (~~6601~~ Revelation 16:1-4,8,10,12,17).

**Ver. 4.** *And when the seven thunders had uttered their voices*, etc.] Or declared all they had to denounce upon the enemies of Christ and his church:

*I was about to write*; John taking particular notice of what they said, and believing it might be for the advantage, comfort, and support of the church of Christ under its suffering circumstances, to be informed of what God had in reserve among the treasures of his wrath for their adversaries, was going to put it down in writing, that he might retain it, and the better communicate it, and in obedience to the order given him, (~~6619~~ Revelation 1:19);

*and I heard a voice from heaven*; from God the Father, for the Son of God in a visionary way was come down from heaven, in the form before described; and this voice answers to the Bath Kol of the Jews, and is the same which ordered John to write, (~~6643~~ Revelation 14:13), though it here forbade him:

*saying unto me, seal up those things*; treasure them up in thy mind, keep them within thy breast, hide them from men, for the present, and say nothing of them:

*which the seven thunders have uttered, and write them not*; that they may not be seen and read at present, because the same things were to be exhibited in another form, and at another time, under the seven vials; only it was thought proper that John should have some intimations of them for his own advantage, and to prepare him for the following vision, for the eating of the book, and for his prophesying before people, nations, tongues, and kings. Mr. Daubuz is of opinion, that by these “seven thunders” are meant seven kingdoms which have received the Reformation, and established it by law within their several dominions, whereby the doctrine and worship of the reformers are become the established religion there; and the laws by which it is established are “the voices” uttered by those supreme authorities; and they are these,

1. The German princes, making one republic.
2. The Swiss cantons.
3. Sweden.

4. Denmark, with Norway.
5. England and Ireland.
6. Scotland.
7. The United Provinces of the Netherlands.

And whereas John, who represents the first reformers, and other faithful men, was for writing what these thunders uttered, this denotes the zeal and earnest desires of these good men to push the Reformation further, and make a thorough work of it, as well as their expectation that now was the time in which the mystery of God was to be fulfilled, in which they were mistaken; wherefore John is bid to seal up these things, and not write them, which shows that the progress of the Reformation was to be stopped from doing fully what the first reformers were prompted to by the supreme powers which encouraged them, and that by the opposition of other temporal princes; it not being the will of God that the glorious state of the church should arise from these thunders, and be built on their laws and establishments; and suggests, that this is not the time in which, nor these the ways and means by which the mystery of God will be finished, which will not be until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet, (<sup>6607</sup>Revelation 10:7); whereas this period of time, to which the Reformation belongs, is an event of the sixth trumpet: and this exposition bids very fair to be the right one.

**Ver. 5.** *And the angel which I saw stand upon the sea and upon the earth,* etc.] His right foot being on the one, and his left foot upon the other, as described in (<sup>6602</sup>Revelation 10:2);

*lifted up his hand to heaven;* the Oriental versions read, “his right hand”; and so some copies, and the Complutensian edition: the man clothed in linen, (<sup>2716</sup>Daniel 12:6,7), who is the same with the angel here, held up both his hands; the lifting up of the hand was a gesture used in swearing: (see <sup>4142</sup>Genesis 14:22); so the Jews say <sup>f303</sup>, “the right hand”, or by the right hand, *h[wby wz*, “this is an oath”, according to (<sup>2717</sup>Daniel 12:7); or whether the right hand or the left, is an oath, according to (<sup>2718</sup>Isaiah 62:8).

**Ver. 6.** *And sware by him that liveth for ever and ever,* etc.] That is, by the living God, who is the true God: and is so described to distinguish him from idol gods, who have no life nor breath in them; and to assert the excellency and perfection of his nature, who has life in himself originally, and independently, is the fountain of life to all creatures living, and who are

supported in their life and being by him; and so he always was, is, and ever will be; this is the same as swearing by Anciualus<sup>f304</sup>:

*who created heaven, and the things that therein are*; the airy, starry, and third heavens, and the inhabitants of them, the fowls of the air, the sun, moon, and stars, and the angels of heaven, as well as the souls of departed saints, and the bodies of as many as are there:

*and the earth, and the things that therein are*; men, beasts, and creeping things, trees, herbs, minerals, etc.

*and the sea, and the things which are therein*: the several sorts of fishes in it: this is also said to distinguish the great God from all false gods, who made not the heavens and the earth, who alone is, and ought to be the object of an oath, or by whom an oath is to be made, and not any creature whatsoever; and since the Angel that here swears is the Lord Jesus Christ, this may be understood of him either as man, swearing by God the Father, in which respect the Father is greater than he; or as a divine person, and so swears by himself, (<sup>303</sup>Hebrews 6:13); for to himself do these characters belong of living for ever and ever, and of having made the heaven, earth, and sea, and all in them: the thing he swears to is,

*that there should be time no longer* which is not to be understood of the cessation of time, and the swallowing of it up in eternity, at the end of all things, when it will be no more measured out by the revolutions of the sun and moon, which will then be no more; for this did not take place upon the angel's oath, or at the time this vision refers to; for after this, there is to be time for the seventh angel to sound his trumpet in, though perhaps that is excepted in the next verse; and after the sounding of that, there will be the space of a thousand years, in which Christ will reign with his people on earth; and after that there will be some space of time for the Gog and Magog army to attack the beloved city; all which will be before the end of all things, or before eternity, properly speaking, takes place; and besides, such an illustrious appearing of Christ as before described, and so solemn an oath as is here made, do not seem necessary to ascertain a truth which nobody doubts of; and everyone knows that after this world, and all things in it are at an end, time will be no more. The true key to this passage is (<sup>2117</sup>Daniel 12:7); where the man clothed in linen swears, that to the end of wonders should be a time, times, and a half, and here the angel swears that time should be no longer; that is, that these time, and times, and half a time, should be no longer; that these dates would be up, and the events



affixed to them be accomplished, when the seventh angel should begin to sound his trumpet: the same divisions of time are made in (<sup><6624></sup>Revelation 12:14); and are the same exactly with the 1260 days, or years, and the forty two months of years, so often mentioned in this book: for a time is a prophetic year, that is, 360 years; and times are two prophetic years, or 70 years; and half a time is half a prophetic year, or 180 years, in all 1260 years: now add the several events to be accomplished in this period of time, and it will give the full sense of this passage thus; the angel swears that the thee of antichrist's reign, his tyranny over the saints, his persecution of them, which was to last forty two months, (<sup><6635></sup>Revelation 13:5), should be no longer; nor of the holy city being trodden under foot by the Gentiles, the Papists, which bears the same date, (<sup><6612></sup>Revelation 11:2), and is called the times of the Gentiles, (<sup><6224></sup>Luke 21:24); nor of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, which has just the same measure of duration, (<sup><6613></sup>Revelation 11:3); nor of the church's retirement, and being hid in the wilderness, (<sup><6624></sup>Revelation 12:14); in short, the time of the four monarchies, and of the last of them, the Roman, and of the last branch of that, the Papal, should be no more than till the sounding of the seventh trumpet, when the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ; (<sup><6615></sup>Revelation 11:15); the words will bear to be rendered, as some have observed, "that there should be delay no longer"; that is, of the coming and kingdom of Christ; though the bridegroom has tarried, he will come, and will not tarry beyond the time the angel swears to; every seal of the sealed book is a delay of, and a stop upon, the open appearance of Christ's kingdom; and the opening of every seal is an advance to it; and when the sixth seal was opened, and Paganism destroyed, and Christianity spread throughout the empire, the kingdom of Christ might have been expected to have appeared; but there was a seventh seal to be opened, which was a stop upon it, and which when opened brought ruin and destruction upon the Christian empire, both western and eastern, under the first six trumpets; and till the seventh sounds there will be a delay of Christ's kingdom, but when that sounds there will be no more a delay.

**Ver. 7.** *But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound*, etc.] This is an exception to what the angel had said and swore to, that time should be no longer; "but", or "unless", or "except the time of the voice of the seventh angel", as the Ethiopic version renders it; when a new period and sort of time should begin, very different from the former, which then should be no more; for now will be the time of Christ's



kingdom on earth, which shall last a thousand years; this time will not be like the former, a time of darkness and ignorance, as was in some periods, partly through the errors and heresies which were propagated in early times, and through that barbarity and ignorance which the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, spread over the empire, when they broke into it, and chiefly through the smoke of the bottomless pit, the false doctrine and worship of the Papists and Mahometans; but in the time of the seventh angel, all this gross darkness will be removed, and it will be a time of unspeakable and everlasting light, so that there will be no need of the sun and moon, of Gospel ministrations and ordinances: nor will it be a time of affliction and persecution; time in that sense will be no more, as it has been under the ten Pagan emperors, and under the Arian emperors, and under the Papal hierarchy; for in this period there will be no more death, sorrow, crying, pain, and tears; though there will be time, it will be another sort of time, quite different from the former, which will be no more when the seventh angel once begins; and as soon as he begins to sound, this will put an end to antichristian time; and at the end of his sounding will begin the time of Christ, or the thousand years' reign: and then

*the mystery of God should be finished*; that is, the angel not only swears that time shall be no longer, but that also then shall be finished the mystery of God; by which is meant, not the resurrection of the dead, and the change of the living, which is called a mystery, (~~<4151>~~1 Corinthians 15:51); for though when this angel sounds, and has done sounding, and Christ comes, the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the dead in Christ, will be finished, yet not the whole resurrection; for the rest of the dead will not live again till the end of the thousand years: but rather the Gospel is designed, which is often called the mystery, and the mystery of the Gospel, and contains many mysteries in it, which are styled the mysteries of God; which respect him, his being, persons, operations, and grace; and are revealed and made known by him; and the finishing of this may respect the preaching of the Gospel to all nations, which will be before the end of the world, and whereby the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and multitudes of souls converted; wherefore it may be best of all to understand this of the church of God, the general assembly and church of the firstborn, even all the elect of God, whose number will now be finished and completed in the conversion of the Jews, and in the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, both which are called “mysteries”, (~~<4125>~~Romans 11:25,26 ~~<4104>~~Ephesians 3:4-6); and now as the antichristian church is called

“mystery”, “Babylon”, (<sup><617></sup>Revelation 17:5); and “the mystery of iniquity”, (<sup><517></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:7); so the true Christian church, the new Jerusalem, coming down from heaven, and prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, may bear the name of the mystery of God; and this may also take in the mystery of all God's providences and promises, and prophecies, respecting the state of his church and people on earth:

*as he hath declared to his servants and prophets*; as to Isaiah in (<sup><218></sup>Isaiah 60:3-5), etc. and (<sup><218></sup>Isaiah 66:8); and to Daniel, in (<sup><214></sup>Daniel 2:44) (<sup><217></sup>Daniel 7:25 12:6,7); and to Zechariah, in (<sup><314></sup>Zechariah 14:9), and others; and which was a Gospel declaration, as the word signifies; it was good news and glad tidings; glorious things were declared to them, and spoken by them, concerning the city and church of God, its happy state on earth, and Christ's reign in it.

**Ver. 8.** *And the voice which I heard from heaven*, etc.] In (<sup><604></sup>Revelation 10:4);

*spake to me again, and said, go and take the little book which is open in the hand of the angel which standeth upon the sea and upon the earth*; as John was to prophesy, (<sup><601></sup>Revelation 10:11); it was necessary that he should have a mission and a commission from heaven; and that he should have the open book of prophecy to prophesy out of; and that he should receive this from the angel's hands, who had unloosed its seals, and opened it: and just so to ordinary prophesying, or preaching, it is necessary that men should have their commission from heaven, should be called of God, and sent by him; and that they should have the book of the Scriptures before them, and open to them, and speak according to these oracles, agreeably to the law and to the testimony, which are profitable for doctrine; and that they should also receive the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, with gifts, and a commission to preach it, from the Angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, who has all power both in heaven and in earth; (see <sup><602></sup>Revelation 10:2).

**Ver. 9.** *And I went to the angel*, etc.] According to the order given him; he was not disobedient to the heavenly vision; and, indeed, whither should any go knowledge but to him who has the words of eternal life, and is the great prophet of the church? and to whom should John go to qualify him for prophesying, but to him, who, as man and Mediator, had this revelation of future things given him? (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 1:1);

*and said unto him, give me the little book*; he did not take it without his leave, but in a modest and humble manner asks him to give it him, that he might deliver out the prophecies in it to others: so ordinary prophets and ministers of the word should go to Christ, to have their eyes opened, their understandings enlightened, that they may understand the Scriptures, and explain them to others:

*and he said unto me, take it, and eat it up*; which must be understood not literally, but mystically; and the sense is this, take the book, and diligently peruse it, and with as much eagerness as an hungry man would eat a meal; so greedy are some persons of reading, and as it were of devouring books; hence Cicero called <sup>f305</sup> Cato “helluo librorum”, a glutton at books: and in such manner John is bid to take and eat this book, and look into it, and read it over diligently, and consider what was in it, and meditate upon it, and digest the things contained in it, and lay them up in his mind and memory; and for the present hide and conceal them, in like manner as he was bid to seal, and not write what the seven thunders uttered; and so, though this book is represented to him as open in the angel's hand, yet he must take it and eat it, and hide it in his belly, because the things in it as yet were not to be accomplished: so for ordinary prophesying, or preaching, the ministers of the word should diligently read the Scriptures, constantly meditate on them, digest the truths of the Gospel in their own minds, and lay them up in the treasury of their hearts, and bring them forth from thence in due season:

*and it shall make thy belly bitter, but it shall be in thy mouth sweet as honey*; as Ezekiel's roll was to him when he ate it, (~~28RE~~ Ezekiel 3:1-3); the Alexandrian copy, instead of “thy belly”, reads “thy heart”.

**Ver. 10.** *And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up*, etc.] As he was bid to do:

*and it was in my mouth sweet as honey*; so is the Gospel in the mouth of a faithful minister of it, who has a spiritual knowledge, and a savoury experience of it; and so it is in the mouth of an understanding hearer, who finds it, and eats it, to the joy and rejoicing of his heart; and so this little book of prophecy being looked into, read, and considered by John, the first taste and knowledge he had of the things contained in it were exceeding grateful and delightful; the view it gave him of the glorious state of the church, and kingdom of Christ on earth, filled with unspeakable pleasure:

*and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter*; so the ministration of the Gospel occasions bitterness, grief, and sorrow, to the preachers and professors of it, through the persecutions that attend it, the obstinacy and hardness of men's hearts against it, and its being the savour of death unto death to many that hear it; and so the little book of prophecy, upon a perusal of it, giving to John a view of the witnesses prophesying: in sackcloth, and of their bodies being killed, and lying exposed in the street of the great city, and of the church's flying into the wilderness, and continuing there for a time and times, and half a time, and of the barbarities and cruelties exercised on the saints by the whore of Rome, whom he saw made drunk with their blood, made his belly bitter, or filled him with sorrow, grief, and pain.

**Ver. 11.** *And he said unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel, from whom John received the little book; the Alexandrian copy reads, “they said unto me”: both the voice of God the Father from heaven, that bid him take the book, and the angel that bid him eat it:

*thou must prophesy again before many people, and nations, and tongues, and kings*; which is to be understood not of John's preaching again to many people, and nations, after his return from his exile at Patmos, as he had done before his banishment thither; and much less of his prophesying along with Enoch and Elias, towards the end of the world, grounded upon two fabulous notions, the one that Enoch and Elias will appear in person before the coming of Christ, and the other, that John died not, but is still alive somewhere, and will continue till Christ's second coming; but rather of his delivering more prophecies out of the open little book; not “before”, as we render it, but either “concerning” many people, nations, tongues, and kings, as the Syriac version renders it: or “against” them, that is, those people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, over which the whore of Babylon reigns, or has reigned, and the ten kings, and kings of the earth she rules over, (<sup>46712</sup> Revelation 17:12,13,15,18). Moreover, this may not so much design John's prophesying in person, as the prophesying: of the witnesses or ministers of the word in the several periods of time, whom John personated and represented; and of whom mention is made in the next chapter, to which this seems to be a transition.

# CHAPTER 11

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 11

This chapter contains the order to measure the temple of God; an account of the two witnesses, their prophesying: and power, their slaying, resurrection, and ascension to heaven, with what followed upon it; and the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and the effects of that. A measuring rod is given to John, with an order to rise and measure the temple, altar, and worshippers, and to leave out the outer court, which was to be given to the Gentiles, who tread the holy city under foot forty and two months, (~~6610b~~ Revelation 11:1,2), the same date with the 1260 days the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, (~~6610b~~ Revelation 11:3), who are compared to two olive trees and to two candlesticks, and are said to stand before God, (~~6610a~~ Revelation 11:4), and who are further described by their power to destroy those that hurt them with fire that proceeds out of their mouths; to shut the heaven, that it rain not during their prophecy; to turn water into blood, and smite the earth with all manner of plagues at pleasure, (~~6610b~~ Revelation 11:5,6); but when the time of their prophecy and testimony is expired, their enemies will have the advantage of them; the antichristian beast of Rome, described by the place of his ascent, the bottomless pit, will fight against them, overcome, and kill them; their dead bodies will be exposed publicly within the Roman jurisdiction, and not suffered to be interred; and their enemies will make a public and general rejoicing over them, (~~6610b~~ Revelation 11:7-10); but after a short space of time they will revive, and stand upon their feet, to the surprise of all spectators; and being invited by a voice from heaven, will ascend thither, in the sight of their enemies; upon which will be an earthquake, in which the tenth part of the city of Rome will fall, and seven thousand men be slain; which will cause consternation in the rest, and put them upon giving glory to God, (~~6611b~~ Revelation 11:11-13); and this will put an end to the second woe, and the third will quickly follow, (~~6611a~~ Revelation 11:14), which is the sounding of the seventh trumpet; the effects of which are, voices heard in heaven, declaring that the kingdoms of the world are become Christ's, and that he shall reign for ever and ever, (~~6611b~~ Revelation 11:15); upon which the four and twenty elders, that sat on their seats before God, congratulate him,

worship, and give thanks unto him, at the Lord God Almighty and eternal; partly because of his visible power and kingdom he now takes to himself; and partly because the time of avenging his people that had suffered for him upon the nations, which makes them angry, was now come; as also because now would be given rewards to all his prophets, saints, and those that feared him, as well as antichrist and his followers would be destroyed, (~~6116~~ Revelation 11:16-18); and other effects of this trumpet are, the opening of the temple of God in heaven, a sight of the ark of the testament, lightnings, voices, thunderings, an earthquake, and great hail, (~~6110~~ Revelation 11:9).

**Ver. 1.** *And there was given me a reed like unto a rod*, etc.] A measuring reed, which with the Jews was six cubits long, (~~23015~~ Ezekiel 40:5); with the Greeks and Romans, ten feet long; the Ethiopic version here calls it a “golden reed”, as in (~~6215~~ Revelation 21:15). This was given unto John very likely by the same angel that gave him the little book, since he afterwards bids him arise and measure with it; and by it seems to be designed the holy Scripture, or the word of God, which is sometimes called a line, a rule, and rod, (~~39304~~ Psalm 19:4 110:2 ~~48166~~ Galatians 6:16), and which is the rule and measure of doctrine and faith; and by it all doctrine is to be tried and measured, and whatsoever is not agreeably to it is not of God, nor to be received, but rejected; and it is the rule and measure of all discipline, worship, and practice; it lays down the plan of a Gospel church, which should be gathered out of the world, and separated from it; it shows who are the proper materials of it, what officers are to be constituted in it, and what ordinances are to be administered, and what laws and rules should be observed in receiving and rejecting of members, and according to which the whole community should walk; in short, it directs to all the forms, laws, and ordinances of God's house; and this is the use John, or those whom he represents, were to make of it:

*and the angel stood*; the same that stood with his right foot on the sea, and his left foot on the earth, and gave to John the little book, (~~6001~~ Revelation 10:1,2,9); though it may be not in the same place and situation, but rather at the gate of the temple, as in (~~23015~~ Ezekiel 40:3). This clause is not in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, but is in the Syriac version and Complutensian edition, and is rightly retained, or otherwise it would seem as if the reed spoke:

*saying, rise and measure the temple of God, and the altar, and them that worship therein*; the allusion is to the temple of Jerusalem, with its appurtenances; there were the most holy place, and the holy place, which was the inner court of the priests, into which they only entered, which was strictly speaking the temple, and is referred to here; and there was the altar of burnt offering, which was in the court of the priests, and the altar of incense, which was before the veil that divided between the holy and holy of holies; and then there was the outer court for all the Israelites to worship in, referred to in (~~Rev~~ Revelation 11:2): and by “the temple of God” is here meant the church, of which the temple was a type; and so particular congregated churches are called temples, (~~1Co~~ 1 Corinthians 3:16,17 ~~2Co~~ 2 Corinthians 6:16 ~~Eph~~ Ephesians 2:21). Solomon, a man of peace, was the builder of the one, and Christ, the Prince of peace, the builder of the other; Solomon's temple was built of hewn stones, made ready before they were brought thither, and a true church of Christ consists of lively stones, hewed and fitted for this spiritual building by the Spirit of God; the temple at Jerusalem was built on a high mountain, and on the north of the city, the church is built upon the rock Christ Jesus, and the Gospel church, or churches, in the times of the sixth trumpet, which this vision refers to, and to the close of it, are in the northern parts of Europe; and as the temple was for religious use and service, for the worship of God and sacrifices, so is the Gospel church, and so are Gospel churches, for the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances, and for the offering up the sacrifices of prayer and praise; and as in the most holy place were the ark of the covenant, and the mercy seat, and as it was the place of the divine Presence, where God granted communion to his people, so in the church are held forth the mysteries of the covenant, Christ as the mercy seat and the propitiatory, in whom the displays of grace are made, and through whom the saints have fellowship with God, and enjoy his presence: “the altar” may design Christ himself, by whom the saints draw nigh to God, offer up their sacrifices, and are accepted with him; or the whole of Gospel worship and ordinances, as prayer, preaching, singing of praise, and the administration of baptism and the Lord's supper: and they “that worship therein”, or “thereat”, are the royal priesthood, or such who are made kings and priests unto God, for none went into the inner court, or served at the altar, but priests; and who make use of Christ, the altar, of his person, blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, in their approaches to God; and who are praying souls, wait at the altar of incense, and draw nigh to the throne or grace with a true heart, and worship God in Spirit and in truth: now



“measuring” of these respects not the primitive church for the first three or four hundred years, and the formation of that according to the rule of God's word, and as a pattern to other churches; for though the apostolic church, or the church as it was in the apostles' time, and as described in their writings, was such a church; yet the church for such a space of time as above was not; there were great departures both from doctrine and discipline, the mystery of iniquity began to work, and way was made for the man of sin and it was far from being a pattern to be imitated; and besides, this measuring refers to the times of the sixth trumpet, and the close of it: nor does it respect the sealing of the 144,000 between the sixth seal and the opening of the seventh seal, which was for the protection and security of them during the times of the six trumpets, which brought desolation into the empire, and apostasy into the church; though measuring sometimes may seem to denote protection, as in (~~300~~ Zechariah 2:1,2,5); and though the outer court is, and will be, a protection to spiritual worshippers, so long as it is not in the hands of the Gentiles, yet this is not the sense, at least not the whole of it: nor does this refer to the hiding of the church in the wilderness, during the reign of antichrist; which might seem to be signified by the internal worshippers retiring to the altar, and to the holy and the most holy place, and being concealed there; and especially since the opening of the temple in (~~6119~~ Revelation 11:19), may seem to be opposed to this; but that takes in too large a compass of time, this being an affair relating only to the close of the sixth trumpet, and which was to be before the seventh trumpet sounded: it seems rather to respect the times of the Reformation by Luther, Calvin, and others, when the measuring reed of the word was taken in hand, and used; but then it was used chiefly for the restoration of pure doctrine, and with good success, but not so much for the regulating and orderly discipline of the churches, for the purity of Gospel worship and ordinances; most, if not all the reformed churches, set out upon too broad a bottom, being national, provincial, or parochial; there was a temple, and an altar erected for God, and there were internal and spiritual worshippers; but then they took in the outward court, which should not have been measured in, and circumscribed with them, but should have been left out; but the time for this was not yet come, but now is: in short, I take it that this measuring refers to what was done in the last age, particularly in our nation; and that it has respect to the separation from the national church, when churches, more or less, were gathered and formed according to the Gospel plan and the primitive institution; a work which never was set about and so effectually done before since the age of



the apostles: the baptized and congregational churches are the temple, altar, and worshippers measured, who have both the true doctrine, worship, and discipline of God's house among them; a set of men in the last age were raised up, who drew a plan of churches, and of church discipline, according to the ancient model; gathered churches out of the world, and constituted them according to the order of the Gospel; circumscribed them, and enclosed them according to the rules of God's word, admitting none but such into communion who were judged by the churches subjects of the grace of God; and rejected and excluded from among them such as were wicked and scandalous; and so reduced the pure members of churches to a small number, a little flock, a few names in Sardis: and I am of opinion that the measuring reed must be used again; we have got of late, through negligence, or a want of a spirit of discerning, too many of the outward court among us; who must be left out, in order to be given up to other hands, as follows.

**Ver. 2.** *But the court which is without the temple leave out, and measure it not,* etc.] The allusion is to the court of the Israelites, where was the great crowd and company of worshippers, even the national church of the Jews, called by Ezekiel the outer court, (<sup>3624</sup>Ezekiel 42:14) (<sup>3642</sup>Ezekiel 46:21), and which was measured in (<sup>3620</sup>Ezekiel 42:20); but this must not be measured: this designs not the visible church apostatized, as succeeding the pure, primitive, and apostolical church, or the apostate church of Rome, antichrist and his followers, for these are meant by the Gentiles, to whom this outward court is given; this outward court, or the worshippers in it, intend a distinct set of worshippers from the internal worshippers, the priests of God in the temple, altar, and inner court, and from the Gentiles, the Papists; and are no other than carnal Protestants, the bulk of the reformed churches, who have only the name, but not the nature of living Christians, have a form of godliness, but deny its power, are Jews outwardly, but not inwardly, and worship only in an external manner, attend to outward forms and ceremonies, but know nothing of true doctrine, pure worship, or spiritual religion; and which are very numerous, as the worshippers in the outward court were: now these, upon a new measuring and regulating of the churches, are ordered to be left, or cast out, and not taken into the dimensions of the Gospel church; these were to be separated from, and have been, and not to be admitted members of regular and orderly constituted churches, and which is here reckoned a sort of casting of them out; the reason of which follows;

*for it is given unto the Gentiles*; by whom are meant the Papists, who are no other than Paganized Christians, having introduced a great deal of Gentilism into the divine service; as the worshipping of the virgin Mary, angels, and saints departed, which is in imitation of the demon worship of the Heathens; as also the dedication of their churches to saints, their saints' days, divers festivals, and many other rites and ceremonies, are plainly of Pagan original; and therefore they may very well be called by this name: now it seems by these words that the bulk of the reformed churches, the crowd of outward court worshippers, will be gained, over to the Popish party, and fall off to the church of Rome, to which their doctrines and practices are plainly verging; the pope of Rome, as low a condition as he now is in, will be set "in status quo", before his utter destruction; he will regain all his former dominions, and be in possession of them at the time of his ruin; the whore of Rome, the antichristian Babylon, will sit as a queen, and promise herself a great deal of peace and pleasure, the inward court worshippers and witnesses being slain, and she restored to all her former power and grandeur; when in one day, on a sudden, her destruction will come upon her, when the term of the beast's reign will be expired, mentioned in the next clause:

*and the holy city shall they tread under foot forty [and] two months*; by "the holy city" is meant all the kingdoms of Europe, or what has, been called Christendom, the western empire as Christian, the main seat of the Christian religion, or all the churches styled Christian, and so called in allusion to Jerusalem, which bears this name, (<sup><4045></sup>Matthew 4:5); and which was still of a far larger extent than the outward court: the "treading" of this "underfoot" does not barely design possessing of it, or worshipping in the same place, as the phrase of treading in the courts does in (<sup><2012></sup>Isaiah 1:12); but a tyrannical power over it, and a wasting, spoiling, and destroying it, in allusion to Jerusalem being trodden under foot, wasted, and destroyed by the Gentiles or the Romans, (<sup><2024></sup>Luke 21:24); and the duration of this tyrannical and oppressive reign will be forty and two months; (see <sup><6135></sup>Revelation 13:5), which being reduced to years, make just three years and a half: but then this date cannot be understood strictly and literally; for such a term can never be sufficient for the whore's reign, who was to rule over the kings of the earth, and all nations were to drink of the wine of her fornication: this is too short a time for her to gain so much power, honour, and riches in, as the 13th, 17th, and 18th chapters of this book show, as well as too short for the afflictions and persecutions of the saints by her;

wherefore this must be understood prophetically of so many months of years; and a month with the Chaldeans consisting of thirty days, and a year of 360 days, which account Daniel used, and John after him, forty two months, reckoning a day for a year, after the prophetic style, make 1260 years; which is the exact time of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, of the church's being hid and nourished in the wilderness, and of the beast's reign, and so of the holy city being trodden under foot. Now this date is not to be reckoned from the outer court being given to the Gentiles, but from the first of antichrist's reign, when the pope of Rome was declared universal bishop; and is only here mentioned to show, that the giving of the outward court to his Gentiles will be towards the expiration of this date.

**Ver. 3.** *And I will give [power] unto my two witnesses*, etc.] By whom are meant, not Enoch and Elias, as some of the ancient fathers thought, who, they supposed, would come before the appearance of Christ, and oppose antichrist, and be slain by him, which sense the Papists greedily catch at; nor are the Scriptures, the two Testaments, Old and New, designed, though their name and number agree, and also their office, which is to testify of Christ; but then to be clothed in sackcloth, to be killed, and rise again, and ascend to heaven, are things that cannot so well be accommodated to them: but these witnesses intend the ministers of the Gospel and churches of Christ, who have bore testimony for Christ, and against antichrist, ever since he appeared in the world; and particularly the churches and ministers in Piedmont bid fair for this character; who were upon the spot when antichrist arose, always bore their protest against him, and were ever independent of the church of Rome, and subsisted in the midst of the darkness of the apostasy; and suffered much, and very great persecutions, from the Papists; and have stood their ground, and continue to this day; and have been like olive trees and candlesticks, imparting oil and light to others. Though they ought not to be considered exclusive of other ministers and churches, who also have bore, and still do bear a witness for Christ, and against the idolatries of the church of Rome: no two individual persons can be meant, since these witnesses were to prophesy 1260 days, that is, so many years, but a succession of ministers and churches; and these are called two, both on account of the fewness of them, and because the testimony of two is sufficient to confirm any matter; and it may be in allusion to the various instances of two eminent persons being raised up at certain periods of time, as Moses and Aaron, at the deliverance of the children of Israel out of Egypt; Caleb and Joshua, at

their entrance into Canaan; Elijah and Elisha in the idolatrous times of Ahab; and Joshua and Zerubbabel at the rebuilding and finishing of the second temple. Now the Angel, and who is Christ, here promises that he will give something to these witnesses: some supply the words, "I will give it"; that is, the holy city, or the church, to them, to be taken care of and defended; others, "I will give" them a mouth and wisdom, which their adversaries shall not be able to resist, according to the promise in (<sup><215></sup>Luke 21:15). We supply the words, "I will give power"; that is, authority to preach the Gospel, and strength to profess it, and to continue to bear a testimony to it, signified by prophesying; (see <sup><441></sup>1 Corinthians 14:1,3).

*And they shall prophesy*; that is, "that they may prophesy"; which is supported by the Arabic and Ethiopic versions, the former rendering the words, "I will give to my two witnesses to prophesy", and the latter, "I will give in command to my two witnesses that they may prophesy"; the sense is, that Christ will give to them a mission and commission, sufficient authority, all needful gifts and grace, courage and presence of mind to preach his Gospel, to hold forth his word, and bear a testimony for him during the whole time of the apostasy, even

*a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days*; that is, so many years, which, as before observed, is the date of the beast's reign, of the holy city being trodden under foot of the Gentiles, and of the church's retirement into the wilderness: it is observable, that the date of the beast's reign and tyranny is expressed by months, and the date of the church's being in the wilderness, and the prophesying of the witnesses, is signified by days; and the reason which some give is not despicable, as that the beast and his followers are the children of darkness and of the night, over which the moon presides, from whence months are, numbered; and the church and the witnesses are children of the day, over which the sun rules. The habit of these witnesses during their time of prophesying follows,

*clothed in sackcloth*; expressive either of their outward state and condition, being poor, mean, and abject, while the followers of the beast are clad in silks, and live deliciously; or else of the inward frame of their minds, as mourning for the sad estate of the church of Christ, groaning under the tyranny and persecutions of antichrist.

**Ver. 4.** *These are the two olive trees*, etc.] Or represented by the two olive trees in (<sup><303></sup>Zechariah 4:3,11-14), which there design Joshua and Zerubbabel; and who in laying out themselves, their gifts and wealth, in

rebuilding and finishing the temple, were types of these witnesses, the ministers of the Gospel, in the successive ages of the apostasy; who may be compared to olive trees, because of the oil of grace, and the truth of it in them; and because of the gifts of the Spirit of God bestowed on them, or their having that anointing which teacheth all things; and because they freely impart their gifts, and the golden oil of the Gospel unto others, and also bring the good tidings of peace and salvation by Christ, of which the olive leaf is a symbol; and because they are like the olive tree, fat, flourishing, and fruitful in spiritual things; they are sons of oil, and God's anointed ones:

*and the two candlesticks*; which hold forth the light of the word, in the midst of Popish darkness: this shows that churches, as well as ministers, are designed by the witnesses, since the candlesticks are explained of the churches, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 1:20), though the simile well agrees with ministers of the word, who are the lights of the world, or hold forth the light of the Gospel, which is put into them by Christ: and these olive trees and candlesticks are represented as

*standing before the God of the earth*; ministering unto him, enjoying his presence, and having his assistance, and being under his protection. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “the Lord of the earth”; and so the Complutensian edition; (see ~~Ze~~ Zechariah 4:14 6:5).

**Ver. 5.** *And if any man will hurt them*, etc.] Do any injury to their persons, or properties, oppose their writings, blaspheme their doctrines, and hinder their ministrations; whoever; they be, whether they be any that live among them, or in other parts; whether they be secret or open enemies; or whether they be of the outward court, or be really Gentiles or Papists; and especially if they do them any injustice, if they wrong, oppress, afflict, and distress them knowingly and willingly:

*fire proceedeth out of their mouth*; by which may be meant the word of God, which they preach and hold forth, which is comparable to fire, (~~Jer~~ Jeremiah 23:29), both for light, it being a means of enlightening sinners, who are darkness itself; and of directing saints in their walk and conversation; and of detecting the errors, immoralities, idolatry, and superstition of men, and particularly of the church of Rome, who cannot bear the light of this word, and therefore forbid the reading of it to the laity, and keep it locked up from them in the Latin tongue: and also for the

heat of it, it being the means of quickening, or of conveying a vital heat to dead sinners; and of warming and comforting the saints, causing their hearts to burn within them, while they bear or read it, or meditate upon it; and of scorching and tormenting reprobate sinners, and filling them with wrath, pain, and anguish, especially the followers of antichrist; and this is greatly designed, for this has a particular reference to the pouring out of the fourth vial, (<sup>666</sup>Revelation 16:9). Likewise, the word of God may be compared to fire for its purity in itself, for every word of his is pure; and for its purifying nature, when faithfully preached, and powerfully applied, it penetrates deep, it searches, and discovers, and purges from the dross of profaneness, false doctrine, and will worship; and for its consuming nature, as follows, it pronouncing damnation to unbelievers and impenitent sinners, and it being the savour of death unto death to such: or else the prayers of these witnesses are intended by the fire that proceeds out of their mouth, for vengeance on their enemies, who hinder their ministrations, blaspheme the truth, and shed their blood; which do not arise from a passionate and revengeful spirit, but from a pure zeal for the glory of God, and the honour of his name, and truth; and which prayers are heard by God, who will avenge his elect, that cry unto him day and night: the allusion is to the fire, which, at the request of Moses, came forth from the Lord, and destroyed two hundred and fifty persons, that opposed him and Aaron; and to the fire which Elias called for from heaven, upon the captains, and the fifties, that came to take him, who were types of these witnesses; (see <sup>4068</sup>Numbers 16:3,29,35 <sup>1000</sup>2 Kings 1:9-12). And also this fire may denote the denunciations of God's wrath by them upon the antichristian party, these being as wood, and their words as fire, to consume them; (see <sup>2454</sup>Jeremiah 5:14 <sup>666</sup>Revelation 19:9-11,18).

*And devoureth their enemies:* whether open or secret; just as the fire devoured Nadab and Abihu, the offerers of strange fire, which the Lord commanded not; so the fire out of the mouth of God's faithful servants devours such who introduce divers and strange doctrines, and the inventions of men, into the church of God; the light of God's word convinces and confounds them, though it may not convert them; it flashes in their consciences, and distresses them, so that they gnaw their tongues for pain; there being nothing but a fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour and destroy them, though not corporeally, yet spiritually and eternally; for even these shall afterwards

make war against them, conquer them, and slay them, and shall see them ascend to heaven, (<sup><6610></sup>Revelation 11:7,12).

*And if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed*; this is repeated, partly to show the certainty of this destruction; and partly to point out the manner of it, which will be not by the use of carnal weapons: these enemies of the witnesses will not be killed by the sword, or any other weapon, but by the word of God, and through the prayers of the saints, and by the denunciations of God's judgments on them. The Jews express the doctrines and traditions of their Rabbins, delivered from one to another, by fire, proceeding out of their mouths; who say <sup>f306</sup>,

“Rab sat before Rabbi, and “there went forth” **hymwpm rwnd**  
**ˆyqwqyz**, “sparks of fire from the mouth of Rab”, into the mouth of  
Rabbi, and from the mouth of Rabbi, into the mouth of Rab;”

which the gloss explains of their communicating their doctrines and traditions to one another.

**Ver. 6.** *These have power to shut heaven*, etc.] For these have the keys of the kingdom of heaven given them, and whatever they bind or loose on earth is bound or loosed in heaven; or in other words, having the true key of knowledge in matters, both of doctrine and discipline, given them, whatever they declare, according to the word of God, to be doctrines fit to be received or rejected, and to be the ordinances of God, and matters of worship to be attended to, and what are not, should be so: and in particular,

*that it rain not in the days of their prophecy*; that is, on their enemies, the antichristian party; for otherwise it must rain on those to whom they minister, their prophecy itself being rain in a spiritual sense: so rain is explained of prophecy in the Targum on (<sup><2386></sup>Isaiah 5:6), which paraphrases the words thus;

“I will command the prophets that they do not prophesy upon them prophecy:”

for this is to be understood not literally, since the days of their prophecy, or preaching in sackcloth, are 1260, that is, 1260 years, and which is the term and duration of antichrist's reign: wherefore, if this was the case, there must be a famine and great distress, during this long space of time; but as this is not matter of fact, so it would not comport with that plenty, luxury,



and deliciousness, in which the whore of Babylon is said to live: but the words are to be taken in a spiritual sense, and to be understood of the Gospel, and doctrines of it, or the word of God, which is sometimes compared to rain, (~~6510~~ Deuteronomy 32:2 ~~2550~~ Isaiah 55:10,11). God is the author and giver of rain, and he only; none of the vanities, or idols of the Gentiles, can give it; has the rain a father? it has, but not on earth, only God who is in heaven; and so the Gospel is of God, and it is he only that can make men able ministers of it; the rain comes down from above, from heaven, and of the same original and descent is the Gospel, it is the voice speaking from heaven; the rain falls, according to divine direction, in one place, and not another, on one city, and not another; and so the Gospel is sometimes in one place, and sometimes in another; it is forbid here, and ordered there. Showers of rain moisten and soften the earth, and make it susceptible of seed; and the Gospel is the means of softening hard hearts, and of making them capable of receiving suitable impressions: rain refreshes the earth, revives the plants and trees, and makes them fruitful; and so the Gospel, attended with a divine blessing, refreshes drooping saints, revives the work of God in them, and is the means of filling them with all the fruits of righteousness. Now the withholding of this rain denotes a famine, not of bread, or a thirst for water, but of hearing the word of the Lord; and as it is a judgment on a nation, or on a city, not to be rained upon, so it is a spiritual judgment upon a people, when God commands his clouds, his ministers, to rain no rain of the Gospel on them; and it is one of the judgments upon the antichristian party, that they have not the Gospel preached unto them, nor any dew of powerful and efficacious grace distilled on them, but are left to their blindness, darkness, and hardness of heart: and these witnesses carrying the Gospel along with them, where they prophesy and preach, is called a shutting up heaven, so that it rain not on the followers of antichrist, from whom they separate themselves, or by whom they are cast out; and this is ascribed to them, and is owing to their removal or ejection; much in the same sense as the night and darkness are to the sun's remove; that is, these follow upon it. The allusion is to the withholding of rain in the times of Elijah, one of the types of these witnesses, because of the idolatries of Ahab and Jezebel, (~~1170~~ 1 Kings 17:1 18:1,41,45). In like manner is the rain of the Gospel withheld during the reign of antichrist, because of the idolatry and superstition of the apostasy.



*And have power over waters to turn them to blood*; by “waters” are meant people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, and particularly those over whom antichrist reigns, (<sup><66715></sup>Revelation 17:15), and turning of them into blood designs the confusions and wars raised among them on account of the prophesying of these witnesses, and the persecutions and bloodshed which followed upon it; which eventually are the end and issue of preaching the Gospel; (see <sup><40034></sup>Matthew 10:34,35). The allusion is to one of the plagues of Egypt, and to Moses and Aaron, who were types of these witnesses turning the waters of Egypt into blood, (<sup><01720></sup>Exodus 7:20); and answers to the second and third vials, (<sup><66163></sup>Revelation 16:3,4).

*And to smite the earth with all plagues as often as they will*; alluding to the plagues of Egypt, one of the names of Rome, or the Roman jurisdiction, in (<sup><66118></sup>Revelation 11:8), and which is meant by the earth here; and referring to the rest of the seven vials poured out by these witnesses, signified by seven angels; and their having power so to do as often as they will, is to be understood of these plagues being inflicted on the inhabitants of the earth, or followers of antichrist, in answer to their prophecies and prayers, which are made according to the will of God, and so always have their effect, being such.

**Ver. 7.** *And when they shall have finished their testimony*, etc.] For Christ, his truths and ordinances; when they are about to finish it, and almost concluded it, even towards the close of the 1260 days or years, in which they must prophesy in sackcloth: or else their testimony and their prophesying may be considered as two distinct things, and the one be finished before the other; their open public testimony, as witnesses, so as to be heard, attended to, and received, will be finished before the last war of the beast against them, in which they will be killed; but their prophesying will continue to the end of the beast's reign, these two being contemporary, of equal date, beginning and ending together; for they will prophesy when they are dead; being dead they will yet speak, and their very death will be a prophesying or foretelling that the ruin of antichrist is at hand; and upon their resurrection and ascension, that will immediately come on. But when their testimony is finished, by a free and open publication of the Gospel,

*the beast that ascended out of the bottomless pit*; the same with that in (<sup><66131></sup>Revelation 13:11), with which compare (<sup><66178></sup>Revelation 17:8); and which is no other than the Romish antichrist; called a beast for his filthiness and cruelty; and said to ascend out of the bottomless pit, out of hell,

because his coming is after the working of Satan: he is raised up, influenced, and supported by him; he is a creature of his, and has his power, seat, and authority from him, the great dragon, the old serpent, called the devil and Satan; his original and rise are the same with those of his doctrine and worship, the smoke of the bottomless pit; they all come out of it, and they will return thither again. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read, “the fourth beast that ascendeth”, etc. as if it was the same with Daniel's fourth beast, (<sup><200></sup>Daniel 7:7,19), as it doubtless is. Now this filthy and savage beast

*shall make war against them*; the witnesses; a war he has been making against the saints ever since he was in power, by his decrees, his counsels, his anathemas, and by sword, fire, and faggot, (<sup><613></sup>Revelation 13:7); but this will be his last war, and it will be a dreadful one; it will be the last struggle of the beast; and though it will be attended with the conquest and slaughter of the witnesses, yet it will lead on to, and issue in his own ruin; this is “the hour of temptation”, in (<sup><610></sup>Revelation 3:10);

*and shall overcome them*; not by arguments taken out of the word of God, by which their mouths will be stopped, so as to be confounded, and have nothing to say, or so as to yield to him, and give up the truths and ordinances of the Gospel; but by outward force and tyranny, so as that they shall be obliged to give way, and he will take possession of the kingdoms and nations in which they have prophesied: he will first attack the outward court, the bulk of formal professors, and will prevail over them; and then, the outworks being taken, he will more easily come at the inner court worshippers within the temple.

*And kill them*; not corporeally, but civilly; for as their dead bodies lying three days and a half, that is, three years and a half, unburied, and their resurrection from the dead, and ascension to heaven, cannot be understood literally, so neither the killing of them; not but that in this war there may be a great slaughter, and much blood shed, in a literal sense: but the killing spoken of seems to regard them, not as men, but as witnesses; they will not be suffered to bear an open testimony any longer; they will be silenced; they will be banished, or removed into corners; and they will not only be under the censures, excommunications, and anathemas of the Romish antichrist, but they will lose all credit and esteem among those, who once pretended to be their friends; who will be ashamed of them, and will join in

reproaching and rejecting them; so that their ministrations will be quite shut up, and at an end.

**Ver. 8.** *And their dead bodies [shall lie] in the street of the great city,* etc.] Not Jerusalem, which was destroyed when John had this vision, and which will; not be rebuilt at the time it refers to; nor is it ever called the great city, though the city of the great King; however, not in this book, though the new Jerusalem is so called, (<sup>6210</sup>Revelation 21:10); but that can never be designed here; but the city of Rome, or the Roman jurisdiction, the whole empire of the Romish antichrist, which is often called the great city in this book; (see <sup>6669</sup>Revelation 16:19 17:18 18:10,16,18,21). The city of Rome itself was very large, and the Roman empire still larger, so as to be called the whole world and the antichristian see of Rome has been of great extent. Now as the street of a city denotes a public open place in it, a place of concourse and resort, (<sup>3020</sup>Proverbs 1:20,21), the dead bodies of those witnesses being said to lie here, may design the publicness of their silence, disgrace, and contempt; and that the silencing and degrading them, and depriving them of all privileges, will be known all over the antichristian empire; and that they will be exposed to public ignominy and shame, their persons, their characters, their testimony, their doctrines, their writings, their churches, and families, and all that belong to them: or else this “street” may design some part of the Romish jurisdiction, and it may be Great Britain may be particularly designed; for where should the dead bodies of the witnesses lie, but where they are slain? and where can they be slain, but where they are? and where are they, at least where are there so many as in these islands? It may be objected, that Great Britain is not a part of the see of Rome, does not belong to the jurisdiction of it; to this it may be replied, that in this last war of the beast, the outer court will be given to the Gentiles, the bulk of the reformed churches will fall off to Popery, and their countries again fall into the hands of the pope, and, among the rest, Great Britain. The fears of Dr. Goodwin seem to be too just, and well grounded, that the prophecy in (<sup>27145</sup>Daniel 11:45) respects our island, which speaks of antichrist planting “the tabernacles of his palace between the seas, in the glorious holy mountain”, or “the mountain of delight, of holiness”. Now where has God such a mountain of delight, or a people that are the darling of his soul, as here? where in all the globe is there such a spot where God has so many saints, so many Holy Ones, as in this island? it may have been truly called a glorious holy mountain, or a mountain of delight; and what place between the seas is there to which these characters

can agree, but Great Britain? Here then antichrist will plant the tabernacles of his palace; but it will be but a tabernacle, or tent; it will be but for a short time, as it follows, “yet he shall come to his end, and none shall help him”, (<sup>27145</sup>Daniel 11:45). Now this great city, in the street of which the bodies of the witnesses will lie exposed, is that

*which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt*; that is, it is called so in a mystic and allegoric sense, in distinction from the literal sense; (see <sup>450B</sup>1 Corinthians 10:3,4); it is called Sodom because of the fulness of bread, plenty and abundance of all outward good things in it; as well as for the pride and idleness of the priests, monks, and friars which swarm in it; and also for the open profaneness and contempt of true and serious religion in it; and particularly for the sin of sodomy, so frequently committed here, with impunity, yea with allowance, and even with commendation. This sin was extolled with praises, as Brightman observes, by John a Casa, archbishop of Beneventum; and was defended in a book, published for that purpose, by one Mutius; and which was allowed by the bulls and letters patent of Pope Julius the Third; and it is called Egypt, because of its tyranny and oppression; as the Egyptians kept the Israelites in bondage, and made them to serve with rigour, and embittered their lives, so the pope, and his Gentiles, or Egyptians, have in a most oppressive and rigorous manner tyrannised over the souls, bodies, and estates of men; and also because of its great idolatry, Egypt being very remarkable for the number of its deities, and the meanness of them; by which the idols and idolatries of the church of Rome may be fitly expressed:

*where also our Lord was crucified*; that is, in the great city, which is fitly compared to Sodom and Egypt; for Christ was crucified actually in Judea, which was then become a Roman province, and under Pontius Pilate, a Roman governor, and by his order, and suffered a Roman kind of death, crucifixion, and for a crime he was charged with, though a false one, against Caesar the Roman emperor; and Christ has been crucified at Rome itself in his members, who have suffered persecution and death, and even the death of the cross there; and he has been crucified afresh, both by the sins and immoralities of those who have bore the Christian name there, and by the frequent sacrifices of him in the Mass. Moreover, by this periphrasis may be meant Jerusalem; and the sense be, that as the great city, or jurisdiction of Rome, may be spiritually or mystically called Sodom and Egypt, so likewise the place where our Lord was crucified, that is, Jerusalem; and that for this reason, because that as Jerusalem stoned and

killed the prophets of the Lord, and upon the inhabitants of it were found all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, so in Rome, in mystical Babylon, will be found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon earth, (<sup><4235></sup>Matthew 23:35,37 <sup><6634></sup>Revelation 18:24). The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions, read, “where also their Lord was crucified”; and the Arabic version more expressly, “the Lord of these two”, i.e. the two witnesses.

**Ver. 9.** *And they of the people, and kindreds, and tongues, and nations,* etc.] These are either the enemies of the witnesses, who consisted of the people, kindred, tongues, and nations, out from among whom they were chosen, redeemed, and called; and before or against whom John, representing these witnesses, prophesied; and over whom the Romish antichrist sits and rules, (<sup><669></sup>Revelation 5:9 10:11 13:7 17:15); or else their friends, either real or pretended; since it is not said “the people”, nor “all the people, kindred, tongues, and nations”, as it is when the antichristian party are spoken of; and seeing “they that dwell upon the earth”, in (<sup><6610></sup>Revelation 11:10), are mentioned as a distinct company from these; and these are said to be some “of”, or “out” of the people, etc. and accordingly the following words will admit of different senses:

*shall see their dead bodies three days and a half, and shall not suffer their dead bodies to be put in graves.* Now, though this is not literally to be understood, yet it may have some reference to the usages of the witnesses enemies, who sometimes have not allowed them a burial: so the bodies of John Huss, and Jerom of Prague, were burnt, and their ashes cast into the Rhine; the body of Peter Ramus was cast about the streets, thrown into ponds and ditches, then dragged out, and beat with rods; and some have had their bones dug up again, after they had been buried many years, and then burnt, and their ashes scattered abroad, as Wickliff and Bucer here in England: but as this is to be understood in a mystical and allusive sense, the meaning is, as it may refer to enemies, that they shall see, and look upon with joy and pleasure, and with scorn and contempt, and insult over the witnesses, being silenced and deprived of power and opportunity of prophesying; and as quite dispirited, cast down, and trodden under foot; and whereas not to have a burial granted is always reckoned a piece of the greatest barbarity and inhumanity, as well as of ignominy and reproach, and is expressive of a most unhappy and miserable condition; (see <sup><139></sup>Psalm 129:2,3 <sup><4219></sup>Jeremiah 22:19 <sup><2018></sup>Ecclesiastes 6:3); so it here signifies, that

the enemies of the witnesses having obtained power over them, will not only insult them, but treat them in a very cruel and inhuman manner, and expose them to scorn and contempt; and it represents their case as being very uncomfortable, and deplorable: or as it may respect friends, real or pretended, such as had been, or were, the sense is, that they shall see them in their unhappy condition, and look upon them with pity and compassion; and shall thoroughly consider, and lay to heart, their case and circumstances; and shall remember then, their doctrine and testimony, and their godly lives, and not suffer them to be buried in oblivion; and shall also call to mind this prediction concerning them, that they should continue in this state but three days and a half, and then revive; and therefore they shall entertain hopes of them, as persons sometimes do of their friends, when they are in doubt whether they are dead or not, and therefore keep them above ground for some time, and will not suffer them to be buried; for when put into the grave, there is no more hope, or when a person has been dead, as in the case of Lazarus, four days; so that this conduct may express the kindness and hope of these friends: or it may be, the meaning is, that they will not look at them but very shyly, and at a distance, as being ashamed of them, and having no heart to succour, relieve, and encourage them; but act as did the priest and the Levite towards the man that fell among thieves, and was left half dead, looked upon him, and turned from him, to the other side of the way; as also, that they will not entertain them, or give them any shelter and refuge among them, when, in this their distress, they shall apply to them: the grave is a resting place; there the wicked cease from troubling, and there the weary are at rest, (~~BBB~~ Job 3:17). Such resting places the witnesses in former times have found, as the English in Queen Mary's days found at Frankfort and Geneva, and other places, and since in Holland; and as now the French refugees here, who being killed in a civil sense in their own country, are put into graves, or are allowed places of rest and security here: but now these witnesses will find none; those who pretended to be their friends will look shy upon them, and not harbour them, yea, will not suffer any to do it; they will by some public act, through fear of the Popish party, forbid the reception and entertainment of them. The time that this will last will be "three days and a half"; after which, as in (~~BBB~~ Revelation 11:11), they will live again, which cannot be understood literally of so many precise days; for it will; not be possible, that, in so short a time, the news of the slaying of the witnesses should be spread among the inhabitants of the earth, and they be able to express their general joy and rejoicing, and to send their gifts to one

another upon his occasion, as is signified in (<sup>chap. 11</sup> Revelation 11:10); nor does this design so long a time, as the time and times, and half a time, elsewhere mentioned; or that it is a period of the same date and duration with the forty two months, in which the holy city is trodden under foot, and the 1260 days, or years, in which the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth; for during that time they will prophesy, and hold forth their testimony, though in sackcloth; but now they will be killed, and during this space will lie dead, and in entire silence: besides, it will be when they shall have finished their testimony, or towards the close of the 1260 days or years, that this war and slaughter will be, and when these three days and a half will take place, which are to be understood of three years and a half, according the prophetic style, a day for a year; and seems intended for the comfort of the saints, that this most afflictive and distressed condition of the witnesses should last but for a little while. It is made a question, whether this war with the witnesses, and the slaughter of them, and their lying unburied, are over or not: some have thought that these things had their accomplishment in the council of Constance, held about the year 1414, and which lasted three years and a half exactly, when those two witnesses, John Huss, and Jerom of Prague, were killed, insulted, and triumphed over by this council, which was made up of almost all nations. Brightman refers it to the Smalcaldic war in Germany in 1547, when the Protestant army was beaten, and John Frederick, elector of Saxony, and Ernest, the son of the landgrave, and after that the landgrave himself, were taken prisoners; which was a grievous blow to the Protestant cause, and occasioned great rejoicing in the Popish party; but in the year 1550, just three years and a half after that defeat, the men of Magdeburgh rose up with great spirit and courage, and revived the cause. About this time was the council of Trent; to which also the same writer accommodates these things, which consisted of men of all nations, and continued three years and a half; when the authority of the Scriptures was destroyed, which he supposes are the witnesses; when they were suppressed and silenced, and lay as a mere carcass, a dead letter, without any life in them: and it is easy to observe, that there have been several periods of time, in which there has been a seeming fulfilment of these things; the persecution under Queen Mary, and the burning of the martyrs in her time, continued about three years and a half; the massacre in France, in 1572, threatened an utter extirpation of the Protestant religion there, which yet revived in 1576, much about the same space of time here mentioned; and there are several others that have been observed by writers; but what seems most remarkable of all is the case of

the Protestants in the valleys of Piedmont, commonly called the Vaudois. The duke of Savoy, their sovereign, by an edict, dated January 31, 1685-6, N. S. forbid the exercise of their religion on pain of death, ordered their churches to be demolished, and their ministers to be banished; which was published in the valleys April the 11th, and was put in execution on the 22nd of the same month, by Savoy and French troops, who killed great numbers of them, took others, and put them into prisons, whom they released about the beginning of December, 1686, and suffered them to depart into other countries, where they were kindly received, relieved, and preserved, particularly by the kingdoms and states of England, Holland, Brandenburg, Geneva, and Switzerland, while the Popish party were rejoicing at their ruin: and toward the latter end of the year 1689, about three years and a half after the publishing of the edict, these people were inspired on a sudden with a spirit of resolution and courage; and, contrary to the advice of their friends, who thought their case desperate, secretly passed the lake of Geneva, and entered Savoy with sword in hand, and recovered their ancient possessions; and by the month of April, A. D. 1690, established themselves in it, notwithstanding the troops of France and Savoy, to whom they were comparatively few, and whom they slew in great numbers, with little loss to themselves; when the duke perceiving they were encouraged and assisted by foreign princes, and he having left the French interest, recalled the rest of them, and reestablished them by an edict, signed June 4, 1690, just three years and a half after their total dissipation, and gave leave to the French refugees to return with them. Now I take it, that these several things which have happened at certain times, in particular places, are so many hints and pledges of what hereafter will be universal to the witnesses in all places where they are. It would be very desirable if it could be ascertained, and concluded upon a good foundation, that this affair of the killing of the witnesses was over; but because of the following things it cannot be; for the outward court is not yet given to the Gentiles, at least not the whole of it, which must be, ere they can come at the witnesses in the inner court to slay them: they have indeed attacked it, and have taken some part of it, as in Germany, Poland, etc. but as yet not in Great Britain, Holland, etc. at least not thoroughly, though it is plain they are getting ground. Moreover, the witnesses have not finished their testimony, they are still prophesying: in sackcloth; whereas it will be when they have finished it, and towards the close of the 1260 days or years, that they will be killed: to which add, that the ruin of antichrist will quickly follow their rising and ascension; so that if any of the



above instances had been the fulfilling of these things relating to the witnesses, antichrist must have been destroyed before now. And it may be further observed, that the second woe, which is the Turkish woe, will, upon the fulfilment of these things, pass away; and the third woe, or the sounding of the seventh trumpet, will immediately take place, which brings on the kingdom of Christ; whereas the Turkish government is still in being, and in great power (this was published in 1747. Ed.); and there is no appearance, as yet, of the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord Jesus Christ. There may be an allusion, in this space of time, to the time that Antiochus, called Epiphanes, held Jerusalem in his hands, after he had conquered it, which was just three years and six months <sup>f307</sup>, during which time he spoiled the temple, and caused the daily sacrifice to cease: this term of time is much spoken of by the Jews; so long they say Nebuchadnezzar besieged Jerusalem, and likewise Vespasian, and also three years and a half Adrian besieged Bithur <sup>f308</sup>.

**Ver. 10.** *And they that dwell upon the earth*, etc.] Out of which the beast arose, and over which he reigns, even the inhabitants of the Roman empire, often in this book called the earth, the followers of antichrist, men that mind nothing but earth, and earthly things:

*shall rejoice over them, and make merry, and shall send gifts one to another*; as is usual with persons, and was with the Jews, to do in times of public rejoicing; (see <sup><1708></sup> Esther 9:18,19 <sup><1680></sup> Nehemiah 8:10,11).

*Because these two prophets tormented them that dwelt on the earth*; not because they were tormented by them, but because they were now freed from their tormenting ministry; they had tormented them by the preaching of the Gospel, which is foolishness, and the savour of death to natural men, and gives them pain, and fills them with vexation and wrath; by their testimony which they had bore for Christ, and against antichrist; by their sharp reproof of them for their false doctrine and will worship, and their impure lives and conversations; by their own holy lives, which would sometimes flash light into their consciences, and make them uneasy; and by their foretelling the calamities and ruin, temporal and eternal, that would come upon them; but now they are silenced, and they hear and see no more of these things at which they rejoice.

**Ver. 11.** *And after three days and a half*, etc.] When it was certain they were dead, and all hope of reviving was over; (see <sup><813></sup> John 11:39); that is, three years and a half:

*the spirit of life from God entered into them*; this phrase is expressive of a resurrection the Jews frequently call the general resurrection *hyyj t*, “a quickening”, and have the very phrase here used; for, speaking of the resurrection, they say <sup>f309</sup>, *yyj d aj wr*, “the spirit of life” does not dwell but in the holy land. This resurrection of the witnesses is not to be understood of a corporeal resurrection; for there is no reason to believe that there will be a resurrection of any particular saints until the general resurrection, which will be at the personal coming of Christ, and at the beginning of the thousand years, and after the sounding of the seventh trumpet; whereas this will be before that, and towards the close of the sixth trumpet: and besides, the death of these witnesses is not corporeal, as has been observed: nor is a spiritual resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace intended, which is owing to the Spirit of life from Christ; for these witnesses were such who had been quickened, and raised in this sense antecedent to their prophesying and killing; but a civil resurrection of them, or a resurrection of them as witnesses, when their spirits will revive, and they will take heart and courage again to appear for Christ: and this may be understood of the same individual persons that were silenced, or of those that succeeded such that corporeally died in the war of the beast, or during this interval; and so these witnesses may be said to rise in them, they appearing in the same spirit they did; just as John the Baptist came in the spirit and power of Elias: and this will be owing to the Spirit of life from God entering into them; which is said in allusion to the living soul of man, which returns to God, and at the resurrection, whether particular or general, comes from him, and reenters the body; and which also is owing to the Spirit of God, by whom mortal bodies will be quickened; and in allusion to the breathing on the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, (<sup>אֵלֹהִים</sup> Ezekiel 37:1-14); and the sense is, that the Spirit of God will inspire these witnesses with fresh life and rigour, zeal and resolution; so that though they have been so long silent, lifeless, and dispirited, they shall now rise in high spirits, and bravely exert themselves in the cause of Christ; and this will not be by any worldly power and authority, or by any secular arm, that shall encourage them, but by the Spirit of God, who shall breathe upon them, and afresh quicken them, and fill them with resolution and courage:

*and they stood upon their feet*; in great numbers, like the army in Ezekiel's vision; and will reassume their former station, and be in a position and a state of readiness to serve the Lord, and to defend his truths, and discharge their duty with boldness and courage, fearing the face of none:

*and great fear fell upon them which saw them*; in this posture; either on their enemies, who may fear that they should be tormented with them again; that the things which they had foretold concerning their ruin are now coming upon them; that they shall be turned out of their places of profit, and lose all their worldly advantages, and carnal pleasures now, and be miserable to all eternity: or upon their friends, either their false hearted ones, that would not succour them when in distress, who may fear that God, whose finger they will see in this matter, will by them resent their conduct towards them; or else their real friends, who may be filled with reverence and awe of the divine Majesty, as the church was upon the business of Ananias and Sapphira, (<sup><461></sup>Acts 5:11).

**Ver. 12.** *And they heard a great voice from heaven*, etc.] The Complutensian edition reads, “I heard”, i.e. “John”; and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; but the copies in general read “they”; not the enemies, but the witnesses: and this seems not to come from any Christian civil magistrate in the church, but from Christ himself; not but that Christ may make use of, such for the bringing of his people into a more glorious and comfortable state in this world:

*saying unto them, come up hither*; as the angel said to John, (<sup><604></sup>Revelation 4:1), and Christ will say to his people, though on another account, (<sup><153></sup>Matthew 25:34).

*And they ascended up to heaven in a cloud*; which is to be understood not literally, for no man hath ascended to heaven, nor will any, until the thousand years are ended, when the saints will, in a body, ascend thither; but mystically, of a more glorious state of the church; so to ascend to heaven signifies a more exalted state in a prince, or a kingdom, (<sup><2143></sup>Isaiah 14:13); and here intends a state of comfortable communion of the saints one with another, of great purity and holiness, of large enjoyments of blessings and privileges, and of great security from enemies, and of great glory, and honour, and power, that shall be bestowed upon them; they now dwelling on high, and their place of defence being the munition of rocks. This will be the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ; and this ascension of the witnesses will be in a cloud, in allusion to our Lord's ascension to heaven, and as expressive of that glory and majesty which will be put upon these risen witnesses, and in which they shall enter into this happy state of things; or it may be, that this may denote that the first appearance of these happy times, and of Christ's spiritual reign in his church, and their more

comfortable enjoyment, will be at first but dim and obscure, and yet such as, in comparison of their former state, will be visible to, and be taken notice of, even by their very enemies:

*and their enemies beheld them*; going up to heaven, or entering into a purer, and more glorious, and spiritual state; for the mountain of the Lord's house will be established upon the top of the mountains, and Jerusalem shall be made the praise of the whole earth, an eternal excellency, and the joy of many generations; and this shall be seen and known of all, though to their grief and sorrow.

**Ver. 13.** *And the same hour was there a great earthquake*, etc.] Or the same day, as the Complutensian edition, and some copies, read; that is, at the time of the resurrection and ascension of the witnesses, as there was at the resurrection of Christ; and is to be understood of a very great commotion in the civil affairs of kingdoms and nations within the Roman jurisdiction, as there was when Rome Pagan was near its ruin, (<sup>¶¶12</sup>Revelation 6:12).

*And the tenth part of the city fell.* Mr. Daubuz interprets the “earthquake” of the irruption of the Ottomans upon the Grecian empire, and the “tenth” part of the city, of the Greek church, and the falling of it, of its loss of liberty, and falling into slavery; but something yet to come is here intended. By “the city” is meant the city of Rome, the great city, mentioned in (<sup>¶¶108</sup>Revelation 11:8); and by “the tenth part” of it may be designed either Rome itself, which as it now is, according to the observation of some, is but a tenth part of what it was once; so that the same thing is meant as when it is said, “Babylon is fallen, is fallen”, (<sup>¶¶48</sup>Revelation 14:8): or it may design the tithes and profits which arise from the several kingdoms belonging to the jurisdiction and see of Rome, which now will fall off from those who used to share them, upon this new and spiritual state of things; the Gospel daily gaining ground, and enlightening the minds of men, and freeing them from the slavery they were held in; or else the ten fold government of the Roman empire, or the ten kings that gave their kingdoms to the whore of Rome, and are the ten horns of the beast, on which she sits, who will now hate her, and burn her flesh with fire; or rather one of the ten kingdoms, into which the Roman western empire was divided. Dr. Goodwin seems inclined to think that Great Britain is intended, which having been gained over to the Popish party, will now fall off again: but I rather think the kingdom of France is meant, the last of the

ten kingdoms, which rose up out of the ruins of the Roman empire, which will be conquered, and which will be the means of its reformation from Popery.

*And in the earthquake were slain of men seven thousand*; the meaning is, that in the commotions, massacres, tumults, and wars which will be throughout the empire, such a number of men will be slain; which is either put for a greater number; a certain for an uncertain, as in (<sup><5104></sup>Romans 11:4); and perhaps in reference to the account there; otherwise seven thousand is but a small number to be slain in battle; or as it is in the original text, “the names of men seven thousand”. Now it is observed by some, that the smallest name of number belonging to men is a centurion, or captain of an hundred men; and supposing that to be meant, then seven thousand names of men will imply, that in an hour, or about a fortnight's time, may be slain throughout all Europe, in battles and massacres, about seven hundred thousand men, which is a very large number: or names of men may signify men of name, of great renown, as in (<sup><5102></sup>Numbers 16:2); and then if seven thousand men of name, officers in armies, should be slain, how great must be the number of the common soldiers? Some have thought, that ecclesiastical dignities, or men distinguished by names and titles, such as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, etc. and the whole rabble of the antichristian hierarchy, which will now fall, and be utterly demolished, are intended:

*and the remnant were affrighted*; who were not slain in this earthquake; these will be affected with the judgments of God upon others, and be made sensible of their danger, and of their deliverance, which will so work upon them, as to reform them from Popery:

*and gave glory to the God of heaven*; will acknowledge the justice of God, and the righteousness of his judgments upon those that were slain, and his goodness to them who are spared; will confess their transgressions and sins they have been guilty of; and give the glory of their deliverance, not to their idols and images, but to the true God, whose religion they now embrace; for this respects the large conversions among the Popish party to the true religion, under the influence of the grace of God, through the preaching of the Gospel, which will now be spread throughout the world.

**Ver. 14.** *The second woe is past*, etc.] Not in John's time, only in a visionary way; the meaning is, that the second woe trumpet, which is the sixth, will now have done sounding, when the four angels, bound in the

river Euphrates, shall have been loosed, and they, with their horsemen, shall have done what they were designed to do; when the two witnesses shall have been slain, and are raised again, and ascended to heaven; and the things attending, or following thereon, as the earthquake, and slaughter, and the conversions of men, are accomplished.

*[And] behold the third woe cometh quickly;* immediately, upon the passing of the other; namely, the sounding of the seventh trumpet, as follows.

**Ver. 15.** *And the seventh angel sounded,* etc.] The last of the seven angels, who had trumpets given them to sound, (<sup><660></sup>Revelation 8:2,6). The days of the voice of this angel, as in (<sup><660></sup>Revelation 10:7), cannot refer to the times of Constantine; for though there was then a strange turn of affairs in favour of the kingdom of Christ, when there was a great spread of the Gospel, and large conversions in many places, and many churches were raised and formed in several countries, and the whole empire became Christian; yet this, as we have seen, came to pass under the sixth seal, before any of the trumpets were sounded, and much less this seventh and last; nor do they belong to the times of the Reformation in Germany. Brightman fixes the sounding of this trumpet to the year 1558, when the kings of Sweden and Denmark set up the Gospel in their kingdoms, and reformed them from Popery; and when Queen Elizabeth came to the throne of England, and rooted out great part of the Romish superstition: but it is certain that this angel has not yet sounded his trumpet, and therefore cannot refer to anything past, but to what is to come; we are yet under the sixth trumpet; the outward court is not yet given to the Gentiles; the witnesses are not slain, and much less risen and ascended; the earthquake, the fall of the tenth part of the city, and the slaughter of seven thousand names of men, with what will follow thereon, are things yet to come; the Turkish woe is not over, and antichrist still reigns, and the kingdoms of this world are far from appearing to be the kingdoms of Christ. Some think, and indeed the generality of interpreters, that this respects the voice of the archangel, and trump of God, the last trump, which will sound at the resurrection of the dead, and the day of judgment; but none of these appear in the account of things under this trumpet; but rather the whole has a view to the spiritual reign of Christ, when both the eastern and western antichrist will be destroyed; the Gospel will be carried all over the world, and there will be large conversions both among Jews and Gentiles, and Christ will reign in a spiritual manner over all the earth. Hence it follows,

*and there were great voices in heaven*; these are either the voices of the angels in heaven, who rejoice at every appearance, and breaking forth of Christ's kingdom and glory, as in (~~660~~ Revelation 5:11,12 7:11,12); and indeed, if they rejoice at the conversion of one sinner, at a single addition to Christ's interest, then much more will they, when the kingdoms of this world become his; or rather these may be the voices of the multitude of the saints in the churches, the same company with those in (~~660~~ Revelation 19:1-7); who express their joy at the judgment of the great whore, and at the marriage of the Lamb; and who, as here, are attended with the thanksgivings and hallelujahs of the four and twenty elders: and it may be, that these are also the voices of the four living creatures, the ministers of the word, since the four and twenty elders generally follow them, (~~660~~ Revelation 4:9,10 5:14); they may be the witnesses, who were silenced, but are now raised up, and are ascended into heaven, and their mouths are opened, and their voices heard again:

*saying, the kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ*; by “the kingdoms of this world” are meant worldly kingdoms, which are set up by worldly power, and are supported by worldly policy, and subsist upon worldly principles and maxims; the government of which proceeds upon worldly ends and views; in distinction from the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world, and is not supported by any such methods; and they are the kingdoms, into which the world is divided, which, and the glory of them, Satan showed to Christ, and insolently offered to give him them, if he would worship him; but these were to come to Christ in another way, and at another time. The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and all the Oriental versions, read in the singular number, “the kingdom of this world”; the whole government of it, which is his by right of nature, and will be overturned, and overturned again and again, till he comes, whose right it is; and then all power, rule, and authority, will be put down, and his kingdom, which will tilt the face of the whole earth, will take place: all the antichristian states and kingdoms are here intended, particularly the kingdoms into which the Roman empire, sometimes called the whole world, (~~660~~ Luke 2:1), is divided, which are ten; one of the ten, a tenth part of the city or jurisdiction of Rome, will fall at the close of the sixth trumpet, and the other nine, or the other nine parts, will fall at the sounding of the seventh; the ten kings, that have given their kingdoms to the beast, will have an aversion to the whore, hate her, and



burn her flesh, will fall off from her, and into the hands of Christ; there will be a general and thorough reformation from Popery in all the kingdoms of the Roman empire: but though these are greatly intended, yet not only they, but the Mahometan nations also, as the Turkish woe will now be over, and the great river Euphrates dried up, to make way for the kings of the east, those large kingdoms and countries of China, Tartary, and Persia; and these now under the power of the Turk will embrace the Christian faith; and also all the Pagan nations are to be taken into the account, and who will now enjoy the light of the Gospel: and all, and everyone those Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan kingdoms, will “become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ”; by “our Lord” may be designed God the Father, who is the Lord of the whole earth, the Lord God Almighty, and is acknowledged as such by angels and men; and by “his Christ”, his Son Jesus Christ, who is equal with him; and what belongs to the one belongs to the other; and who, as Mediator, is his anointed One; anointed to be prophet, priest, and King; anointed with the oil of gladness, the Holy Ghost; (see <sup><3911D></sup>Psalm 2:2), where the same distinction is. In the Targum on (<sup><201D></sup>Isaiah 4:2) mention is made of **yjd aj wçm**, “the Messiah”; or “Christ of Jehovah”: and in the same Targum on (<sup><2530></sup>Isaiah 53:10), it is said, “they shall look” **zhj yçm twkl mb**, “upon the kingdom of their Messiah”; though it may be rather that Christ is designed by both these phrases, and the words be rendered, “our Lord, even his Christ”; since the phrase, “our Lord”, as well as Christ, is generally understood of Jesus Christ in the New Testament; and who is Lord of all, of angels, and of men, and the Christ of God. Now these kingdoms will become his, not merely by right, for so they are his already, by right of nature, and creation, and preservation; but these have shaken off his government, and have refused to have him to reign over them, and have fallen into the hands of usurpers, as Satan, the god of this world, the Romish antichrist, that reigns over the kings of the earth, and Mahomet the king of the locusts; but now these will, in fact, come into his hands, and be under his government; they will acknowledge him as their Lord and Sovereign, and fear and worship him, as King of saints: and this will be brought about, not by force of arms, as Mahomet got his dominions; nor by policy and fraud, by imposture and lying wonders, by which the pope of Rome has obtained his authority over the nations; but partly by the pouring out of the vials of God's wrath upon the seat of the beast, and upon the river Euphrates, that is, both upon the pope and Turk, which will weaken and destroy their power and authority, and make way for Christ to set up his kingdom; and partly, and chiefly, by the preaching



of the Gospel: now will an open door be set, which none can shut; many will run to and fro, and knowledge will be increased; the earth will be covered with it, as the sea with waters; multitudes of souls everywhere will be converted; a nation will be born at once; churches will be set up in every place, which are Christ's kingdom, where he reigns, and where his subjects are, and his laws are put in execution; where his word will be now faithfully preached, his ordinances purely administered, and he, in his person, office, and grace, will be alone exalted: the consequence of which will be,

*and he shall reign for ever and ever*; no usurper will ever start up more, or obtain, neither Satan, nor the beast, nor the false prophet, shall ever regain their power and authority any more; neither Paganism, nor Judaism, nor antichristianism, either Papal or Mahometan, shall ever have place more: Christ will reign in this spiritual way, more or less, until he comes personally, and then he will reign with his people on earth a thousand years; and when they are ended, he will reign with them in heaven to all eternity; for though, at the end of these years, he shall deliver up the kingdom to the Father, yet he will not cease to reign; indeed he will not reign in the same manner, but he will reign with equal power and authority, and over, and with the same persons. The Vulgate Latin version adds, "Amen".

**Ver. 16.** *And the four and twenty elders*, etc.] The same with those in  Revelation 4:4);

*which sat before God on their seats*; as they are also there described; and which may be expressive of their enjoyment of the divine Presence; and also of their quiet and undisturbed situation, being restored to their former places, which they now possess without molestation and interruption; for as these are the representatives of Gospel churches in all ages, they were with the church in the wilderness during the 1260 days, or years: hence we hear nothing of them from the time of the sealing of the hundred and forty and four thousand, and during the sounding of the trumpets; but now they are restored to their former seats, and upon this wonderful change of things in the world, they

*fell upon their faces and worshipped God*; in a very humble and reverential posture, and in a way of praise and thanksgiving.

**Ver. 17.** *Saying, we give thee thanks, O Lord God Almighty*, etc.] The person addressed is the Lord Jesus Christ, whose the kingdoms are

become, and who now reigns in great power and authority; he is Lord of all, and truly and properly God, and the Almighty, as his works of creation, preservation, redemption, raising himself from the dead, etc. declare; and each of these titles exceedingly well suit him, when his visible kingdom on earth will be so greatly enlarged:

*which art, and wast, and art to come*: the everlasting, “I am”, the unchangeable Jehovah: the phrase is expressive of the eternity and immutability, (see Gill on “~~4008~~ Revelation 1:8”); and it may be observed, whereas in this description of him it is said, “and art to come”, this therefore does not belong to his personal, but to his spiritual reign; he will not be as yet come in person, to raise the dead, and judge the world, when these voices shall be in heaven, and these congratulations of the elders be made: the reason of their praise and thanksgiving follows,

*because thou hast taken to thee thy great power, and hast reigned*; power always belonged to him, as God; he always was the mighty God, and, as such, help for his people was laid upon him, he being mighty to save, and able to bear the government of them, laid on his shoulders; and, as Mediator, all power in heaven, and in earth, was given to him at his resurrection; and he had a name given him above every name, when exalted at the right hand of God, and was made, or declared, Lord and Christ; and from that time he has, in some measure, exerted his power and reigned: he endued his apostles with power from on high; and he went forth in the ministry of the Gospel conquering, and to conquer; and has ever since reigned in the hearts of his people; but now he will manifest and display his “great” power; he will show it more openly, and use it more extensively; his kingdom shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth; he shall be King over all the earth; his power has been seen in ages past, but now the “greatness” of his power will be made manifest; he has always had a kingdom on earth, but now the, “greatness” of the kingdom, under the whole heaven, will be his.

**Ver. 18.** *And the nations were angry*, etc.] (see ~~4900~~ Psalm 99:1), which the Septuagint render, the “Lord reigns, let the nations be angry”. This refers not to the times of the dragon, or the Pagan Roman emperors, who were wroth with the woman, the church, and made war with her seed; but Rome Papal, and its Gentiles, are intended; these are the nations that antichrist reigns over: and it does not so much design their anger against Christ, and his people, expressed by their anathemas, excommunications, murders; and

massacres, and bloody persecutions, which could not be cause of thanksgiving to the elders; but their anger and resentment at his power and reign, at having the outward court taken from them, said to be given them, (~~and~~ Revelation 11:2); and at their loss of power, profit, pleasure, and plenty, through the fall of Babylon, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom; and though these things will make the Gentiles, the followers of antichrist, gnash their teeth, it will occasion joy and thanksgiving among the saints:

*and thy wrath is come:* the time is come to make Babylon, or the Romish antichrist, to drink of the wine of the fierceness of divine wrath; as the time of the Lamb's wrath and vengeance upon Rome Pagan was come at the opening of the sixth seal, so the time of his wrath and vengeance on Rome Papal will be come at the sounding of the seventh trumpet:

*and the time of the dead, that they should be judged;* not the time of the wicked, who are dead in sins, while they live, and who die in their sins, not their time to be raised from the dead, in order to be judged, for they will not rise till after the thousand years are ended; nor the time of the dead in Christ, who will rise upon Christ's personal coming, at the beginning of the thousand years; but this trumpet respects not the personal coming of Christ to raise the dead, and judge the world, but his spiritual coming to reign in his churches, and judge their enemies: the time of those that were dead for Christ, whose blood had been shed in his cause, the time for the vindication of them, and avenging their blood, is now come; the souls of those under the altar had been a long time crying to God to avenge their blood on them that dwell on the earth; and now the time will be come, when God will judge his people, vindicate their cause; and when he, to whom vengeance belongs, will repay it, by pouring out the vials of his wrath on the antichristian party, by giving them blood to drink, because they are worthy; this judgment will issue in the fall and ruin both of the western and eastern antichrist.

*And that thou shouldest give reward unto thy servants;* not a reward of debt, but of grace; not the recompence of reward, or the reward of the inheritance in heaven; but some marks of honour and respect; some measure of happiness, peace, and joy, which Christ of his rich grace will give to his ministers and churches, and all that love him in this glorious period of time; and who are distinguished in the following manner,

*the prophets, and to the saints, and them that fear thy name, small and great:* by the "prophets" are meant, not the prophets of the Old Testament,

but the prophets of the New; and not those extraordinary persons, who are distinguished on the one hand from apostles and evangelists, and on the other from pastors and teachers, who had an extraordinary gift of interpreting the Scriptures, and of foretelling things to come; but the ministers of the word, the two prophets or witnesses, who had prophesied in sackcloth, but shall now be clothed with salvation: and by “the saints” are designed such as were set apart by God the Father from eternity, and whose sins are expiated by the blood of Christ, and who are internally sanctified by the, Spirit of God, and externally separated from the rest of mankind, and incorporated into a Gospel church state, and are in holy fellowship one with another: and they that “fear the name” of God are such as truly love and reverence him, and worship him in Spirit and in truth, but are not members of any particular church; who yet will be taken notice of by the Lord, and a book of remembrance be written for them; so the proselytes from among the Gentiles are distinguished from the Israelites by the same character; (see Gill on “~~44516~~Acts 13:16”); or rather this is a general character of both ministers and churches, since to fear the name of the Lord is a phrase that includes all religious worship, internal and external. And now all these, “small and great”, whether greater or lesser believers, whether men of larger or meaner gifts and abilities, will all have the same reward, enjoy the same church privileges, partake of the same ordinances, in the purity of them, have the same communion with God, and fellowship with Christ, and one another, and share in, the same common peace, and liberty, and security from enemies: the last thing taken notice of by these elders, as matter of thanksgiving, is the destruction of antichrist.

*And shouldest destroy them which destroy the earth*; or “corrupt it”; meaning antichrist and his followers; who destroy the bodies, souls, and estates of men, and not only the inhabitants of the earth, but even the earth itself; for through that laziness and idleness which they spread wherever they come, a fruitful country is turned into barrenness; who corrupt the minds of men with false doctrine, idolatry, and superstition, and the bodies of women and men with all uncleanness and filthiness, with fornication, sodomy, etc. (~~66910~~Revelation 19:2); and are the cause of their own destruction, and the destruction of others; which, upon the blowing of the seventh trumpet, will come swiftly and irrecoverably. Now will Babylon sink as a millstone into the sea, never to be seen more; both the western and eastern antichrists are intended; the former is called the son of perdition, because of his destroying others, and going into perdition

himself; and the latter is called “Abaddon” and “Apollyon”, which both signify a destroyer, (<sup><3004></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:4 <sup><691></sup>Revelation 9:11).

**Ver. 19.** *And the temple of God was opened in heaven*, etc.] The temple at Jerusalem, to which the allusion is, was the place of public worship; this, in times of idolatry, was shut up, and fell to decay; and when there was a reformation its doors were opened, and that repaired; and to this the reference seems to be; and the sense is, that at this time the pure worship of God will be restored, and there will be a free and uninterrupted exercise of it; the temple will be open to all; here everyone may come, and sit, and worship without fear; churches will now be formed according to the original plan, and primitive order and institution of them; and the laws of Christ concerning the admission, regulation, and exclusion of members, will be carefully and punctually observed; the ordinances of Christ will be kept, as they were first delivered, and be purged from all the corruptions introduced by Papists or retained by Protestants; the ordinance of the Lord's supper will be freed from the senseless notions of transubstantiation and consubstantiation, and from all vain and impertinent rites and ceremonies that attend it; and the ordinance of baptism will be administered, both as to mode and subject, according to the word of God, as well as be cleared from the superstitious rites of the sign of the cross, chrism, spittle, etc. in short, all external worship will be pure, plain, and evangelical: hence it appears, that by this temple is not meant the church triumphant, and the happiness of the saints in heaven, as becoming visible, not even the new Jerusalem church state, or the personal reign of Christ on earth for a thousand years; for in that state there will be no temple at all, nor will the saints then need the sun, or moon of Gospel ordinances, (<sup><692></sup>Revelation 21:22,23);

*and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament*: the ark was a chest, in which the covenant or tables of the law were put; upon it was the mercy seat, and over that the cherubim of glory, shadowing it; between which were the seat of the divine Majesty; this ark stood in the holy of holies, and was seen only by the high priest once a year, and was covered with a covering vail, (<sup><0015></sup>Numbers 4:5); it was wanting in the second temple <sup>f310</sup>; to this the allusion is here; (see Gill on “<sup><3008></sup>Hebrews 9:4”). Now in this spiritual Gospel church state, through the pure ministry of the word, and the faithful administration of ordinances, the mysteries of the Gospel, into which angels desire to look, signified by the cherubim over the mercy seat, will be clearly revealed to all Christians, Jews and Gentiles;

particularly to the former, from whom they have been hid; the veil that is over their hearts will then be done away, when they shall be turned to the Lord; and indeed the veil which is overall people will then be removed; and those truths which have been so much obscured by antichrist will be clearly seen; and especially the Lord Jesus Christ, the antitype of the ark, in whom are hid the treasures of wisdom; by whom the law, and the two tables of it, are fulfilled; and in whom they are pure and perfect; and by whom the covenant of grace is ratified and confirmed; and in whom it is sure; and through whom God is propitious to his people, and grants them communion with him; he will be visibly held forth in the ministry of the word; and be seen in the glory of his person, and offices, and grace; who has been so long and greatly hid, and kept out of sight by Popish and Mahometan darkness;

*and there were lightnings, and voices, and thunderings, and an earthquake, and great hail;* which may be understood of the vials of God's wrath, that will be poured out upon the pope and Turk; which though mentioned last, will be first, and make way for this spiritual state; particularly the things here spoken of may be compared with what will be at the pouring out of the seventh vial, (~~Revelation~~ Revelation 16:18,21); or this may design the powerful "voices", and clear ministrations of the Gospel, and the efficacy of them at this time; which, like "thunders", will awaken the consciences of men, and, like "earthquakes", will make them shake and tremble, and cry out, what shall we do to be saved? and as "lightnings" illuminate their understandings, and give them a clear discerning of divine things; and as "hail" beat down all self-righteousness and self-confidence, and all errors, heresies, superstition, and will worship. Though I suspect, that these several things are expressive of the change and revolution that will be made after a time, in this happy and comfortable state; and that the cold, which generally attends an hail storm, represents that coldness and lukewarmness, into which the churches of Christ will again sink, expressed in the Laodicean church state, in which condition Christ will find them when he personally appears; so that the seven seals, with the seven trumpets, bring us exactly to the same period of time as the seven churches do.

“And they took all the holy vessels of the Lord, both great and small, with the vessels of the ark of God, and the king's treasures, and carried them away into Babylon.” (1 Esdras 1:54) ``4 And open your hearts in his law and commandments, and send you peace, 5

And hear your prayers, and be at one with you, and never forsake you in time of trouble.” (2 Maccabees 1)

# CHAPTER 12

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 12

This chapter contains a vision of two wonders or signs seen in heaven, a woman and a dragon, and an account of what followed thereon, war both in heaven and earth. The vision of the woman is in ([Revelation 12:1,2](#)), who is described by her being clothed with the sun; by her having the moon under her feet; by a crown of twelve stars on her head; and by her pregnancy, travail, pains, and cry. The vision of the dragon is in ([Revelation 12:3,4](#)), who is described by his size, a great one; by his colour, red; by the number of his heads and horns, and the crowns on the former; by the force and strength of his tail, drawing and casting: down to the earth the third part of the stars of heaven; and by his position, standing before the woman, in order to devour her child when born. Next follows an account of the birth of her child, and what became of that and her: the child is said to be a man child, is described as a monarch, and as advanced to great honour and dignity; but she flies into the wilderness, where a place is prepared for her of God, and where she is hid for the space of 1260 days, ([Revelation 12:5,6](#)); upon this ensues a war in heaven; the combatants on one side were Michael and his angels, and on the other the dragon and his; the issue of which was, that the latter were conquered, and cast out into the earth, ([Revelation 12:7-9](#)), on account of which victory a triumphant song is sung by the inhabitants of heaven, because of salvation and strength that were come to them; and because of the kingdom and power of Christ, which now took place; and because of the ejection of Satan, the accuser of their brethren; in which song also notice is taken of the manner in which Satan was overcome by those he accused, by the blood of the Lamb, by the word of their testimony, and by their death; and it is concluded with an apostrophe to those that dwell in heaven, calling on them to rejoice, and to the inhabitants of the earth denouncing woe to them, because the devil was among them, whose wrath was great, his time being short, ([Revelation 12:10-12](#)). Next follow the dragon's persecution of the woman, and her flight into the wilderness, and the care took of her there, as before described, ([Revelation 12:13,14](#)); then the method the serpent took to annoy her, the help she received from the earth,



and the wrath of the dragon upon that; which put him upon making war with the remnant of her seed, who kept the commandments of God, and had the testimony of Jesus, (<sup>(6617)</sup>Revelation 12:15-17).

**Ver. 1.** *And there appeared a great wonder in heaven*, etc.] This vision begins a new account of things, and represents the church in the apostles' times, and purer ages of Christianity, and under the Heathen and Arian persecutions; after which an account is given of the beast, mentioned in (<sup>(6617)</sup>Revelation 11:7), of his rise, power, and reign, and then of the victories of the saints over him and of the vials of God's wrath upon him, and of his utter ruin and destruction; when comes on the marriage of the Lamb, and after that the first resurrection, and the thousand years' reign; and the whole is closed with a most beautiful description of the new Jerusalem state, which is the grand point and utmost period this prophetic book leads unto. This vision was seen "in heavens", whither John was called up to, (<sup>(6618)</sup>Revelation 4:1); and where the various scenes, in a visionary way, were acted, both before, and after this; and which was an emblem of the state of the church on earth: what was seen is called "a wonder" or "sign", it being very amazing to behold, and very significative of persons and things; and a "great" one, because it respects great affairs, and wonderful events relating to the state of the church in future times, as well as present: and the first thing seen and observed was

*a woman*: by whom is meant, not the virgin Mary, as highly favoured of God, and big with her firstborn son Jesus; though there may be an allusion to her, and in some things there is a likeness, as is by some observed; as Mary brought forth Christ corporeally, and God in the fulness of time sent forth his Son, made of a woman, so this woman brings forth Christ spiritually, or the manly birth of his kingdom in the world, or one that should be the instrument of enlarging his kingdom; and as Herod sought to destroy Christ in his infancy, and as soon as born, so the dragon here stands watching to destroy the manly birth as soon as brought forth; and as Joseph, with Mary, and her son, by a divine direction, fled into Egypt, where they continued during the reign of Herod, so to this woman are given two wings of an eagle, to flee into the wilderness, where she abides, and is nourished, during the reign of antichrist; and as Herod, after the flight of Mary, killed all the infants of Bethlehem, of two years of age, and under, that he might destroy her son, so the dragon casts out a flood of water after the woman, to carry her away, and makes war with the remnant of her seed; and as the son of Mary, after he had done his work, was taken

up to heaven, and made Lord and Christ, so the man child, this woman brings forth, is caught up to God, and his throne, to rule all nations with a rod of iron. But Mary, and the birth of Christ, can never be intended in this vision, that affair being past and over, and would never be represented to John in this manner, who was well acquainted with it: nor is the church of God, among the Jews of the former dispensation, designed; who were highly honoured of God, on whom he shone forth at the giving of the law to them; who had his word and ordinances, to be a light unto them, and had the priests and prophets of the Lord among them; and whose crown and glory it was to descend from the twelve patriarchs; and who were in great expectation of, and most earnestly desired, and longed for, and were, as it were, in pain for the coming of the Messiah; but to what purpose could such a representation of them be made to John now? much less is the church of the Jews, or the Jewish synagogue, as it was at the coming and birth of here designed, which was an evil, wicked, and adulterous generation, and so bad as not to be declared by the tongue and pen of man, and therefore far from answering the description here; but the pure apostolic church is meant, or the church of Christ, as it was in the times of the apostles, and the first ages of Christianity: the description answers to the first of the seven churches, the church at Ephesus, and to the opening of the first seal; and the church apostolical is here called “a woman”, because the church was not now in its infancy, in nonage, as under the former dispensation, but grown up, mature, and at full age; and because espoused and married to Christ her husband, to whom she now brought forth many children, in a spiritual sense, as she hereafter will bring forth many more; and, because of her beauty in the eyes of her Lord and husband, which is greatly desired, and highly commended by him; as also because of her weakness in herself her ministers and members, not being able to do anything without her husband, Christ, through whom she can do all things. And who is further described by her habit and attire,

*clothed with the sun*; which does not point at her future state in glory; (see ~~<0137>~~ Matthew 13:47); but to her then present state on earth; and is expressive of that clear light of Gospel doctrine, which shone out upon her, like the sun in its meridian glory, and of the heat of love to God, Christ, and his people, and zeal for his truths, ordinances, worship, and discipline, which appeared in her; and of that inward holiness of heart which made her all glorious within; and of the outward purity of life and conversation, which greatly adorned her; but, above all, of the righteousness of Christ,

who is the sun of righteousness, and the Lord her righteousness; which righteousness, as it was doctrinally held forth by her in the clearest manner, was also as a garment on her, to cover, preserve, and beautify her; and is comparable to the sun for its glory and excellency, outshining that of angels and men; and for its spotless purity, being without any blemish or deficiency; and for its perpetuity, being an everlasting one, and even exceeding the sun in duration.

*And the moon under her feet*; the church is sometimes compared to the moon herself, because, as the moon receives its light from the sun, so she receives her light from Christ; and as the moon often changes, and has its various “phases” and appearances, so the church sometimes is in the exercise of grace, and sometimes not; sometimes under trials and persecutions, and at other times in rest and peace; one while retaining the doctrines and ordinances of the Gospel in their power and purity, and anon almost overrun with errors and superstition; but this cannot be the sense here. The common interpretation is, that it signifies the church's contempt of, and trampling upon all worldly things, which are changeable, perishing, and passing away; and which very well suits with the primitive saints, who did set their affections on things in earth, but on things in heaven, who sold their worldly possessions, and laid them at the apostles' feet. Brightman thinks, that, as the moon is a luminary, it may denote the light derived from the word of God, which was a lamp to her feet, and a lantern to her paths, by which her discipline and public worship were directed, and all the private actions of life were squared; which is no contemptible sense of the words: but I rather think the ceremonial law is intended, which is very fitly represented by the moon; it consisted much in the observation of new moons, and its solemn festivals were governed and regulated by them; (see <sup><482></sup>2 Chronicles 8:12,13 <sup><2013></sup>Isaiah 1:13 <sup><3085></sup>Amos 8:5). There was some light in it, and it gave light to the saints in the night of Jewish darkness; it pointed out Christ to them, and was their schoolmaster to teach and lead them to him; yet, like the moon, it was the lesser light, the light it gave was interior to that which the Gospel now gives; and as the moon has its spots had that its imperfections; had it been faultless, there had been no need of another, and a new dispensation, but that could make nothing perfect; and, as the moon, it was variable and changeable; it was but for a time, and is now done away; it is not only waxen old like the moon in the wane, but is entirely vanished away: and yet, though it was abolished by the death of Christ, it was kept up and maintained by many of the Jews, even of them

that, believed: persons are naturally fond of ceremonies; and many had rather part with a doctrine of the Gospel than with an old custom, or an useless ceremony; and this was, in a great measure, the case of the Jews; (see <sup><427></sup>Acts 21:20); so that it was one of the greatest difficulties the Christian church had to grapple with, to get the ceremonial law under foot; for though it was under the feet of Christ, it was a long time ere it was under the feet of the church; and a wonder it was when it was accomplished. Mr. Daubuz has given a new interpretation of this clause; and by “the moon” he understands the Holy Ghost, the Governor of the church, next to Christ, his successor and Vicar, and the minister of him, the sun of righteousness; who is said to be “under [the] feet” of the church, to assist her in her labour, and in the bringing forth of her man child; and to support and sustain her followers and members; and to be a luminary to them, to guide them in their ways.

*And upon her head a crown of twelve stars*; by “stars” are meant the ministers of the Gospel, which Christ holds in his right hand, and the church here bears on her head, (<sup><428></sup>Revelation 1:20). And these “twelve” have respect to the twelve apostles of Christ; and the “crown”, which was composed of these stars, designs the doctrine which they preached; and this being on her “head”, shows that it was in the beginning of this church state that the pure apostolic doctrine was embraced, professed, and held forth; for in the latter part of it there was a great decline, and falling off from it; in the times of the Apostle Paul, the mystery of iniquity began to work; and in John's time many antichrists were come into the world: and also this signifies, that the church openly owned the doctrine of the apostles, and was not ashamed of it before men, and publicly preached, and held it forth in her ministers, to all the world; and that this was her crown and glory, so long as she held it in its power, purity, and was both what she gloried in, and was a glory, an ornament to her: and this was also an emblem of her victory over her enemies, and of her future happiness, and pointed at the means of both; that it was by a faithful and steadfast adherence to the doctrine of the apostles that she overcame Satan, and all her spiritual enemies, and came to the possession of the crown of life and glory.

**Ver. 2.** *And she being big with child*, etc.] Which may be expressive of the fruitfulness of the church in bearing and bringing forth many souls to Christ, and which were very numerous in this period of time, when it was said of Zion that this and that man was born in her; and particularly of her

pregnancy with the kingdom of Christ, to be brought forth, and set up in the Roman empire, under the influence of a Roman emperor: and this being her case, she

*cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered*; which are metaphors taken from a woman in travail; and may either denote the earnest cries and fervent prayers of the members of the church, and the laborious and painful ministrations of the preachers of the Gospel for the conversion of souls, and especially for the setting up of the kingdom of Christ in the empire of Rome; or else the sore and grievous persecutions which attended the apostles of Christ, and succeeding ministers of the word, throughout the times of the ten Roman emperors, and especially under Dioclesian; when the church was big, and laboured in great pain, and the time was drawing on apace that a Christian emperor should be brought forth, who should be a means of spreading the Gospel, and the kingdom of Christ, all over the empire; (see <sup>4316</sup>Jeremiah 30:6,7 <sup>4248</sup>Matthew 24:8); so the Targumist frequently explains the pains of a woman in travail in the prophets by **aq[**, “tribulation”; see the Targum on (<sup>2338</sup>Isaiah 13:8 26:18 66:7).

**Ver. 3.** *And there appeared another wonder in heaven*, etc.] Or “sign”; which represents the woman, or the church's adversary, Satan; not that he was in heaven, in the third heaven, the place of glory and happiness, for out of that he had been cast long ago; but in his great power and authority here on, earth, particularly in the Roman empire, where the church was labouring to bring forth her man child:

*and behold a great red dragon*; the devil, as it is explained in (<sup>6129</sup>Revelation 12:9); though not he in person, but the Heathen Roman empire, or the Heathen Roman emperors, acted, influenced, directed, and presided over by him; so Pharaoh king of Egypt, and other cruel and persecuting monarchs and states, are called dragons in Scripture, (<sup>2370</sup>Isaiah 27:1 51:9 <sup>4328</sup>Ezekiel 29:3); all which places the Targum interprets of **akl m**, “a king”, and particularly of Pharaoh king of Egypt; who is like to a great and mighty dragon: and the Roman Pagan empire, as under the influence of Satan, the god of this world, is fitly compared to a “dragon”, for its policy and cunning in circumventing and ensnaring the professors of Christianity; and for its cruelty and inhumanity in persecuting of them; and for its poison of idolatry, will worship, and superstition: and it may be called a “great” one, for its strength and power, which lay in its immense treasure and riches, in numbers of men, in powerful armies, in strong cities,

castles, etc. and for its large extent and jurisdiction; and a “red” one, because of the blood of the saints shed in it, by which it became of this colour; suitable to the character and bloody practices of the old serpent the devil, by whom it was influenced, who was a murderer from the beginning; and agreeably to one of the names by which the Jews <sup>f311</sup> frequently call the Roman empire Edom, the name Esau had from the red pottage he sold his birthright for, and who himself was born red, (<sup>(-0259)</sup>Genesis 25:29,30); it seems there were red dragons; Homer <sup>f312</sup> says of the dragon, that it is red upon its back:

*having seven heads, and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads*; the “seven heads” of the Roman empire either design the seven mountains, or hills, on which Rome, the metropolis of the empire, was built, as the seven heads of the beast on which the woman drunk with the blood of the saints sat, are explained in (<sup>(-617)</sup>Revelation 17:9); or rather the seven forms of government which successively should obtain in the empire, as kings, consuls, decemvirs, dictators, tribunes, emperors, and popes; hence these heads are said to have “seven crowns” upon them, as expressive of the imperial power and dignity which were in them, and exercised by them: Mr. Daubuz thinks seven capital cities in the Roman empire are meant, as Rome, Carthage, Aege, Antiochia, Augustodunum, Alexandria, and Constantinople; and nothing is more common than to call chief cities the heads of the countries they belong unto, as Damascus the head of Syria, and Samaria the head of Ephraim, (<sup>(-2378)</sup>Isaiah 7:8,9). Pliny <sup>f313</sup> calls Babylon the head of Chaldea; and Cornelius Nepos says <sup>f314</sup> of Thebes, that it was the head of all Greece; and Syracuse is by Florus <sup>f315</sup> called the head of Sicily, as Rome is in Livy <sup>f316</sup>, and other writers, the head of the world: and by the “ten horns” are meant either the ten kingdoms which should hereafter arise out of the Roman empire, and whose kings should give their kingdoms to the beast; or the ten Roman emperors, the persecutors of the Christians; or rather the ten provinces, or jurisdictions, which the empire was divided into while Pagan: Brightman out of Strabo has shown, that in the times of Augustus Caesar the Roman empire was distributed into two parts, the one was more immediately under the care of the emperor, and the other was governed by deputies; and each were divided into ten provinces; that which the emperor held consisted of Africa, France, Britain, Germany, Dacia with Mysia and Thracia, Cappadocia, Armenia, Syria, Palestine with Judea and Egypt, in all ten; and that part which was governed by deputies were the outermost Spain, and the isles by it, the

innermost Spain, etc. Sardinia with Corsica, Sicily, Illyricum with Epirus, Macedonia, Achaia, Crete with Cyreniaca, Cyprus, Bithynia with Propontis; so that the Roman Pagan empire, as under the dominion of Satan, is manifestly designed by the dragon thus described. The Jews <sup>f317</sup> speak of ten horns which the Israelites had, which when they sinned were taken from them, as it is written, (<sup><200B></sup>Lamentations 2:3), and were given to the nations of the world, according to (<sup><200D></sup>Daniel 7:20); “and of the ten horns that were in his head”, etc.

**Ver. 4.** *And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth,* etc.] So Solinus <sup>f318</sup> speaks of dragons that have power not only in their teeth, but in their tails, and do more hurt by striking than by biting; and the great serpent, which Attilius Regulus and his army fought with, not only destroyed many of his soldiers with its vast mouth, but dashed many to pieces with its tail <sup>f319</sup>; which serpent, Pliny <sup>f320</sup> says, was a hundred and twenty foot long: this is said in allusion to Antiochus Epiphanes, in (<sup><208D></sup>Daniel 8:10); and designs either the subduing of the third part of the principalities, states, and kingdoms of the known world, to the Roman empire, through its great power and strength; which lay in its tail, in its train of armies which attended it, whereby such a number of nations were drawn into subjection to it, insomuch that the empire was called all the world, (<sup><400D></sup>Luke 2:1); or else the influence the dragon should have upon the ministers of the word, who are compared to stars, (<sup><600D></sup>Revelation 1:20); by causing them to relinquish their ministry, and drop their heavenly employment, and fall from that high and honourable state in which they were, into a carnal, earthly, and worldly religion; and that either through policy, cunning, and flattery, or through sorcery, magic art, lying oracles, and prophecy; (see <sup><200E></sup>Isaiah 9:15); or through the violence of persecution they had not power to withstand; of which falling stars there are many instances, as the ecclesiastical histories of those times show:

*and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born;* just as the dragon Pharaoh lay in the midst of his rivers, in the river Nile, (<sup><200B></sup>Ezekiel 29:3); to slay the male children of Israel as soon as born; and as the dragon Herod sought to take away the life of Jesus quickly after his birth; and as Satan is like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour, so the Pagan empire, or the Pagan emperors, took every opportunity to stifle the kingdom of Christ in embryo, and to prevent the bringing forth of any illustrious person; and sought to destroy him as soon as he appeared, who might be thought, or



suspected to be an instrument of encouraging and establishing the kingdom of Christ in the empire: the instances Brightman produces are appropriate, and to the purpose; as of Maximinus destroying Alexander the son of Mammea, who he saw was inclined to the Christians; and of Decius taking off the two Philips, father and son, who were favourable to their cause; but especially the watchfulness of the dragon to destroy the man child was very manifest in the Roman emperors towards Constantine; Dioclesian and Galerius, observing his virtuous disposition in his youth, left nothing unattempted to cut him off privately; he was sent against the Sarmatians, a cruel and savage people, in hopes he would have been destroyed by them; and was set to fight with a lion in the theatre, under a pretence of exercising and showing his valour; and many other methods were used to take away his life, but none succeeded.

**Ver. 5.** *And she brought forth a man child*, etc.] Not Christ, literally and personally considered, or Christ in his human nature, as made of a woman, and born of a virgin, which was a fact that had been years ago; but Christ mystically, or Christ in his members, who are called by his name, because he is formed in them, and they are the seed of the woman, the church; and many of these were brought forth to Christ by the church in the primitive times, who were a manly birth, hale, strong, and robust Christians; or rather this manly birth may design a more glorious appearing and breaking forth of the kingdom of Christ in the Roman empire; for though Christ came as a King, yet his kingdom was not with observation in the days of his flesh; and though, upon his ascension to heaven, he was made and declared Lord and Christ, and had a kingdom and interest in the world, and even in the Roman empire, during the first three centuries, yet this was attended with the cross and persecution; but now, towards the close of that period, Constantine, a Christian emperor, was born, under whose influence and encouragement the Gospel was spread, and the kingdom of Christ set up and established in the empire; and this seems to be the thing intended here, he being of a generous, heroic, and manly disposition:

*who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron*; this has a manifest reference to (~~the~~ Psalm 2:9); which psalm, and the passage referred to in it, evidently belong to Christ; and as this is represented as something future, what should be hereafter, and not what would immediately take place, it may regard the kingdom of Christ in the last times, of which the present breaking forth of it in Constantine's time was an emblem and pledge; and may denote the universality of it, it reaching to all the kingdoms of the



world, and the manner which Christ will rule, especially over his enemies, antichrist and his followers, whom he will destroy with the breath of his mouth, and break in pieces with his rod of iron, and order all that would not have him to reign over them slain before him; and as this may be applied to Christ mystical, the seed of the church, and members of Christ, as it is in (<sup>f125</sup>Revelation 2:26,27); it may relate to their reign with Christ on earth, when they shall sit on thrones, and judge the world, when the kingdom and dominion, and the greatness of the kingdom under the whole heaven shall be given to there; but since this is expressly said of the man child in the text, it may be expressive even of the temporal government of Constantine, who was an heroic and victorious prince, and extended his dominions to the several parts of the world; as far as Britain to the west, and all Scythia to the north, Ethiopia to the south, and the remote parts of India to the east, even to the ultimate parts of the whole world, as Eusebius <sup>f321</sup> affirms, making his kingdom to be three times larger than that of Alexander the great: and more especially it may describe the kingdom of Christ in his times; which was spread throughout all the nations of the empire; when Paganism was demolished, both in the continent and in the isles of the sea, and the strong holds Satan were pulled down, not by carnal, but spiritual weapons; when multitudes of souls were converted by the word, the rod of Christ's strength, and when the saints were guided, directed, fed, and comforted by it; for the allusion seems to be to the shepherd's rod, with which he leads and feeds his sheep; the same word signifies both to rule and feed:

*and her child caught up unto God, and [to] his throne;* which is to be understood not of Christ's ascent to heaven in human nature, when he was set down on the same throne with his Father; nor of Christ mystical, or of the saints being caught up into the air, to meet the Lord and be for ever with him, and sit down with him on the same throne; but rather of some glorious advance of the church and kingdom of Christ on earth; for as "to fall from heaven" is expressive of debasement and meanness, and of a low estate that a person is brought into, (<sup>2342</sup>Isaiah 14:12); so an ascending up to heaven, as the two witnesses in the preceding chapter are said to do, denotes exaltation, or a rise to some more glorious state and condition, which was the case of the church in Constantine's time: and this may also take in the accession of Constantine himself to the imperial throne, which was the throne of God; for king's have their sceptres, thrones, and kingdoms from him, they his viceregents, and in some measure represent

and are therefore called gods, and the children of the most high; yea, since Constantine, as advanced to the empire, was such an instrument in Christ's hand for the setting up and establishing his kingdom in it, Christ himself may be here represented as reigning over the Roman empire, as a presage and prelude of his reigning over all the earth another day.

**Ver. 6.** *And the woman fled into the wilderness*, etc.] Not as soon as she was delivered of her child, which is not reasonable to suppose, and would have been improper if not impracticable; nor indeed was this flight until after the war was over, mentioned in (<sup><69213></sup>Revelation 12:13-17); nor until the dragon and his angels were conquered and cast out; nor until a fresh persecution was raised by the dragon against the woman, as appears from (<sup><69214></sup>Revelation 12:14); where this account stands in its proper place, and is here only introduced by way of prolepsis, or anticipation, and that with this view, to show what care was taken of the woman, as well as of her son: and this does not design the flight of the Christians from Jerusalem to Pella, a little before the destruction of the former; nor the expulsion of the Jews or Christians from Rome, either by Claudius or by Nero; but the disappearance of the true church, and its obscure state and condition quickly after the above advance of it; for through the riches and honours which Constantine bestowed upon the Christians, they became vain, proud, ambitious, and careless; false doctrine and superstition obtained; the antichristian apostasy came on apace, and prevailed and increased, and so obscured the true church, that in process of time it became invisible, was in the cleft of the rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, or like persons in a wood or wilderness, not to be seen, as well as desolate and uncomfortable:

*where she hath a place prepared of God*; God has had, and will have a church in the worst of times; as he reserved a number in Elijah's time, so he did in the times of the antichristian apostasy, who bowed not the knee to idolatry; this woman, the church, and her case, are the same with the 144,000 sealed ones in (<sup><69011></sup>Revelation 7:1-8): whom God distinguished, hid, and preserved; for the wilderness is a place of retirement and safety, (<sup><69215></sup>Ezekiel 34:25), as well as of obscurity; and if any particular place is pointed at, I should think the valleys of Piedmont, which lie between France and Italy, are intended, where God has preserved, and continued a set of witnesses to the truth, in a succession, from the beginning of the apostasy to the present time, living in obscurity, and in safety, so far as not to be utterly destroyed:

*that they should feed her there a thousand two hundred [and] threescore days:* in allusion to the children of Israel in the wilderness, where they were fed with manna forty years; so the overcomers, or true Christians in the Pergamos church state, have hidden manna given them to eat, the food of the wilderness, with which church state the church in the wilderness must be considered as contemporary, as also with the Thyatirian and Sardinian church states; for though, at the Reformation, which the Sardinian church state introduces, the church appeared again, and has been ever since coming up out of the wilderness, yet she is stall in it; where she is fed and nourished with the Gospel, and the ordinances of it, by the faithful ministers of the word, the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth; the time of whose prophesying: is exactly of the same date with the woman's bring in the wilderness, and with the reign of antichrist, namely, forty two months, or 1260 days, that is so many years, (~~Gen~~ Revelation 11:2,3,13).

**Ver. 7.** *And there was war in heaven,* etc.] Not in the third heaven, the habitation of God, the seat of the angels and glorified saints, there is no discord, jars, and contentions there, nothing but peace, love, and joy; but in the church below, which is militant, and has in it as it were a company of two armies; or rather in the Roman empire, which was the heaven of Satan, the god of this world, and of his angels; and this war refers not to the dispute between Michael the archangel and the devil about the body of Moses, (~~Gen~~ Jude 1:9); nor to the of the angels when they rebelled against God, left their first estate, and were cast down to hell, (~~Gen~~ Jude 1:6); nor to that ancient and stated enmity between the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman, (~~Gen~~ Genesis 3:15), which has appeared in all ages of time, more or less, since the fall of Adam; nor to the combats which Christ personally had with Satan and his powers when here on earth, as in the wilderness, immediately after his baptism, and in the garden, a little before his death, and on the cross, when he spoiled principalities and powers, and destroyed him that had the power of death, the devil; but rather to the conflict which Christ and his people had with the rulers of the darkness of this world, with the Roman powers, and with false teachers during the three first centuries; though it seems best to understand it of the war commenced by Constantine against Paganism, and which was finished by Theodosius, by whom Heathenism received its death wound, and was never restored since the phrase of war in heaven is not unknown to the Jews; they say <sup>f322</sup> when Pharaoh pursued after Israel, there was war above and below, and there was a very fierce war **μυμϸβ**, “in heaven”:

*Michael and his angels fought against the dragon*: by whom is meant not a created angel, with whom his name does not agree, it signifying “who is as God”; nor does it appear that there is anyone created angel that presides over the rest, and has them at his command; though the Jews seem to imagine as if the angels were ranged under several heads and governors, of whom they make Michael to be one; for they say <sup>f323</sup>,

“when the holy blessed God descended on Mount Sinai, several companies of angels descended with him, *wtrwbj w l akym*,  
 “Michael and his company”, and Gabriel and his company:”

“so kings armies”, in (<sup>4982</sup>Psalm 68:12); are by them interpreted of “kings of angels”; and it is asked who are these? and the answer is, Michael and Gabriel <sup>f324</sup>. Lord Napier thinks that the Holy Ghost is designed, who is equally truly God as the Father and the Son, and who in the hearts of the saints opposes Satan and his temptations; but it seems best to interpret it of Jesus Christ, who is equal with God, is his fellow, is one with the Father, and in whom the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily: he is the Archangel, the first of the chief princes, the head of all principality and power, who is on the side of the Lord's people, pleads their cause, defends their persons, and saves them; (see <sup>6009</sup>Jude 1:9 <sup>2703</sup>Daniel 10:13 12:1); and by “his angels” may be meant either the good angels, literally understood, who are his creatures, his ministers, and whom he employs under him, in protecting his people, and in destroying his enemies; or else the ministers of the Gospel, who are called angels in this book, and who, under Christ, fight the good fight of faith, contend earnestly for it, being valiant for the truth upon earth; or rather the Christian emperors, particularly Constantine and Theodosius, and the Christians with them, who opposed Paganism in the empire, and at last subdued, and cast it out:

*and the dragon fought, and his angels*; there is such an order among the evil angels, as to have one of their own at the head of them, they having cast off their allegiance to God and Christ, who is styled the prince of devils, and his name is Beelzebub: hence we read of the devil and his angels; (see <sup>4124</sup>Matthew 12:24 25:41); and these may be intended here, unless false teachers, who transform themselves into angels of light, as their leader sometimes does, should be thought to be meant, who resist the truth and oppose themselves to the ministers of it; though rather, Satan as presiding over, and influencing the Roman Pagan empire, and the Roman emperors, who acted under him, are here designed; with whom

Constantine and Theodosius, under Christ, combated, such as Maximinus, Maxentius, Licinius, Arbogastes, and Eugenius, and those that were with them. The Arabic version renders it, “the serpent with his soldiers”.

**Ver. 8.** *And prevailed not*, etc.] That is, the dragon, or the devil, and his angels, prevailed not against Michael and his angels; but, on the other hand, were conquered by them, as the above tyrants were by Constantine and Theodosius: some copies read in the singular number, “and he prevailed not”, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; and other copies in the plural number, “they prevailed not”: and as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions:

*neither was their place found any more in heaven*; in the Roman empire; or “his place”, as some copies and versions: this was the time of the judgment of the world, or of the empire as Pagan; Satan the prince of the world, who had long governed in it, was now cast out of all power and authority in it, and all the idol gods in whom he was worshipped, with all the idolatrous priests; nor were there any more any Heathen emperors, for after Constantine's time there was only Julian the apostate, and who reigned but a little while; and after Theodosius, who cleared the empire of Paganism, there never was any, and there is reason to believe there never will be.

**Ver. 9.** *And the great dragon was cast out*, etc.] From heaven, or from power and authority in the Roman empire, namely, the devil, where he had long presided; it is observable that Constantine himself speaks of “the dragon” being removed from the government of the commonwealth by the providence of God, and by the ministry, or means of him <sup>f325</sup>; and he had his own effigies on a table placed before the porch of his palace, with the cross over his head, and a dragon under his feet thrust through with darts, and falling headlong <sup>f326</sup>;

*the old serpent*; who is so called, because, of old, from the beginning, almost as soon as the world was, he appeared in the form of a serpent, or rather made use of it as an instrument and means, by which he seduced Eve, and so brought on the ruin of mankind, it is very usual with the Jews to call the devil *ynwmdqh cj n*, “the old serpent” <sup>f327</sup>; wherefore John uses this phrase as a known one, to explain who was meant by the great dragon:

*called the devil and Satan*; the first of these names signifies an accuser, and a forger of calumnies, and such is the old serpent; he accuses God to men,

as if he was envious of their happiness, as in the case of our first parents, and of men to God, of which there is an instance in the case of Job; and hence he is in (<sup><620></sup>Revelation 12:10) called the accuser of the brethren; and the latter of them signifies an enemy, one that is filled with hatred and enmity to God and Christ, and to his church and people, whose adversary he is said to be, and at whose right hand he stands to resist, as he did Joshua the high priest:

*which deceiveth the whole world*; which he did by deceiving our first parents, from whom all mankind spring, and in whose loins they were when they were deceived; so the Jews say <sup>f328</sup> of the old serpent, that  $\mu\lambda\ \omega[\ h\ l\ k\ l\ h[j\ m$ , “he deceives the whole world”; and so he deceived and corrupted the old world before the flood; and so he seduces every age and generation of men in the world; but here the Roman empire, sometimes called all the world, as in (<sup><600></sup>Luke 2:1), is meant, whom Satan deceived by drawing it into idolatry and superstition;

*he was cast out into the earth*; he was cast out of the Roman empire, from the rule of it, and worship in it, the Heathen gods and Heathen emperors being no more; when he possessed and instigated, and influenced the Huns, Goths, and Vandals, a meaner and baser sort of people, hereafter in this chapter called the earth, which is said to help the woman, contrary to the intention of Satan; the phrase denotes the greatness of the fall of Satan, his loss of power, and the meanness and low estate of the persons he afterwards had the power of, both the savage people before mentioned, and the antichristian party:

*and his angels were cast out with him*; the Heathen emperors, magistrates, priests, and other votaries of his, which he made use of as instruments to do his will.

**Ver. 10.** *And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven*, etc.] Which was a song of praise on account of the victory obtained by Michael and his angels over the dragon and his, or for the overthrow and downfall of Paganism in the Roman empire; for by “heaven” is meant the empire, now become Christian, or the Christian church state in it; and the “loud voice” heard in it by John shows that there was a great number in it, who rejoiced on this occasion, and that they were full of affection and fervency, and therefore expressed themselves in such manner, and in form following:

*now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ*; “salvation” was come when Christ obtained it by his sufferings and death, and comes to particular persons in the effectual calling, and it will only be fully come when it is perfectly enjoyed in heaven: but here it designs a deliverance from Satan, as the god of this world, who was now dethroned, and cast down from his power, authority, and influence in the empire; and from Pagan idolatry and superstition, and from the ten days of tribulation, the cruel and bloody persecutions under the Heathen emperors; and denotes that safety and security, comfort, peace, and happiness, the churches enjoyed under the government of a Christian emperor: and now was come “strength”; not the strength of Christ personal, displayed in the redemption of his people; but rather of Christ mystical, of his church and interest, which had been very weak and low, and under oppression and persecution, but was now exalted, and in a flourishing condition, and was become strong and mighty; or it may design the strength and power of Christ, shown in destroying his enemies, in casting the dragon out of heaven down to the earth, and in bringing to confusion and destruction the Heathen emperors, princes, and others, who fled to the rocks and mountains for fear of him, and because of his great wrath: also now came “the kingdom of our God”, the Gospel of the kingdom was preached everywhere and Gospel churches were set up in all parts of the empire, both which are sometimes signified by the kingdom of God; here was now an illustrious appearance of the kingdom of God in the world, such as had never been before; and which was a pledge and presage of the greatness of the kingdom, or of that everlasting kingdom which will be set up hereafter, when all other kingdoms will be at an end: to which is added “the power of his Christ”; or his authority as Lord and Christ, which took place at his resurrection, ascension, and session at the right hand of God, and which will more fully appear at the last day, when he shall come in glory, and exercise his authority in judging the quick and dead, of which there was some resemblance at this time, in dethroning Satan, destroying Paganism, and putting an end to the power of the Heathen emperors and empire; and which is expressed in such language as the day of judgment is, (~~and~~ Revelation 6:12-17); for to the opening of the sixth seal does this passage belong: a further account is given of the matter of this song, and the reason of it:

*for the accuser of our brethren is cast down*; hence it appears that this is not a song of the angels in heaven, since the saints are never called their



brethren, nor the angels theirs, but their fellow servants; rather it may be thought to be the song of the saints in heaven, acknowledging those on earth to be their brethren, as they are, for there is but one family in heaven and in earth, and the saints on earth are called the of the souls under the altar, (~~<66B>~~ Revelation 6:9,11); but as this refers to the state of the church in Constantine's time, it must be the song of the saints in that state, who call the martyrs, that had been slain under the former persecutions, their brethren; for that they are the persons meant is clear from the following verse, whom Satan is an accuser of, for he is designed here; the word rendered “devil” signifies an accuser, and a false one, and is so translated (~~<66B>~~ Titus 2:3); this is a name frequently given to Satan by the Jews, and have adopted into their language the very Greek word <sup>f329</sup> that is here used; and often say of him that he accuses Israel, and particularly that he accuses Israel above, that is, in heaven; and that he stands and **dymt grj qm** <sup>f330</sup>, “continually accuses them”, the very phrase used in the next clause: when Israel came out of Egypt, they say <sup>f331</sup> the angel Samael (the devil) stood and accused them; the first day of the month Tisri, according to them <sup>f332</sup>, is appointed a day for blowing of trumpets, to confound Satan, who comes to accuse at that time; so they say <sup>f333</sup> that Satan stood and accused Abraham, and others; and indeed he was an accuser from the beginning, both of God to men, and of men to God; we have instances in Job and Joshua the high priest, (~~<80B>~~ Job 1:8-11) (~~<81B>~~ Zechariah 3:1); but here it refers to the accusations brought against the Christians in the primitive times, during the ten persecutions, which were very horrid ones indeed; as that they had their private suppers, at which they ate their own infants, and their nightly meetings, for the gratifying of their lusts, in which they committed adultery, incest, and all manner of uncleanness; if ever a fire happened in a city, they were charged with it; and whenever there were any famine, or pestilence, or wars, or any public calamity, they were accused as the cause and occasion of it; as appears from the apologies for them written by Justin, Tertullian, Cyprian, Minutius Felix, etc. so that Satan at this time was remarkably the accuser of the brethren; but now this father of lies was cast down, he was cast out of heaven, and deprived of that power and authority he had in the empire, and lost his influence over men, and could not spread his lies, and get his false charges and accusations credited and received as before; he was not indeed wholly destroyed, nor even shut up in the bottomless pit, but he was cast down to the earth; he was in a low condition, his power was greatly diminished, and he was conquered by Christ, and cast down and bruised under the feet of the saints,



*which accused them before our God day and night*; so the evil spirit in Ahab's time, and Satan in Job's time, are said to stand before the Lord: and this shows the malice, and also the insolence of the devil, that he should stand and accuse the saints before God, who he knew was their God, and was on their side, and therefore his accusations could be of no avail; and though Christ appears in the presence of God for them, and is their advocate with the Father, yet he is constant and indefatigable in going about, and picking up charges against them, and carrying them to God.

**Ver. 11.** *And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, by whose blood they were redeemed and ransomed out of the hands of Satan, that was stronger than they; and by which they were justified from all sin, and so all charges and condemnation were of no avail against them, whether of Satan or the world; and by which they were cleansed from all pollution, both internal and external; and by which even their conversation garments were washed and made white; by this they also, drew nigh to God with boldness, as to their own God, notwithstanding the accusations of Satan; and this they could, and did make use of as a shield to defend them against all his charges; and this being sprinkled upon them, as it gave them an inward conscience peace amidst all, so it was their security from the destroying angel; and under this purple covering they went triumphantly to glory, having through it obtained an entire conquest over Satan: as also

*and by the word of their testimony*; either by Christ, the essential Word, they bore record of, who is sharper than any twoedged sword, and through whom they were made more than conquerors; or rather by the use they made of the Scriptures of truth, the sword of the Spirit, the word of God, to which they bore a faithful testimony, and to which they adhered, and by so doing gained the victory over Satan and his instruments, whether false teachers or persecutors; and particularly by the Gospel, which they embraced, professed, and preached with constancy and courage, and by their last testimony they bore to it at their death, on the account of it, as it follows:

*and they loved not their lives unto the death*; they did not value them; they made no account of them; they were not anxiously careful to preserve them; they chose to lose them; they ran to the stake, and willingly and cheerfully laid them down; they did not count them dear unto them, as said the Apostle Paul, that they might finish their course with joy, and testify

the Gospel of the grace of God, or bear a testimony to it, (<sup><402></sup>Acts 20:24); yea, as Christ has directed, (<sup><214></sup>Luke 14:26); they hated their lives in comparison of him, and when in competition with him and his Gospel; and by dying thus they conquered Satan; had they loved their lives, and saved them by denying Christ and his truths, Satan would have conquered them; but dying in the cause of Christ, and for it, they got the victory over him.

**Ver. 12.** *Therefore rejoice, [ye] heavens, and ye that dwell in them,* etc.] So in the prophetic language, at times, and upon occasions of rejoicing, the heavens are called upon to join, and bear a part therein, (<sup><1960></sup>Psalm 96:10,11 <sup><2342></sup>Isaiah 44:23); and by these may be meant here the angels of heaven, who rejoice at every advance of Christ's kingdom and interest; they rejoiced at his incarnation, and so they do at the conversion of every single sinner; and much more may they be thought to do so at such a time as this, when there were such multitudes of conversions, and the churches and interest of Christ in so flourishing a condition, and Satan's kingdom so much weakened; and to these may be joined the souls of the saints departed, who might be made acquainted with this wonderful change of things in the empire; and it may also be understood of the saints, the members of the several churches, even all heavenly minded persons, who were born from above, and were partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversations were in heaven; these are called upon to take their part in this song of praise and thanksgiving:

*woe to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea:* such as are of the earth, earthy, sensual, and earthly minded persons; and who are like the troubled waters, and raging waves of the sea, cannot rest, but cast up mire and dirt, and foam out their own shame; the barbarous nations of the Goths and Vandals, carnal professors of religion, and the antichristian party, which quickly upon this sprung up, may be intended, on whom this woe is denounced; the reason of which follows:

*for the devil is come down unto you;* and a greater woe cannot be upon men on earth, than to have the devil among them, who always brings mischief with him, and breathes nothing but ruin and destruction to men; he having lost his power in the Roman empire, possessed the above persons, and took up his residence among them; he came down, but not willingly, he was forced to it, he was cast down:

*having great wrath;* because he was conquered, and cast out of heaven, and was deprived of the worship that had been long given him, as the god

of the world, and of that authority and influence which he had over men: and this his great wrath was seen in stirring up the Arians to persecute the Christians; and in the times of Julian, when he endeavoured to regain his lost power; and in bringing in the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the empire, to waste and destroy it; and in moving the antichristian party, which soon prevailed, to make war against the saints:

*because he knoweth he hath but a short time*; ere he should be shut up in the bottomless pit, or be confined in the place of torment, and ere his full punishment should be inflicted on him; which time of his to tempt, deceive, disturb, and distress men, is to be no longer than during the forty two months of antichrist's reign, and the 1260 days, or years, of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth, and of the church's being in the wilderness, and no longer than till the thousand years' reign of Christ with his saints begins, which, in comparison of his long reign in the Gentile world, is but a short time; and though, after the thousand years are ended, he will be let loose, yet it will be but for a season, a very small time, when he will be cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, and be tormented night and day, for ever and ever.

**Ver. 13.** *And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth*, etc.] When the devil perceived he had not the power in the Roman empire he formerly had; and that his influence was only over the common and meaner sort of people, or over the earthly part of the church, and the barbarous nations in the world:

*he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man [child]*: he was enraged at the church, and pursued her with great wrath, who had brought forth a Christian emperor, by whom the kingdom of Christ was encouraged and supported in the empire; and because he could not come at this child to destroy it, that being caught up to God and to his throne, he attacks the woman, the church, in a new way, by stirring up earthly minded professors of Christianity, the Arians, against her, and by bringing in an inundation of the barbarous nations into the empire, now become Christian; for this persecution cannot be understood of the persecution raised by the Jews, under the instigation of Satan, against the Christian church, quickly after the ascension of Christ to heaven, for then the dragon had his place and power in the Roman empire, whereas this persecution was not till after the downfall of Paganism in it; and for the same reason it cannot design the persecution against the Christians begun by Nero, and carried on under

succeeding emperors, which were the ten days of tribulation under the Smyrnaean church state, and were now over; these were the pains and birth throes of the woman, the church, antecedent to, and which brought on, the birth of the man child; and the persons that endured them were those that overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, the word of their testimony, and their death, which were all previous to these times: nor does it respect so much the persecution under Julian, which was carried on not by open force and violence, but by subtlety; he abstained from corporeal punishments and shedding of blood, observing that these methods in former times had given the Christians an opportunity of showing their faith, patience: and fortitude, which had been the means of increasing their number; wherefore he betook himself to more private and artful methods, as to content himself with taking away the revenues of the ministers of the word, not suffering any Christians to be in military employments, denying their children the use of schools, encouraging the Jews, their sworn enemies, and tolerating all sorts of heresies among themselves, that so they might destroy one another; to which may be added, that his reign was but one year and seven or eight months, and therefore can scarcely be thought to be pointed at here; but inasmuch as the Arian persecution was the first after the fall of Paganism, and the principal one before the rise of antichrist, this may most reasonably be concluded to be meant here; and this began even in Constantine's time, for by means of an Arian presbyter that belonged to his sister Constantia, he was prevailed upon, towards the close of his days, to believe that Arius was not the man he was said to be, and that he had had hard measure; insomuch that he was recalled, and received into communion, and Athanasius was driven from his church, and banished to Triers in France: and the historian says <sup>f334</sup>, that Constantine exercised “vim persecutionis”, the force of persecution, or a violent one; bishops were exiled, the clergy were severely handled, and laymen taken notice of, who separated themselves from the communion of the Arians. Under Constantius, his son, the persecution raged much, Athanasius being gone from Alexandria, and one Gregory put in his room; and the people being uneasy at it, some were banished, others cast into prison, and others had their goods confiscated; women were dragged by the hair of their heads to the tribunals, and used very ignominiously; three thousand soldiers entered a church on an Easter day, and killed many women and children; virgins were stripped naked, and the bodies of those who died of their wounds were denied a burial, and cast to the dogs; and the persecution did not stop here, but went through Egypt, where the bishops, some of them, were

beaten with rods, others were laid in bonds, and others were banished: in Egypt and Lybia ninety bishops were forced away, sixteen were banished, whose churches were delivered to the Arians. Lucius of Adrianople was bound in chains, cast into prison, and there perished; Paul of Constantinople was first expelled, after that murdered, and Macedonius, an Arian, put in his room; and such who refused to commune with him suffered stripes, bonds, imprisonment, and other tortures, of which they died, and others were banished, where they perished; women that refused had their breasts cut off, or burnt, either with red hot irons, or with eggs roasted at the fire to a very great heat <sup>f335</sup>; with other instances too many to recite. Under Valens the emperor things were still worse, who became an Arian at the persuasion of his wife, and was baptized by Eudoxius, the Arian bishop of Constantinople, who, at his baptism, obliged him to swear that he would defend Arianism, and persecute those of a contrary opinion; and accordingly he moved an irreconcilable war against them; at one time he expelled Melesius from Antioch, Eusebius from Samosata, Pelagius from Laodicea, and Barsis from Edessa; and all the rest that would not communicate with Euzoius, an Arian, he punished, either with pecuniary fines or with stripes; and he is said to drown many in the river Orontes. This persecution went through the churches of Thrace, Dacia, and Pannonia; but what is most shocking of all is, that some chosen ecclesiastical men, to the number of four score and one, were sent to him from Constantinople to Nicomedia, with a supplication to redress some injuries and grievances; at which he being angry, ordered Modestus, the governor, to take them and put them to death; but the governor fearing to do it openly, lest there should be an insurrections, ordered a ship to be got ready, pretending to carry them into exile, but directed the mariners to go in a fisher's boat behind, and set fire to the ship, which they accordingly did when at sea, where all the above worthy men perished at once <sup>f336</sup>. It would be endless to rehearse all the instances of cruelty under this persecution; it need only be observed, that this was at the instigation of the devil, as all persecution is; and that Satan herein acted like himself, as the great dragon, as he was when Rome Pagan was in power: these were Christian emperors in name, but they exercised all the cruelties of the Heathen ones, if they did not exceed them; and a greater regard was shown to Paganism than to the orthodox religion. Valens tolerated all religions but that, especially Heathenism; all his reign the fire burned upon the altars, images were honoured with libations and sacrifices, the public festivals of the Heathens were kept, and the rites of Bacchus were performed in the streets <sup>f337</sup>; and

this persecution was followed by the inundation of the barbarous nations, of which hereafter.

**Ver. 14.** *And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle*, etc.] By which are meant, not the two testaments, by which she was supported under afflictions, trials, and persecutions, and against Satan and all his efforts; nor the two graces of faith and hope, by which she rose, and dwelt on high, in the view of invisible things, and with contempt of the world, its frowns or flatteries; nor, as others think, prayer and good works, by the former of which she flew to God for supplies of grace and protection, and by the latter was useful and profitable to men, and gave glory to God, and escaped the just censures of the world; nor are two powerful kingdoms, within the dominions of the dragon, intended, as others have thought, who take them to be France and Spain, to which Britain was an appendix; when they were in the possession of Constantius Chlorus, the father of Constantine the great, where the Christians had refuge in the persecution under Dioclesian; but this was before the war in heaven, and the downfall of Paganism in the empire, and before the above persecution; rather these two wings of the eagle design the eastern and western divisions of the Roman empire: it is not unusual in Scripture for a monarchy, or monarch, as the Assyrian king and kingdom, to be signified by an eagle, and the wings of eagles, (<sup><267B></sup>Ezekiel 17:3,12 <sup><270H></sup>Daniel 7:4); and it is well known that the eagle is the ensign of the Roman empire, to which the allusion is in (<sup><40B></sup>Matthew 24:28); and at the death of Theodosius the empire was divided, as has been observed before, into two parts; the eastern empire was given to one of his sons and the western to another; and this was between the Arian persecution, and the irruption of the Goths and Vandals, when the church was fleeing and gradually disappearing; and these two empires both went under the Christian name, and supported the outward visible church, though much corrupted, and still more and more corrupting; by which means the pure members of the church, though few and very obscure were preserved. In a word, these wings may denote the swiftness in which the church proceeded to disappear, having lost her former simplicity and glory for which eagles' wings are famous, (<sup><215B></sup>Proverbs 23:5); and more especially that divine strength and support by which she was bore up, and carried through, and delivered out of sore afflictions and persecutions; (see <sup><248B></sup>Isaiah 40:31). The allusion is to God's deliverance of the people of Israel out of Egypt when he bore them as on eagles wings,

and carried them though the wilderness, (<sup>(1290)</sup>Exodus 19:4 <sup>(620)</sup>Deuteronomy 32:10-12), so here it follows,

*that she might fly into the wilderness*; a place desolate, and full of serpents and scorpions, uncomfortable, and destitute of provisions, and yet a place of safety as well as of solitariness and retirement; and chiefly designs the obscure and invisible state of the pure church in the times of the antichristian apostasy; (see Gill on "<sup>(626)</sup>Revelation 12:6").

*Into her place*; which was prepared of God for her, as in (<sup>(626)</sup>Revelation 12:6);

*where she is nourished* by the ministers of the word the two witnesses that prophesy in sackcloth who feed the church with knowledge and understanding; with the words of faith and good doctrine, with the Gospel, and the truths of it, which are sweet, comfortable and nutritive; and with the ordinances of the Gospel, the entertainment of Wisdom's house, the feast of fat things, and the breasts of consolation; and with Christ the hidden manna, the food of the wilderness: and that

*for a time, and times, and half a time*; that is, all the times of antichrist, the forty two months of his reign; during which time the holy city is trodden under foot, and in a desolate and afflicted condition outwardly, as may be learnt by comparing together (<sup>(2025)</sup>Daniel 7:25) (<sup>(635)</sup>Revelation 13:5 11:2); and until the end of wonders, or when time shall be no longer or till the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet as appears from (<sup>(2135)</sup>Daniel 12:7 <sup>(616)</sup>Revelation 10:6,7). This date is the same with 1260 days in (<sup>(626)</sup>Revelation 12:6), for "time" signifies a prophetic year, or 360 years; and "times" two years, or 720 years; and half a time, half a year, or 180 years, in all 1230 years; and which are to be reckoned, not from the beginning of the church's flight in Constantine's time, or from the Arian persecution, but from her entering into her wilderness state, or entire disappearance upon the prevalence of the antichristian apostasy; which might be when the bishop of Rome took upon him the title of universal bishop: and here and during this time she is hid

*from the face of the serpent*; that is, from his wrath so as that he cannot utterly destroy her. God having reserved a sealed number for himself; (see <sup>(616)</sup>Revelation 6:16), or from the sight of the serpent as the Arabic version renders it, so as that he could not discern with all his quick sight where the church was.



**Ver. 15.** *And the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood,* etc.]

Which cannot design any persecution before the fall of Paganism, either of the Jews, or of the Romans; nor indeed the Arian persecution, since the casting out of this flood is distinguished from the above persecution, and was after the church began to flee upon that persecution; though it is not unusual for wicked persecutors, and violent persecutions, to be expressed by waters, and they are called proud waters, (<sup><BCE></sup>Psalm 124:1-4); and these may be said to be cast out of the mouth of the serpent, the devil, who was a persecutor and a murderer from the beginning, and by whom all persecutors and persecutions are instigated, moved, and carried on; but rather, as the words of a man's mouth are as deep waters, (<sup><BCE></sup>Proverbs 18:4); and doctrines, good or bad, may be so called; that flood of errors and heresies, which were poured in between the times of Constantine and the rise of antichrist may be here intended; such as the Arian heresy, which denied the divinity of Christ; the Nestorian heresy, which divided his person; and the Eutychian heresy, which confounded the two natures in him; and the Macedonian heresy, which took away the deity of the Holy Ghost; and the Pelagian heresy, which destroyed the grace of God, and set up the power of man's free will: and this flood of errors and heresies may be truly said to be cast out of the serpent's mouth; since the old serpent, the devil, is the father of all lies, and errors: and the above heresies are the doctrines of devils, and damnable ones; and were designed by Satan to destroy the souls of men, and ruin the church: though since this flood followed upon the Arian persecution, and was after the church began to flee, being supported and secured by the two divisions of the empire, eastern and western, the wings of the Roman eagle, it seems best by this flood to understand the irruption of the barbarous nations, which quickly followed that division; the Goths, Huns, Vandals, Heruli, Alans, and Lombards, who were poured into the western empire, and overran, and at last destroyed it; so that this flood is contemporary with the first four trumpets; after which followed the swarms of locusts, the Saracens, which infested, teased, and tormented the "eastern" empire; and after them the Turks, the four angels bound at the great river Euphrates, were let loose, and like a mighty torrent overflowed, and utterly destroyed it; and all this was done at the instigation of Satan, he being filled with wrath, because the empire was become Christian, and his view was to destroy the church in it: for this flood was cast



*after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood;* along with the empire, and be no more; but his designs were frustrated, and he disappointed; so people, nations, and tongues, are compared to waters in (<sup>675</sup>Revelation 17:15); (see <sup>2387</sup>Isaiah 8:7 28:2), which the Targum interprets of the armies of much people.

**Ver. 16.** *And the earth helped the woman*, etc.] By opening itself, and taking in what the serpent cast out, so that it could not reach the woman, and annoy her, as follows:

*and the earth opened her mouth;* as it did when it swallowed up Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, (<sup>4160</sup>Numbers 16:30); to which history this may have some respect:

*and swallowed up the flood which the dragon east out of his mouth;* if the flood refers to the Arian persecution, then the earth helping the woman, the church, and swallowing up this flood, may respect the Goths, who broke into the Roman provinces, under their king, Athanaricus, and fell upon the Arians, with great rage and cruelty, and infested the Roman provinces, which were nearer; they seized upon Thrace, which was the occasion of tranquillity to the orthodox; for Valens being moved by these things, desisted from persecuting them, and, leaving Antioch, he went to Constantinople to form measures for the carrying on of the war against the Goths <sup>f338</sup>; and thus the earth helped the woman. But if, by the flood, the errors and heresies of those times are meant, then the councils may be intended by the earth; which, though they consisted of men that were earthly, and greatly apostatized in other things, yet opposed, refuted, and condemned these heresies and errors, and so were the means of preserving the church from them, as some think; though others are of opinion that the barbarous nations are in this also designed, who embracing Arianism, and the corrupt religion, where they came, by which they were, in, some measure, mollified and reconciled to the Christians, did not seek to root them out, and destroy them, as Satan hoped they would; but since they themselves, with the Mahometans, are meant by the flood, the earth must be interpreted of the corrupt and antichristian church, the idolaters which sustained the force of this inundation, and for some time repelled it, and so secured the true church; and when the western empire was overrun by it, as by the Goths, etc. idolaters, earthly minded men, and carnal professors, were the sufferers, and bore the shock of it; and when the eastern empire was overrun by the Saracens, the tormenting locusts, the green things,

grass and trees, were not hurt by them; none of the sealed ones, only those who were not sealed, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 9:4); and the Turkish inundation was a scourge upon the antichristian party: so that it was the earth, or earthly part of professors, the idolaters, that bore the fury and force of this flood, and broke it off from the church. And so sometimes wicked men are helpful to the saints, as the Philistines were serviceable to David, to screen him from the fury of Saul; and Lysias, the chief captain, and Felix and Festus, Roman governors, were instruments of preserving the Apostle Paul from falling into the hands of the Jews, his enemies; and the Christians that were scattered by the persecution at Jerusalem found refuge and safety among the Gentiles.

**Ver. 17.** *And the dragon was wroth with the woman*, etc.] The devil was very angry with the church, because he could not destroy her by the Arian persecution he had raised; and because he could not carry her away with the flood, either of errors and heresies, or of the barbarous nations; and because he could not, by any means, come at her, and indeed did not well know where she was, a place being prepared for her of God in the wilderness, where she was taken care of: wherefore he took another method as follows,

*and went to make war with the remnant of her seed*; which refers to the war the beast, to whom he gave his power, seat, and authority, is said to make with the saints; and which was entered into and carried on by his instigation, of which there is an account in the following chapter: the persons with whom he went to make war are described as “her seed”; the seed of the church, her spiritual offspring, the sons and daughters she brought forth to Christ; between which seed, and Satan and his seed, there always was an enmity: and these are “the remnant” of her seed, a few persons scattered up and down, a remnant according to the election of grace; who were not in bodies, or in church states, regularly formed, as heretofore, but in private families, and some here, and some there; and who were called out to bear a testimony for Christ in corrupt times: and these are further described as such

*who keep the commandments of God*: and not the traditions of men: nor are the commands of the moral law of God so much designed, though it is true that these were kept by the seed of the church; but rather the ordinances of the Gospel, the commands of God our Saviour, such as baptism and the Lord's supper; which were kept by these faithful ones, as

they had been delivered, when they began now to be sadly corrupted by the antichristian party:

*and have the testimony of Jesus Christ*; the Gospel, which is a testimony concerning him; (see Gill on “~~the~~ Revelation 1:2”). This they had in their hearts, a spiritual knowledge and saving experience of it; and this they had in their hands, they made a profession of it, they held it forth, and held it fast; all which was the reason of Satan's enmity against them, and war with them.

# CHAPTER 13

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 13

This chapter contains a description of the Romish antichrist, under the figure of two beasts, the one representing him in his civil power, the other in his ecclesiastical power. The first beast is described by its origin, the sea, and by the monstrous shape its several parts; its heads seven, in which were the name of blasphemy; its horns ten, on which were crowns; its skin like a leopard, its feet as a bear, and its mouth as a lion; and by its state and condition, having power, a throne, and great authority; and having one of its heads wounded, and healed; and by the great regard had unto him, being wondered at, and worshipped by all the world, and declared to be more powerful than any, and none to be like them, ([Revelation 13:1-4](#)). Next an account is given of what he was suffered to have, a blaspheming mouth, and power to continue forty two months, ([Revelation 13:5](#)); and of what he said or uttered, his blasphemy against God, his name, tabernacle, and the inhabitants of heaven, ([Revelation 13:6](#)); and of what he did by permission, made war with the saints, overcame them, and had power over all people, ([Revelation 13:7](#)); and of the worship given him by the reprobate part of the world, ([Revelation 13:8](#)); and the whole is concluded with an exhortation exciting attention to what had been said, with a threatening to the beast, and a word of comfort to the saints, ([Revelation 13:9,10](#)). And then follows the description of the second beast, by its original the earth; by its likeness to a lamb, and a dragon; to the former for its two horns, and to the latter for its speech, ([Revelation 13:11](#)); and by the actions ascribed to it, which are many; as exercising all the power of the first beast; causing all the inhabitants of the earth to worship that; doing miracles, of which one is mentioned, thereby deceiving the men of the world; ordering them to make an image to the wounded beast; giving life to it, so that it could speak; putting to death all that refused to worship it; obliging men of all ranks and degrees to have a mark in their right hands or foreheads, and forbidding such that had not to buy or sell, ([Revelation 13:12-17](#)). And the chapter is concluded with an epiphonema, exciting men of understanding to search out, and count the number of the beast's name, since it is possible to be done, being the

number of a man, and easy to be done, consisting of three Greek letters,  $\chi$   $\xi$   $\varsigma$ , which are numerically 666, (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 13:18).

**Ver. 1.** *And I stood upon the sand of the sea*, etc.] The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “and he stood”, etc. and so the Alexandrian copy; meaning the dragon, said to be wroth with the woman, and to go forth to make war with her seed, in the latter part of the preceding chapter, where some versions place this clause; and the Arabic version reads expressly, “and the serpent stood”, etc. And this is thought by some to be the better reading, because of the connection with what goes before, and because there is no mention of the name of John, nor of his being called or removed from heaven, where he was beholding sights, and continuing the account of them, (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 4:1 12:1 15:1), as there is when he is shown sights elsewhere; (see <sup><666></sup>Revelation 17:3 21:10). And besides, as the dragon was contriving a new way of persecuting the saints, and about to raise up a beast out of the sea, by which he might do it, to whom he would give his power, seat, and authority, he is represented as standing in a proper place for this purpose; it was upon the sand, which may signify a multitude of people employed by him, and also may denote the weakness and failure of his efforts in the issue; yet the Greek copies in general agree in the common reading, and refer it to John, who stood on the shore of the isle of Patmos, and in a fit place, in a visionary way, to behold the following sight: for that the next clause belongs to him is without doubt,

*and saw a beast rise up out of the sea*: by which is meant, not the devil, because it is in (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 13:2), distinguished from the dragon, who is the devil and Satan, as also elsewhere, (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 16:13 20:10), nor the old Roman empire, though there are many things which seem to agree; the Roman monarchy is called a beast it is one of the four beasts in (<sup><270></sup>Daniel 7:2,7); which rose up out of the sea, from a multitude of people and nations, which were gathered to it and composed it. Rome Pagan had, as this beast has, seven heads and ten horns, (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 12:3); and had power over all nations, and is therefore sometimes called the whole world, and exercised great cruelty upon the Christians; but then this is signified by the red dragon itself, in the preceding chapter, and, besides, had risen up before the times of John, whereas this is one of the things shown him, which should be hereafter: this beast then was not, but was to come, (<sup><666></sup>Revelation 4:1 17:11); and was not to arise, nor did it arise till after the downfall of Rome Pagan, and after the Arian persecution, after the

woman's flight into the wilderness, and after, and upon the inundation of the barbarous nations into the empire, as appears from the preceding chapter; nor will the time of this beast's duration agree with the old Roman empire, for this beast is to continue forty two months, (<sup>6615</sup>Revelation 13:5); which is the whole time of the holy city being trodden under foot, and of the church's being in the wilderness, and of the witnesses prophesying in sackcloth; whereas the Roman monarchy, governed by emperors, did not last four hundred years. Moreover, as this beast is distinguished from the dragon, so it is said to have its power from him; whereas the Roman empire was of God, and obedience and subjection to it are always recommended to the saints in the Scriptures, (<sup>6505</sup>Romans 13:1 <sup>6001</sup>Titus 3:1 <sup>6013</sup>1 Peter 1:13), much less can the empire, as become truly Christian, be intended; nor are either the eastern or the Turkish empires designed, for neither of these had their seat at Rome, which the dragon save to this beast, but at Constantinople: it remains then, that by it meant the Roman empire, when divided into ten kingdoms, and united in the Papacy; or it designs Christ in his secular power, with the ten kings, that receive power with him as such one hour, and give their kingdom to him: now this beast is said to "rise up out of the sea"; either out of the abyss, the bottomless pit of hell, (see <sup>6610</sup>Revelation 11:7 17:8); or out of the sea of this world, and the wicked in it, who are like a troubled sea that cannot rest; or out of the floods of errors and heresies, by which this man of sin was conceived and cherished, and a way was paved for his open rising and appearance in the world; or rather, since waters design, in this book, nations, people, and tongues, (see <sup>6675</sup>Revelation 17:15); and the four beasts in Daniel are said to rise out of the sea, (<sup>6610</sup>Revelation 7:2); and a multitude of people are compared to the waves of the sea, (<sup>6308</sup>Ezekiel 26:3); see also (<sup>6370</sup>Isaiah 17:12 57:20), where the Jewish writers say <sup>f339</sup>, the nations are compared to the sea, as Israel to the sand, the inundation of the barbarous nations, the Goths, Huns, and Vandals, into the empire, seem to be intended, which made great commotions and changes in it: these set up ten kingdoms in it, upon which antichrist arose, and placed himself at the head of them; these gave their kingdoms to the beast; and so may be said to give rise unto him, especially as to his secular power.

*Having seven heads*: which some understand the seat of knowledge, and seven a number of perfection; and so may refer to those boasted treasures of wisdom and knowledge which antichrist pretends to have, as being the judge of controversies, and the infallible interpreter of the Scriptures; or

else the seven fold form of government among the Romans is intended, as in (<sup>661B</sup>Revelation 12:3); or rather as it is interpreted in (<sup>667D</sup>Revelation 17:9); the seven mountains on which Rome was built, and so design the city itself built on them, that being the metropolis of the empire; or the seven capital cities of the empire, as Mr. Daubuz thinks; the whole is meant, for it is the same Roman monarchy as before, only in a different form:

*and ten horns*; the ten kingdoms, into which the empire was divide it upon its being wasted and vanquished by the Goths, and the ten kings of them, which reigned with the beast, and gave their kingdoms to him; so horns signify kingdoms in (<sup>301S</sup>Zechariah 1:18).

*And upon his horns ten crowns*; which distinguishes Rome Papal from Rome Pagan; the crowns in Rome Pagan were upon the heads, or the emperors, that resided at Rome; and though it had ten horns, as here, and was divided into so many provinces, which were governed by deputies, proconsuls, etc. yet they were not kings, they had no crowns; but here the horns have crowns on them because the governors of these ten kingdoms are crowned kings:

*and upon his heads the name of blasphemy*; which refers not to Rome Pagan being called the eternal city, and Rome the goddess, and the like; but to Rome Papal, or antichrist, who elsewhere is said to have the name “Mystery” written upon the forehead, and to have blasphemy on his heads; and is called blasphemy in the abstract, as being a most blasphemous creature against God, Christ, and his people, and so his name is suitable to his character, mouth, and language, (<sup>663E</sup>Revelation 13:5,6); assuming that to himself which only belongs to God and Christ, as power over the conscience, to forgive sin, etc. and even deity itself; (see <sup>5004-2</sup>Thessalonians 1:4 <sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:3). The Alexandrian copy, and some others, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “names of blasphemy”.

**Ver. 2.** *And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard*, etc.] To which the Grecian kingdom is compared in (<sup>270B</sup>Daniel 7:6); because of that rapidity and swiftness with which Alexander overran the world, and set up this monarchy; and to which the Roman Papal monarchy bears some resemblance; for as the Grecian monarchy was divided into several parts, which the leopard's spots may also point out, so the Roman empire was divided into ten parts, and united under the pope, as the head of them; and

may be, in this form, compared to a leopard for its swiftness, (<sup><3008></sup>Habakkuk 1:8); because this beast, as soon as he arose and got power, quickly, and in a very short time, extended it over all emperors, kings, princes, bishops, and over all kingdoms and churches; and for its spots, (<sup><2423></sup>Jeremiah 13:23), which may be expressive both of the spots of sin and immorality of every kind, and of errors and heresies, superstition and idolatry, with which antichrist and his followers abound; and for its insidiousness and cruelty, (<sup><2416></sup>Jeremiah 5:6 <sup><2837></sup>Hosea 13:7). It lies in wait for its prey, and suddenly falls upon it, and devours it; and is a lively picture of the cunning sleight of the antichristian party, who lie in wait to deceive, and of their blood thirstiness and barbarity. It is reported <sup>f340</sup> of the leopard, that it is of a sweet smell, and by its odour it draws the fawns, does, etc. near it, and then makes a prey of them; so antichrist, by outward riches and preferments, by the external pomp and splendour of his religion, by his living wonders and miracles, and by his great pretensions to holiness and the like, allures multitudes unto him, and destroys them.

*And his feet were as [the feet] of a bear;* to which the Persian monarchy is compared, (<sup><2008></sup>Daniel 7:5). And this, as some think, may denote the strength and stability of the kingdom of antichrist, it having already endured a great while, and will be thought to be very firm and stable when its ruin is near; or rather the wars and fightings of antichrist against the saints, the fore feet of the bear being what that creature lights with, and tears and destroys such as oppose it, or fall a prey to it; and may also, as before, express the voraciousness and cruelty of antichrist, with respect to the bodies and souls of men:

*and his mouth, as the mouth of a lion:* to which creature the Babylonian monarchy is compared, (<sup><2008></sup>Daniel 7:4), uttering out blasphemies against God, threatening ruin and destruction to men, and injecting fear into them, as the roaring of a lion does, and seizing upon, and devouring their estates and possessions, as well as butchering their persons. This beast has all the properties of the several beasts in Daniel's prophecy, wherefore all the figures there made use of to describe them are put together, to point unto us this monster of iniquity.

*And the dragon gave him his power:* for the coming of antichrist is after the working of Satan, (<sup><3008></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:9,10); he gave him his cunning and subtlety, as the old serpent, and taught him his arts and tricks to deceive mankind; and gave him a power to do signs and lying wonders,



as well as communicated his malice and cruelty to persecute and oppress the saints; or an “army” of ecclesiastics to fight under him, and for him:

*and his seat*; at Rome, for there Satan's seat was, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 2:13), in the time of the Pagan Roman empire, which was quitted by Dioclesian and Maximian, when they resigned the government of it, the one being at Nicomedia, and the other at Milan; and when Constantine came to the throne, he removed to Byzantium, and rebuilt it, and called it after his name Constantinople, and had his residence there, as had all the eastern emperors afterwards; and as for the western emperors, they chiefly resided either at Milan or Ravenna, to which last place Odoacer, Theodoric, and other Gothic kings retired, when the government was in their hands; so that hereby this seat was empty, and way was made for antichrist to take it, as he did.

*And great authority*; over the Roman empire, and the kings and kingdoms in it; he gave him his authority as the god of this world; what Christ refused at the hands of Satan, that his pretended vicar took, even the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them; yea, assumed to himself all power in heaven, earth, and hell, signified by his triple crown, at the instigation of the devil; so that it appears that he is not the vicar of Christ, but the vicar of the devil; and not the successor of Peter, but the successor of Satan; and that he holds his possessions, not by the donation of Constantine, but by the gift of the dragon.

**Ver. 3.** *And I saw one of his heads*, etc.] Not the Capitoline mountain, or the Capitol, the temple of Jupiter, built on that hill, which was burnt by lightning in the times of Titus, and magnificently rebuilt by Domitian, which was a thing past, and of no such moment as to be taken notice of here; nor anyone of the Roman emperors particularly, as Julius Caesar, at whose death the empire received a wound, upon its first erection in him, but was healed by the settlement of Augustus in it; nor Nero, at whose death the family of the Caesars ceased, when the empire was threatened with ruin in the following reigns, but was restored and reestablished in Vespasian, for these were before the times of John: but this is to be understood of the sixth head, or form of government, which obtained in the empire; namely, that of emperors, and of the destruction of Rome itself, the head of the empire, and which was built on seven mountains, designed by the seven heads of this beast: and this head was

*as it were wounded to death*; when the Roman empire was like a burning mountain cast into the sea; when Rome itself was taken, sacked, and burnt, more than once, particularly by Totilas; when Augustulus, the last of the emperors, was obliged to abdicate the throne; when Odoacer called himself, not emperor of Rome, but king of Italy, and retired from Rome to Ravenna; and when Adolphus, another Gothic king, thought to have changed the name of Rome, and given it that of Gothia: this seemed to be a deadly wound to Rome, to the empire and emperors.

*And his deadly wound was healed*; by the setting up of ten kingdoms in it, the kings of which gave them to the beast, to antichrist, the pope of Rome, and so the empire came to have an head again, a governor, though of another kind: some choose to understand this of the wound which antichrist received at the Reformation, by Luther, Calvin, and others, which has since been healing, Popery recovering itself again in some countries where it was driven out, and which, it is thought, will be entirely healed before his destruction:

*and all the world wondered after the beast*; which expresses the large extent of antichrist's dominion, which reached to all the Roman empire, (~~☞~~ Luke 2:1); yea, to all kindreds, tongues, and nations, (~~☞~~ Revelation 13:7); so that the universality the Papists boast of, as a note of the true church, is manifestly a mark of the beast, or of antichrist; and also the great esteem he is had in by his followers, who admire his power and authority, his grandeur, pomp, and riches, his signs and lying wonders, his pretended infallibility and holiness, his stock of merits and unwritten traditions, his skill to interpret Scripture, and his power to forgive sins, and the like: they went after him, obeyed him, embraced his doctrines, attended his religion and worship with wonder and amazement.

**Ver. 4.** *And they worshipped the dragon*, etc.] The devil, in the idols, images, angels, and saints departed, to whom they give adoration, as did the Gentiles, whose successors they are, and whose name they bear; (see ~~☞~~ 1 Corinthians 10:20);

*which gave power unto the beast*, as in (~~☞~~ Revelation 13:2);

*and they worshipped the beast*; not only in a civil way, being subject to him as their temporal lord, to whom they give homage; obedience, and tribute, but in a religious way; for antichrist sits in the temple to be worshipped as God, showing himself that he is God, and receives adorations from his

creatures, the cardinals, and others; but woe to them that worship this beast; (see <sup>(649)</sup>Revelation 14:9-11).

*Saying, who [is] like unto the beast?* using such expressions as are used of God himself, implying that there is none like him, (<sup>(251)</sup>Exodus 15:11) (<sup>(335)</sup>Psalms 113:5 <sup>(248)</sup>Isaiah 40:18,25), yea, they ascribe deity to him, calling him our Lord God the pope, God, and a God on earth; (see Gill on “<sup>(310)</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:4”).

*Who is able to make war with him?* And indeed, such was his power and strength once, that he was more than a match for emperors and kings; and those were badly off that engaged in a war with him, when his power was such, that he could depose one, and set up other, kick the crowns of kings, tread upon the necks of emperors, oblige them to hold his stirrup, while mounted his horse, and keep them barefoot at his gate for days together, waiting for admittance; of all which there are instances.

**Ver. 5.** *And there was given unto him a mouth,* etc.] The beast is said to have a mouth before, like the mouth of a lion, (<sup>(632)</sup>Revelation 13:2); but now he was moved and stirred up by the dragon, the devil, to open it, not only in a cruel and voracious way, but in a haughty, lying, and blasphemous manner: and this was given him, it was at the instigation of Satan, and by divine permission; his coming, speaking, and acting, were after the working of Satan, but not without the will of God; who, as he gave up many to a judicial blindness, to believe his lies and blasphemies, gave up him to speak them, as follows:

*speaking great things, and blasphemies;* great swelling words of vanity; calling himself by high and lofty titles, as Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, head of the church, universal bishop, etc. promising great things to his followers, riches, honours, pleasures, pardons, and heaven itself; and uttering things of a blasphemous kind, or great blasphemies, the particulars of which are mentioned in (<sup>(636)</sup>Revelation 13:6); so the little horn, who is the same with the Romish antichrist, is said to have a mouth speaking great things, very great things, and his look more stout than his fellows, (<sup>(208)</sup>Daniel 7:8,20).

*And power was given unto him to continue forty [and] two months;* to continue in being, or to continue blaspheming and speaking great things; and indeed, as long as he continues, he will continue blaspheming; as soon as he arose he had a name of blasphemy on his heads, and his mouth was

immediately opened in blasphemy, and so it continues, and will to the end of this date. The Ethiopic version reads it, “and power was given to him to do signs, whatsoever he would”; miracles, lying signs and wonders; (see <sup><6613></sup>Revelation 13:13,14). Some copies read, and so the Arabic version, “and power was given him to make war”; but he did not make war as soon as he arose, and so not all the time that is here allotted him; and the word “war” seems to be transcribed from (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 13:7). The phrase rather intends his being, and the continuance and duration of it; which is the same period of time in which the holy city is trodden under foot by this beast, and the same with the 1260 days or years, in which the witnesses prophesy in sackcloth, and the woman, the church, is in the wilderness, (<sup><6610></sup>Revelation 11:2,3 12:6,14); for forty two months, reckoning thirty days to a month, as the eastern people did, make just 1260 days, for these things are all contemporary: hence it appears, that 1260 prophetic days, that is, years, contain the whole period of antichrist's reign and continuance; so that could we tell where they began, it might be exactly known when his reign will end; but for want of knowing the former, the best of calculators have failed in the latter: but seeing the time when he was made universal bishop by Phocas bids fair for the time of his open appearance, and the beginning of his reign, and of his blasphemy, which was in the year 606, to which, if we add 1260, the expiration of his reign will fall in the year 1866; so that he may have upwards of an hundred and twenty years yet to continue; but of this we cannot be certain; however, the conjecture is not improbable.

**Ver. 6.** *And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God*, etc.] By sitting as God in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God; by suffering himself to be called by the name of God, God on earth, Lord God the pope, and to be worshipped as God; and by assuming infallibility, giving out that he cannot err, which only belongs to the God of truth; and by his idolatrous practices commanded by him, as the worshipping of idols of gold, silver, wood, and stone, which is in Scripture called blaspheming God, (<sup><2767></sup>Isaiah 65:7 <sup><2717></sup>Ezekiel 20:27); (see <sup><2713></sup>Daniel 11:36).

*To blaspheme his name*; his authority, by arrogating to himself all power in heaven, earth, and hell; by taking upon him to bind and loose the consciences of men, and to dispense with the laws of God, and make them void by his own traditions; and to dispose of the kingdoms of this world, by removing kings, and setting up kings at pleasure, which is the prerogative of the King of kings; and by pretending; to forgive sin, which

none but God can do; and by granting indulgences, pardons, etc. Moreover, by the name of God may be meant the Scriptures, which are the means by which God reveals and makes known himself; and these the man of sin blasphemes, by making them a nose of wax, by imposing on them what senses he pleases; by assuming a right of being the sole interpreter of them, and the judge of all controversies; and by setting up his own unwritten traditions upon an equal foot with them, and above them, and by denying the common people the use of them, in their own language; and particularly the Gospel, which is sometimes called the name of the Lord, (<sup>4195</sup>Acts 9:15), may be intended, which is sadly blasphemed, and evil spoken of by antichrist; as the doctrines of justification by Christ's righteousness, of peace and pardon by his blood, and atonement by his sacrifice, through the antichristian notions of merit, works of supererogation, pardons, penance, purgatory, and the like:

*and his tabernacle*; meaning either the human nature of Christ, which God pitched, and not man, the temple of his body, in which the Godhead dwells bodily, and where the eternal Word dwelt, or tabernacled among men; this is blasphemed by pretending to transubstantiate, the bread and wine in the supper of the Lord into the very body and blood of Christ, and to offer him up again in the sacrifice of the Mass, every time that blasphemous piece of service is performed: or else the church of God, which is the temple of the living God, where he chooses, desires, and delights to dwell; this is blasphemed by antichrist, by sitting in it as if he was God; asserting himself to be the head of the church which solely belongs to Christ; taking upon him to coin new doctrines, and make new laws and orders, and impose them on it, and to change and alter the ordinances and discipline of it as he pleases; and by persecuting and destroying all such who will not submit to his decrees and prescripts: or else heaven itself, the habitation of God, and where his throne is, may be designed, which the pope blasphemously affirms to have the keys of; and that he can open and shut it, let persons into it, or exclude from it, at pleasure; and that he can dispose of it, and sell it for money, and make and canonize new saints in it, as often as he thinks fit.

*And them that dwell in heaven*; either saints below, members of a Gospel church, who are born from above, are partakers of the heavenly calling, and whose conversation is in heaven, who are by antichrist stigmatized and persecuted as schismatics and heretics; or rather angels and saints departed, who are in heaven, and dwell there, and who are worshipped and prayed to

as Mediators and intercessors, whose names are used in a very ridiculous and blasphemous manner, to their great dishonour and reproach, as well as to the injury of Christ, the only Mediator between God and men.

**Ver. 7.** *And it was given unto him to make war with the saints*, etc.] The remnant of the woman's seed, (<sup>6627</sup>Revelation 12:17), whom God has set apart for himself, Christ has cleansed from sin by his blood, and the Holy Spirit has sanctified by his grace; and who under the influence of it live holy lives and conversations; against such Satan always bore an enmity; and it is an aggravation of the wickedness of the Romish antichrist, that he makes war with such, which he is stirred up to by Satan, with a malicious intent, and is permitted by God for the trial of the faith and patience of his people: this war of antichrist, with the saints, may be understood not merely spiritually, of his anathemas, excommunications, bulls, and the like, but literally, of his drawing the temporal sword against them; (see <sup>6630</sup>Revelation 13:10); and bringing of armies against them, and fighting pitched battles; and it is thought there may be a special regard had to his war with the Waldenses and Albigenses, in which war it is said that a million were slain; and may take in all his ways and methods of destroying the saints, by the bloody Inquisition, murders, massacres, and punishments of all sorts; and also his last war with the two witnesses, in which they will be slain, which is yet to come, (<sup>6610</sup>Revelation 11:7);

*and to overcome them*: not so as to submit to him, and to forsake the doctrines and ordinances of Christ, but by killing them; and who, by dying in the faith and cause of Christ, overcome Satan, get the victory over the world, and antichrist, and are more than conquerors through him that has loved them.

*And power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations*; in the Roman empire, which wondered after him, and worshipped him, and over whom he has reigned, and has exercised both a temporal and spiritual jurisdiction; (see <sup>6675</sup>Revelation 17:15,18).

**Ver. 8.** *And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him*, etc.] The inhabitants of the Roman empire, the idolatrous part of it, the men of the world, earthly minded men; who are as they came into the world, and are of the earth, earthly, and seek only after earthly honours, pleasures, and profits; these are the admirers and adorers of the beast:

*whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world*; by which book is meant God's predestination of men to eternal life, or his decree of election; why this is called the "book of life", (see Gill on "~~668B~~ Revelation 3:5"); and their "names [being] written [therein] from the foundation of the world", (~~667B~~ Revelation 17:8), for such a construction the words will bear, denotes that election is eternal, and is not an act of time, nor dependent upon anything done in time; and that it is of particular persons, and not of bodies of men, of nations and churches, and still less of propositions, or of persons so and so qualified, or under such conditions and circumstances; and that it is perfectly well known to God, and is sure and certain in its effects, and is unchangeable and irrevocable; for what is written in it, is written, and will always stand, not upon the foot of works, but of the sovereign grace of God; and this is called the Lamb's book; that is, Christ, who is compared to a Lamb for its harmlessness, meekness, and patience, and was typified by the lambs in the legal sacrifices; and this book is called his, because he was present at the making of it, and was concerned in putting down the names in it, (~~663B~~ John 13:18), and he himself stands first in it as the elect of God, and the head of all the elect, who, as members, were chosen in him: the act of election was made in him, and stands sure in him; and he is the author and giver of that life, which men are chosen unto both here and hereafter: and he may be said to be "slain from the foundation of the world"; in the decree and purpose of God, by which he was set forth, or foreappointed to be the propitiation for sin, and was foreordained, before the foundation of the world, to redeem his people by his blood, and in the promise of God immediately after the fall of man, that the seed of the woman should have his heel bruised, and he himself should bruise the serpent's head, which made it as sure as if it was then done; and in the sacrifices, which were immediately upon this offered up, and were types of the death and sacrifice of Christ; and in the faith of the saints, which brings distant things near, and considers them as if present; and also in his members, in Abel, and others, in whom he suffered, as he still does in his people; to which may be added, that such is the efficacy of the bloodshed and death of Christ, that it reached to all the saints from the beginning of the world, for the justification of their persons, the atonement of their sins, and cleansing from them; for the remission of sins, that are past, and for the redemption of transgressions under the first testament; for Old Testament saints from the beginning are saved by the grace of the Lord Jesus, as New Testament



ones are. Something like this the Jews say<sup>f341</sup> of the Messiah upon (~~Gen~~Genesis 49:11),

“he washed **aml [ yrbtad amwym**, “from the day that the world was created”; who is he? this is the King Messiah. — It is written (~~Gen~~Genesis 1:2); “and the Spirit of God”, etc. This is the Spirit of the King Messiah; and from the day that the world was created; he washed his garments in wine;”

which the Jewish writers<sup>f342</sup> understand of blood, which for its redness is like to wine; though they interpret it of the blood of the slain, with which the garments of the Messiah will be stained. Now such whose names are not written in this book of the Lamb, who have no interest in electing grace, nor in redemption by Christ, the slain Lamb of God, nor any right unto eternal life, who are reprobate persons, vessels of wrath fitted for destruction, who are foreordained to condemnation, and are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned, these are the followers and worshippers of antichrist.

**Ver. 9.** *If any man have an ear, let him hear.*] And diligently attend to this mystical description of antichrist, as being matter of some difficulty to understand, as well as of great moment and importance, and seriously consider it, that he may know him, and his followers, and avoid them; (see Gill on “~~Rev~~Revelation 1:7”).

**Ver. 10.** *He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity*, etc.] As the devil, by whom men are led captive at his will, and the Romish antichrist, who leads multitudes of souls to hell; these shall be taken and cast into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone. The Jews<sup>f343</sup> have a saying, that

“captivity comes into the world for idolatry, uncleanness, and murder;”

which three things are notorious in the Romish antichrist: and in the same treatise they say<sup>f344</sup>, that the sword, the next judgment mentioned, comes into the world for delay of justice, and the perversion of it.

*He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword*; the design of the phrase is to show, that there will be a just retaliation made to the antichristian beast, for all his cruelty to the saints, and the murders of them; and that because he has shed much blood of the saints, blood shall be given



him to drink, and he shall be used in like manner he has used others; (see <sup><0016</sup>Genesis 9:6) (<sup><4052</sup>Matthew 26:52).

*Here is the patience and the faith of the saints*; meaning either that hereby, through the cruelties and barbarities of the Romish antichrist, the patience and faith of the saints are tried; and that they have great need of them, and of the exercise of them, under such usages; and that these being tried, and continue, will receive much commendation, honour, and praise; or else the sense is, that it requires both faith and patience in the saints, to believe that antichrist will be thus destroyed, and to wait quietly till the time comes. The Arabic version reads, “here is the patience and prayers of the saints”: who cry, how long will it be ere our blood is avenged? and have need of patience to rest a while, till their prayers are answered.

**Ver. 11.** *And I beheld another beast*, etc.] The same with the first, only in another form; the same for being and person, but under a different consideration; the same antichrist, but appearing in another light and view: the first beast is the pope of Rome, at the head of the ten kingdoms, of which the Roman empire consisted; this other beast is the same pope of Rome, with his clergy, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, etc. before he is described as a temporal monarch, now as a spiritual lord; there he is represented in his secular character, as having the seat, power, and authority of the dragon, of Rome Pagan, engaging the attention and wonder of the whole world, and striking terror into them, and as making war with the saints, and ruling over all nations and tongues; here in his ecclesiastic character, pretending great humility and holiness, showing signs and lying wonders, obliging to idolatry, and exercising tyranny and cruelty on all that will not profess his religion: that this is the same beast with the first in substance, though not in show, appears from his exercising the same power, causing all to worship the first beast, or himself as a temporal lord, by which he is supported in his spiritual dignity; and by mention being made only of one beast, at the close of this account, and of his mark, name, and number being but one; nor is there any other but one hereafter spoken, of in this book, either as ruling, or as conquered, and as taken, and as going into perdition, and as cast into the lake: this beast is described by his original,

*coming up out of the earth*; either from under it, out of the bottomless pit, from hell; or out of, a low condition, a poor crawling earthworm; the extracts of many of the popes, cardinals, and religious orders, have been

very mean: or this may represent the secret and private manner, and slow degrees by which this monster of iniquity rose; as things gradually rise up out of the earth unobserved; this man of sin was springing up in the apostles' time, and by degrees rose up to the power and authority he is here said to have: or rather, as this beast, in his other form, rose up out of the sea, out of the commotions raised in the empire by the barbarous nations, by whom he was lifted up to his imperial dignity; so he is described in this form, and is represented as rising up out of the earth, out of the earthly part of the church, or out of the apostasy which the visible church was sunk into, through the outward riches and honours bestowed on it by the Christian emperors, which made way for the rising of this beast; and this shows the nature of his kingdom, which is worldly and earthly, and so truly antichristian, being diametrically opposite to the kingdom of Christ, which is not of this world:

*and he had two horns like a lamb*; or “like to the Lamb”; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God; though he has seven horns, denoting fulness of power, this but two; he stands on Mount Zion, with the 144,000, having his Father's name on their foreheads, this upon the earth, with his followers, having his own mark and name upon them. The Ethiopic version renders it, “and he had two horns, and he seemed as a lamb”; he affected a lamb like disposition, pretended to great humility and meekness, calling himself “servus servorum”, the servant of servants, to cover his pride, ambition, and tyranny; and would be thought to be a lamb without spot and blemish, ascribing to himself infallibility, and suffering himself to be called his Holiness, when he is the man of sin, and mystery of iniquity: by his “two horns” some understand his two fold power, secular and ecclesiastic; but as these are separately represented by two beasts, rather these two horns intend the two parts of the empire, eastern and western, into which it was divided, when this beast arose, and by which the Papacy was raised to its power, had supported in it; and the two supreme pontiffs, the bishop of Rome, and the bishop of Constantinople; or else the beast's power of binding and loosing, of dispensing with the laws of God, and of imposing his own laws on the consciences of men.

*And he spake as a dragon*; like the devil himself, affirming as he did, (~~and~~ Luke 4:6); that the power of disposing of the kingdoms of this world, and the glory of them, was delivered to him, and he could give it to whom he would: he spake arrogantly, as if he was above all that is called God, and as if he was God himself; and he spake like a dragon cruelly, like the

great red dragon, like the devil, who was a murderer from the beginning, breathing out slaughter, and threatenings against the saints, as Rome Pagan; and he spake lies in hypocrisy, blasphemies, idolatries, and doctrines of devils.

**Ver. 12.** *And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him*, etc.] Sitting in the same seat, having the same power and authority from the dragon, making war with the saints by preaching and writing against them, by anathemas, excommunications, and bulls, and so overcame and silenced them, or delivered them over to the secular arm to be put to death, ruling over the consciences of men in a tyrannical way, in all nations, kindreds, and tongues, in the empire; and all this before, in the presence, and under the influence of the secular power, of the Papacy, signified by the first beast, and with his good liking, and for his credit and support:

*and causeth the earth, and them that dwell therein*; the Roman empire, and the inhabitants of it, especially the carnal and earthly part of them:

*to worship the first beast*; to be subject to the temporal power of the Papacy, or to submit to the pope as a temporal lord, to give homage and tribute to him, and the like, in order to support his worldly power and grandeur; and this was caused or brought about by his emissaries, his spiritual vassals, his legates, cardinals, priests, etc. by their exhortations, persuasions, and commands, delivered both in writing and preaching:

*whose deadly wound was healed*; which deadly wound was given the Roman empire under its sixth head, the emperors, when they ceased, and was healed by the pope, the seventh head, being set as a temporal monarch over the ten kingdoms in it.

**Ver. 13.** *And he doeth great wonders*, etc.] Or miracles; not real, but pretended ones, lying wonders, which the Popish legends are full of the accounts of, as done by the priests, or by this or the other saint:

*so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men*; in imitation of Elijah, (<sup>1700>2 Kings 1:9-14); and this single instance is put instead of all others, it being usual with the Jews to express all wonderful and miraculous operations by this miracle of Elijah's: and this may be understood mystically, of the pretensions of the Papacy to confer the Holy Ghost, and his gifts upon men, by breathing on them, which on the day of Pentecost were represented by cloven tongues, as of fire, coming down from heaven; or of their anathemas, curses, and

excommunications, at which time burning torches and candles are cast up, and fall down, as emblems of divine wrath, which is called cursing men with bell, book, and candle; or else of the fire of persecution: “from heaven”; the secular powers of the empire: “upon the earth”; the common people: or this may be understood literally; so they tell us, that Pope Zachary, once on a journey to Ravenna, had in the daytime a cloud to protect him from the heat, and in the night time armies of fire appeared in the clouds to go before him; and as Pope Innocent was at Mass, a golden crown was seen, and on it a dove, and under it a smoking censer, and hard by them two burning firebrands: and it is reported of Pope Hildebrand, that, whenever he pleased, he could shake his sleeves, and sparks of fire would come out; and by these miracles deluded the eyes of the simple with a show of holiness, which, with other instances, are taken notice of by Napier, Brightman, and other writers: and so here this is said to be done “in the sight of men”; to their apprehension, seemingly, in their view; they being cheated and deluded with an appearance and show of things which were not real.

**Ver. 14.** *And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth*, etc.] The Complutensian edition, and two of Stephens's copies, read “mine”, instead of “them”; creatures of God, and professors of Christ, carnal and unregenerate men; not the elect of God, and true believers in Christ, these cannot be deceived by the signs and wonders of false Christs and false prophets; antichrist's deceivableness of unrighteousness only operates in them that perish:

*by [the means of] those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast*; the secular power of the Papacy encouraging, confirming, and giving a sanction to those lying miracles, and obliging all to believe them, and come into the things, doctrines, or practices, they are designed to promote:

*saying to them that dwell on the earth*: the apostate church, or the carnal inhabitants of the empire: ordering and commanding them

*that they should make an image to the beast which had the wound by a sword, and did live*; meaning the Roman empire, which had received a deadly wound in its sixth head, the emperors, by the sword of the Goths, Huns, etc. but now revived in its seventh head, the pope of Rome, to whom the ten kings gave their kingdoms: the image made to this beast some understand of the translation of the empire to Charles the great, and

his successors the emperors, by the pope of Rome, he ordaining so many electors to chose a king of the Romans, and elect an emperor when one was wanting; and this was an image to the first beast, a shadow, an appearance of the Roman empire, and but a shadow; for the power of inaugurating and crowning these emperors, and of setting up and deposing them when the pope pleased, lie reserved to himself: but rather this designs the image worship, or the worshipping of idols of gold and silver, of wood and stone, which he caused the inhabitants of the earth to make, and give adoration to; or else the whole Papal religion, and the Papacy itself, for the beast, and the image of the beast, are all along in this book afterwards mentioned together as being the same, (<sup>(614B)</sup>Revelation 14:9 15:2 16:2 19:20 20:4), which is an image of the Gentile religion, in their high priest, priests, temples, idols, offerings, garments, worshipping of angels, and saints departed, with a numerous train of rites and ceremonies, borrowed from the old Pagan religion; hence the Papists are called Gentiles, (<sup>(614B)</sup>Revelation 11:2), the Roman empire, represented by these two beasts, and this image, had now one head, the pope, as before an emperor, and a religion in it much resembling its ancient one; but, before that was set up, this image was in being.

**Ver. 15.** *And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast,* etc.] Or “breath”; he breathed into it, and animated it; he gave this new religion a sanction, he confirmed and established it, and obliged all in his dominions to embrace and acknowledge it; and this he did by his decrees and canons, and those that refused were delivered over to the secular power, which he also exercised under another consideration:

*that the image of the beast should both speak:* so that it was not like Nebuchadnezzar's golden image that he set up, which required another to speak for it and demand adoration to it; and should seem to be preferable to the dumb idols of the Gentiles, which have mouths, but speak not; and may be understood either of the images of the virgin Mary, and other saints, which it is pretended, and the people are made to believe, that they do at times actually speak, and really weep and laugh, as it may serve their different purposes; or this image may be said to speak by the decrees, canons, anathemas, curses, threatenings, persuasions, doctrines, and blasphemies of the pope and his clergy; so that this image is like both the first and second beast; it has a mouth speaking blasphemies, as the first, and it speaks like a dragon, as the second;

*and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed*: which, according to the generality of copies, refers to the image itself, that that has a power from the beast as to speak, so to put to death those that refuse to worship it; but the Complutensian edition reads **ΚΑΙ ΠΟΙΕΙ**, “and causes”: that is, the beast causes, or orders all those that will not worship the image, to be killed; that is, that as many as will not embrace and profess the Popish religion shall be put to death; and these are the known orders and decrees of the Papacy, which have been executed by the Inquisition, and other hands, in innumerable instances; the blood of all the saints and prophets is found in Rome Papal, and will be avenged; these are the martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood the whore on the scarlet coloured beast has been made drunk; and this sense is confirmed by the eastern versions.

**Ver. 16.** *And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond*, etc.] Men of all ranks and degrees, states and conditions, within his jurisdiction; this refers to the beast, and not to the image:

*to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads*; or “that they might give themselves marks”, as the Complutensian edition reads; which is an allusion either to the custom among the Romans of imprinting marks upon their servants and soldiers, by which they might be known to whom they belonged; servants had them in their foreheads <sup>f345</sup>, and soldiers in their hands <sup>f346</sup>; or to the usages of the Jews in binding their phylacteries upon their arms and foreheads, to put them in mind of the law of God, and their obedience to it; or to the practices of the Heathens, in putting the mark of the god they worshipped upon their bodies; Maimonides <sup>f347</sup> says, it was a custom with the Gentiles to mark themselves with their idols, showing that they were their bought servants, and were marked for their service: the sense is, that some received the mark in one place, and some in another: those who were obliged to receive the mark in the right hand seem to be the clergy, such who entered into holy orders; who lifted up their right hand, and swore and vowed allegiance to the pope, and testified they were ready to defend and support his religion and interest; and who in their ordination are said to have an indelible character impressed on them: and those who received the mark in their foreheads are the common people in general, who one and all have the same impress upon them; which may intend either the sign of the cross in baptism, or rather their open confession of the Popish religion, which they as publicly avow and declare as if it had been written on their foreheads.

**Ver. 17.** *And that no man might buy or sell*, etc.] Either in an ecclesiastical sense, as to, be in any church office, or perform any such service, to say Mass, hear confession, give absolution, sell pardons and indulgences, etc. or in a civil sense, as to trade, and exercise merchandise, and this was forbidden by several Popish councils and synods; the Lateran council, under Pope Alexander, decreed against the Waldenses and Albigenses, that no one should presume to retain or encourage them in their houses or countries, or “trade” with them; and the synod of Tours in France forbid any reception of heretics, or protection, and that any communion should be had with them “in buying and selling”, as Mr. Mede has observed; and it was ordered by a bull of Pope Martin the Fifth, that no contract should be made with such, and that they should not follow any business and merchandise:

*save he that had the mark*; took the oath to be true to the pope, or made a public profession of the Popish religion:

*or the name of the beast*; Papists, so called from the pope; thus the antichristians are called from antichrist, as the Christians from Christ:

*or the number of his name*; which is either the same with the number of the beast in (<sup><661318></sup>Revelation 13:18), or is something distinct it; and those who have it may be such persons who neither have the indelible character of the Romish clergy, nor are open professors of the Popish religion, but are in heart inclined to it, and privately and secretly promote it, by their doctrines and practices; and so are numbered, reckoned, esteemed, and accounted of by the Papists, and receive favours from them; or rather such who openly “furnish the drink offering” in the Mass, mixed with wine and water, *ynml* , “for that number”, (<sup><23511></sup>Isaiah 65:11).

**Ver. 18.** *Here is wisdom*, etc.] Not only in the above description of the two beasts, but in what follows as to the number of the beast, these two now coalescing in one, and have one and the same number; and to wrap it up, and conceal it in such an obscure manner, shows great wisdom in God, as it requires much in men, and serves greatly to exercise all his intellectual powers to find it out:

*let him that hath understanding count the number of, the beast*; whoever has skill numbers, let him make use of it, that he may know the name and nature of the antichristian beast, and the numerical letters of his name, or the number of him, and of the time when he arose, and when he will expire:



*for it is the number of a man*: either a number that may be reckoned by man, or which is in common use among men; (see <sup>(6617)</sup>Revelation 21:17); or that which is contained in the name of a man:

*and his number [is] six hundred threescore [and] six*: which some think refers to the time of the rise of antichrist, in the year 666; but that seems rather to be in the year 606, when the bishop of Rome obtained the name of universal bishop; others have been of opinion that it refers to the expiration of the beast, which they thought would have been in the year 1666, the number of the thousand being dropped, as it is in our common way of speaking; as when we say the Spanish invasion was in 88, meaning 1588, and the civil wars began in 41, that is, 1641; but time has shown that this was a mistaken sense; the more prevailing opinion is that of Mr. Potter, who has wrote a peculiar and learned treatise upon this passage, who makes the counting of this number to be no other than the extracting of its root, which is the number 25, which when multiplied into itself, and the fraction in working it 41 is added, makes up the square number 666; and now 25 being added to A. D. 33, make 58, which was the time of the beast's conception, to which if 666 is added, it brings us to the year 724, when he arrived to his age of manhood, and when the war about the worshipping of images broke out: but others think that the numeral letters in some man's name which amount to this date, and which agrees with antichrist, are intended; and here various conjectures are made; some have observed, that in genealogical arithmetic the number of Adonikam's posterity is 666, (<sup>(4513)</sup>Ezra 2:13); whose name signifies “a lord rising up”, or “risen”; and suits very well with antichrist, who is risen up, and assumes a lordly domination over the kings of the earth; and it is further observed, that the Hebrew word **tyymwr**, which signifies “Roman”, and, having the word beast or kingdom joined to it, designs the Roman beast, or kingdom, consists of numeral letters, which make up this sum; and so the Hebrew word **rwts**, “Sethut”, which is the name of a man, (<sup>(0413)</sup>Numbers 13:13), and signifies “mystery”, in its numeral letters comes just to this number, and one of the names of the whore of Babylon is “mystery”, (<sup>(6615)</sup>Revelation 17:5); but the name “Lateinos” bids as fair as any, which is mentioned by so ancient a writer as Irenaeus, who was a hearer of Polycarp, a disciple of John, the writer of this book; now the numeral value of the letters of this word makes up exactly 666, thus;  $\lambda$  30.  $\alpha$  1.  $\tau$  300.  $\epsilon$  5.  $\iota$  10.  $\nu$  50.  $\omicron$  70.  $\zeta$  200. in all 666; and it is well known that the church of Rome is called the Latin Church and the pope of Rome the head of the Latin church, and his



seat is in the Latin empire, and the service of the beast is in the Latin tongue, and the Bible is kept in that language, from the reading of the common people: it has been observed that the numeral letters in Ludovicus, or Lewis, which is a common name of the French kings, and is the name of the present French king, make up this same number; and may denote the destruction of antichrist, which will quickly follow the downfall of the kingdom of France, under a king of this name; and the rather, since this was the last of the ten kingdoms that was set up, and in which the primitive beast subsists, and the only one that has not yet been conquered, or in which a revolution has not been; and since this is the tenth part of the city which shall fall a little before the third woe comes on: and that it may fall under Ludovicus, or Lewis, the present French king <sup>f348</sup>, may be hoped for, and is desirable.

# CHAPTER 14

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 14

This chapter contains three visions; one of the Lamb on Mount Zion, another of the three angels preaching against Babylon, and the third of the harvest and vintage. The vision of the Lamb is in (<sup>6640</sup> Revelation 14:1), which is no other than Christ, described by his similitude, as a Lamb; by the place where he was, Mount Zion; by his position there, standing, and by the company that were with him, whose number were 144,000, and their character, his Father's name written on their foreheads; at the same time a voice was heard from heaven, comparable to the sound of many waters, of thunders, and of harps: and a song sung which none learn but the above number with the Lamb, (<sup>6642</sup> Revelation 14:2,3), who are described by their purity, chastity, and strict adherence to Christ; by their redemption through him; by their being the firstfruits of God and of the Lamb, and by their integrity and unblemished character, (<sup>6640</sup> Revelation 14:4,5); next follows the account of the three angels; the first comes with the everlasting Gospel, to preach it to all men, loudly calling upon all to fear and worship God, and give glory to him, since he is the Creator of all, and the hour of his judgment is come, (<sup>6646</sup> Revelation 14:6,7); the second proclaims the fall of Babylon, with the reason of it, (<sup>6648</sup> Revelation 14:8); and the third denounces the wrath of God upon the worshippers of the beast in the most public manner, and that for ever, (<sup>6649</sup> Revelation 14:9-11); and this vision is closed with some expressions, showing that, till this was done, the patience of the saints would be tried, and the true worshippers of the Lamb be discovered, and comforting them with an assurance of that rest that remains after death for the faithful followers of Christ, (<sup>6642</sup> Revelation 14:12,13); after this is the vision of the harvest and vintage of the earth. The reaper is described by his form, like the son of man; by his seat, a white cloud; by a golden crown on his head, and by a sharp sickle in his hand, (<sup>6644</sup> Revelation 14:14); who is called upon by an angel out of the temple to make use of his sickle, and reap, because the time of reaping was come, the harvest being ripe, (<sup>6645</sup> Revelation 14:15), upon which he thrusts in his sickle, and reaps the earth, (<sup>6646</sup> Revelation 14:16); after this, another angel appears out of the temple, with a sharp sickle, to whom another

angel from the altar, that had power over fire, calls to make use of his sickle, and gather the clusters of the vine, since the grapes were fully ripe, (~~647~~ Revelation 14:17,18); upon which he thrusts in his sickle, and gathers them, and casts them into the winepress of divine wrath, which being trodden, blood comes out of it to the horses' bridles for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs, (~~649~~ Revelation 14:19,20).

**Ver. 1.** *And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy, and some others, read “the Lamb”; the same that had been seen before in, the midst of the throne, (~~618~~ Revelation 5:6); and all the Oriental versions have the same article also; the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, for mention is made of his Father in a following clause; the King of Zion, where he is seen standing, and the Redeemer of his people, who are at large described; it is the same Lamb who is so often spoken of in this book before: in the two preceding chapters an account is given of the state of the church, as oppressed under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, and here of its more glorious and victorious condition, with Christ at the head of it; in the last chapter antichrist is described, with his followers and worshippers, and as exercising tyranny and cruelty upon the saints, and here Christ and his followers are represented in vision, and some hints given of the fall of Babylon, and of the wrath of God upon the worshippers of the beast, and of the happiness of those who belong to the Lamb: and of him it is here said, that he

*stood on the Mount Zion*; by which is meant not heaven, but the church on earth; why that is called Mount Zion, (see Gill on “~~3822~~ Hebrews 12:22”); here Christ the Lamb stood, as presiding over it, being King of Zion, or the church; where he stood and fed, or ruled, in the name of the Lord, and in the majesty of his God; and where he appeared in the defence of his church and people, oppressed by antichrist; for he is Michael that standeth for the children of his people, and who stands with courage, and in the greatness of his strength, and is invincible; nor does he stand here alone:

*and with him an hundred forty [and] four thousand*; the same with those in (~~618~~ Revelation 7:3,4), though all the world wondered after the beast, and all that dwelt upon the earth worshipped him, yet there was a number preserved that did not bow the knee to him; a remnant according to the election of grace, who were called out of the world, and brought to Zion, and were on the side of the Lamb, and abode by him, and cleaved unto him:

*having his Father's name written in their foreheads*; not baptism, administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, as some think; nor eternal election, as others, though as their names were written in the Lamb's book of life, so this was manifest to themselves and others, as if his name and his Father's had been written in their foreheads; but rather adoption, the new name of a child of God, they having the spirit of adoption, whereby they cried, "Abba", Father, and being openly and manifestly the children of God, by faith in Christ Jesus; unless it should be thought there is an allusion to the inscription in the mitre on the forehead of the high priest, "holiness to the Lord", and so be expressive of that visible holiness which will be on the saints in the spiritual reign of Christ, which this vision respects; (see <sup><3840></sup>Zechariah 14:20); or to the frontlets between the eyes of the people of Israel, to put them in mind of the law, and their obedience to it, (<sup><4808></sup>Deuteronomy 6:8); and so may here denote the engagements of those saints in the service of God; though perhaps no more is intended than their open and hearty profession of their faith, and that they were not ashamed of appearing in the cause of God and truth; nor of Christ and his words, his Gospel and ordinances: the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, "having his name, (the Lamb's,) and his Father's name written in their foreheads"; and the Ethiopic version adds, "and of his Holy Spirit". Mr. Daubuz thinks this vision refers to the times of Constantine, and to the Christians then, and particularly the council of Nice, and as contemporary with that in (<sup><6600></sup>Revelation 7:9-17).

**Ver. 2.** *And I heard a voice from heaven*, etc.] The same with the voices heard in heaven upon the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (<sup><6615></sup>Revelation 11:15);

*as the voice of many waters*; very loud, and uttered by a great multitude of people, signified by waters in this book, (<sup><6675></sup>Revelation 17:15); the same with those that praise the Lord for the destruction of antichrist, and for the marriage of the Lamb, (<sup><6600></sup>Revelation 19:1-7);

*and as the voice of a great thunder*; to which the Gospel may be compared for its open, loud publication, being heard far and near, as thunder is:

*and I heard the voice of harpers, harping with their harps*; that is, singing the praises of God, for the fall of Babylon, the happy state and condition of the church, and the blessings of grace; the harp being a musical instrument, used under the Old Testament in singing praise: Brightman thinks that

these different sounds represent the course of Gospel doctrine, and the church's voice throughout the reign of antichrist; that when the church first went into the wilderness, her voice was like the murmuring of waters, confused and indistinct; when she began to revive under the Waldenses and Albigenses, Wickliff, Huss, etc. her voice was like thunder, loud and terrible; and at the Reformation, it was as the voice of harpers, when confessions of faith were published with sweet harmony and consent. Others have thought that the different properties and efficacy of the Gospel are designed; as its rapidity and irresistible force, by the many waters; its striking and shaking the consciences of men, by the thunder, Christ's ministers being sometimes "Boanergeses", sons of thunder; and its harmonious music, pleasant sound, peace, joy, and comfort it brings, by the voice of harpers. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions, read, "the voice which I heard was as harpers", etc.

**Ver. 3.** *And they sung as it were a new song*, etc.] The song of redeeming grace; the same with that in (~~410~~ Revelation 5:9); see the note there: this is to be understood of the 144,000, who sung it

*before the throne, and before the four beasts and the elders*; that is, publicly in the church, the ministers and members being present; of these; (see Gill on "~~404~~ Revelation 4:4"); (see Gill on "~~406~~ Revelation 4:6");

*and no man could learn that song but the hundred [and] forty [and] four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth*; out of every kindred, tongue, people, and nation; from among the men of the earth, and out of the apostate church, called the earth, in opposition to the pure church, which so often goes by the name of heaven in this book; and these, in consequence of being redeemed by the blood of Christ, were called by grace out of the world; and such only can sing the song of redemption with application to themselves; and say he has redeemed us, and loved us, and washed us from our sins in his blood; to none but these is it given to know spiritually and experimentally the mysteries of electing and redeeming grace; the natural and carnal man neither knows nor receives the things of the Spirit of God; nor can he learn them by hearing, reading, study, and conversation, unless it be only in a notional and speculative way. The Jews speak of a new song, which the angels have never used <sup>f349</sup>;

“it is said, (<sup><981></sup>Psalm 98:1); “sing unto the Lord a new song”; a new song, for there is an old song; but this song is what the angels never praised him with, and therefore it is new;”

and indeed the song of redeeming love is peculiar to men.

**Ver. 4.** *These are they which were not defiled with women*, etc.] With the whore of Rome, and her harlots, she is the mother of; while the kings and inhabitants of the earth were drunk with the wine of their fornication, or committed idolatry with them, which is spiritual fornication, and is here meant by being defiled with them, these were free from such pollutions, or idolatrous practices:

*for they are virgins*; for their beauty and comeliness in Christ, chastity, sincerity of their love, uncorruptness in doctrine and worship, and for the uprightness of conversation; (see Gill on “<sup><4151></sup>Matthew 25:1”);

*these are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth*; as the sheep follow the shepherd of the flock, and which is a character of Christ's sheep, (<sup><810></sup>John 10:4,5,27). These follow Christ in the exercise of the graces of humility, patience, and love; and in the performance of the several duties of religion, and subjection to ordinances, and in the path of sufferings; and in every way in which Christ the Lamb has gone before them, or in his word and providence leads and directs them to, whether it be grateful to the flesh or not; particularly they follow where he is preached, and his Word and ordinances are faithfully administered; and they follow him to heaven, where he is: it was part of the oath taken by the Roman soldiers, **τοῖς στρατηγοῖς ἀκολουπεῖν οἳ ποτ' αἰ ἀγωσι**, “to follow the generals wherever they should lead” <sup>f350</sup>, to which it is thought there is an allusion here; (see <sup><1052></sup>2 Samuel 15:21);

*these were redeemed from among men*; “by Jesus”, as the Syriac and Arabic versions add, and so the Complutensian edition; by the blood of Christ, for all men are not redeemed by it; and in consequence of this they were called, and delivered from this present evil world, and the men of it, and from a vain, wicked, and idolatrous conversation with it:

*[being] the firstfruits unto God, and to the Lamb*; in allusion to the firstfruits under the law, which represented and sanctified the lump, and showed that harvest was coming; so these persons are called the firstfruits to God, and to the Lamb, being called by grace, and consecrated to their worship and service, with reference to the harvest of souls, or that large

number of them which will be gathered in during the spiritual reign of Christ, which these persons will be at the beginning of; and as those who are first called and converted in a country or nation are said to be the firstfruits of it, ( <sup><5165></sup>Romans 16:5 <sup><5165></sup>1 Corinthians 16:15); so these being the first, in the period of time to which respect is had, bear this name; and as the converted Jews received the firstfruits of the Spirit, on the day of Pentecost, and at other times, so these will receive the firstfruits of the far greater pouring forth of the Spirit in the latter day, which will begin, and usher in the kingdom of Christ; (see <sup><5183></sup>Romans 8:23).

**Ver. 5.** *And in their mouth was found no guile*, etc.] Or “a lie”, as the Complutensian edition, the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read; by which may be meant idolatry, for idols and idolatrous practices are often called lies, and lying vanities; (see <sup><2469></sup>Jeremiah 16:19 <sup><5125></sup>Amos 1:4 <sup><5125></sup>Jon 1:8 <sup><5125></sup>Romans 1:25); and the sense is, that the superstition and idolatry of the church of Rome were not among them: or it may design false doctrine, and the meaning be, that they did not speak lies in hypocrisy, as the followers of antichrist do; nor were they given up to believe a lie, as they are: the generality of copies read, “no guile”; which is expressive of the sincerity of their words; there was no deceit nor hypocrisy in them; they did not speak with flattering lips to men, nor did they draw nigh to God with their mouths, when their hearts were far from him; they were Israelites indeed, like Nathanael, in whom was no guile; though not in so strict a sense, in which this phrase is used of Christ, (<sup><5102></sup>1 Peter 1:22);

*for they are without fault before the throne of God*; not as considered in themselves, as if they were entirely free from sin, and never committed any; though it might be true of them, that in general they were of unblemished lives and conversations, that is, not guilty of any notorious and scandalous crimes; but rather the sense is, that they were without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, as being washed in the blood of Christ, and so cleansed from all sin, and as being justified by his righteousness from all iniquity; and so were before the throne of God, and in the sight of divine justice, unblamable and unproveable; (see Jude 24 <sup><5102></sup>Colossians 1:22); the phrase, “before the throne of God”, is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, and in the Complutensian edition.

**Ver. 6.** *And I saw another angel*, etc.] This is to be understood not of one of the ministering spirits so called; for though wings are sometimes ascribed to angels, and Gabriel is said to fly swiftly; and though they desire to look into the mysteries of the everlasting Gospel, yet the preaching of that is not committed to any of them; but a minister of the Gospel is intended, who is the angel of the church, for in this book pastors of churches are so called, (<sup><601></sup>Revelation 1:20); and not a single minister of the Gospel is meant, but a set of Gospel ministers; and some think that those are designed who appeared in the eighth and ninth centuries, both in the eastern and western empire, against the worshipping of images; since this angel calls upon the inhabitants of the earth to fear God, give glory to him, and worship him, and not images; but there was little of the everlasting Gospel preached in those times. Others are of opinion that those who preceded, and led on to the Reformation, are pointed at by this angel, such as Wickliff in England, Franciscus Petrarcha in Italy, John Huss and Jerom of Prague in Bohemia, with others; but these also had not the everlasting Gospel in its clearness and purity, nor did they preach it to all the inhabitants of the earth; rather I think a set of Gospel preachers are intended, who will appear at the beginning of the spiritual reign of Christ, and will be a means of ushering it in; and these are the watchmen of Zion, who will give the Lord no rest till he has made Jerusalem the praise of the whole earth; and who will then see eye to eye in Gospel mysteries, and will publish good tidings of peace and salvation, and proclaim Zion's King reigning, (<sup><2316></sup>Isaiah 62:6,7 52:7,8); this angel is called "another", being distinct from the voice heard (<sup><640></sup>Revelation 14:2), though he is the first with respect to the following angels, as appears from (<sup><641></sup>Revelation 14:9); the place where John saw this angel, and the position he was in, follow:

*fly in the midst of heaven*: the church, the great congregation, the several congregations of the saints; in the midst of which these ministers will preach righteousness, salvation, loving kindness, and truth, as Christ has done before them; and from hence the word of the Lord will go forth to all parts of the world: they will preach the Gospel openly and publicly, with great freedom, boldness, and intrepidity, in the view of all men, not fearing the faces of any; and the Gospel ministered by them will have a swift, sudden, and universal spread; they themselves will run to and fro, and the Gospel will run and be glorified, and the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the Lord, and multitudes will flock to Christ, who in that day will be alone exalted; for these ministers will come forth publicly:



*having the everlasting Gospel*; the Gospel in its fulness and purity; the Gospel of the grace of God, of free justification by the righteousness of Christ, of peace and pardon by his blood, and of complete salvation by him; called everlasting, because the substance of it was settled from all eternity, in the council and covenant of peace; it was ordained before the world was, and was hid in God from the beginning; and the revelation of it was of old; it was made to our first parents immediately after the fall, and was spoken of by all God's holy prophets which have been since the world began; it was preached before unto Abraham, and in the times of Isaiah, and by other prophets, and so is no new upstart doctrine: besides, the matter of it is everlasting; it treats of everlasting things; of the eternal election of persons to salvation; of God's everlasting love to them; of an everlasting covenant he made with Christ on their account; of blessings, promises, and grace given to them in him, before the world began; and of his being set up so early as a Mediator, and of his going forth in a way of grace from everlasting; as well as it reveals an everlasting righteousness, and brings life and immortality, or eternal life to light, or shows the way to everlasting life and happiness; to which may be added, that it will abide for ever, it will always remain, and that inexpugnable, maugre all the opposition of hell and earth; it will continue till all the elect of God are gathered in, notwithstanding the violence of persecutors, or the craft of seducers; nor will it be antiquated and made void by another Gospel succeeding it, for there will be no other: now this the ministers of those times will "have"; not in their heads only, by knowledge, but in their hearts, by experience, and will have it in their mouths, and speak it out freely and openly, and will have a commission from Christ to preach it, and gifts qualifying them for it:

*to preach to them that dwell on the earth*; that are in the apostate church, carnal, unregenerate, and earthly persons. The Complutensian edition reads, "that sit on the earth"; as persons abject, mean, and distressed, to whom the Gospel is acceptable:

*and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people*; whether Jews, Turks, or Pagans; for the Gospel, as before observed, will now have an universal spread all the world over.

**Ver. 7.** *Saying with a loud voice*, etc.] These ministers shall lift up their voice like a trumpet, and cry aloud, and deliver out the Gospel fully and faithfully, with great authority and power, and with much vehemence, zeal, and fervency:

*fear God*; or “the Lord”, as some copies, the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions, read: not the antichristian beast and his followers, as men formerly had done; but God the Lord, and him not with a servile fear, or a fear of punishment, of wrath, hell, and damnation; nor with a distrust of his grace, love, power, and providence, much less with an hypocritical fear; but with a godly fear, which has the goodness of God for its object, and springs from a sense of the love of God, and is a reverential affection for him, and is attended with faith and spiritual joy, and includes all worship of him, both internal and external; hence the Syriac version renders it, “serve God”: and this shows that the duties of religion are to be inculcated by Gospel ministers; and that they will be urged by them when the everlasting Gospel is preached in its greatest purity:

*and give glory to him*; and not to graven images, which he will not allow; and glory is to be given to him, on account of the perfections of his nature, and, the works of his hands; and is given when men ascribe greatness to him, praise his works of creation, and acquiesce in those of Providence, acknowledging the power, goodness, and wisdom of God in all; and when they give thanks for all his mercies, temporal and spiritual, and especially for Jesus Christ; and when they exercise faith on him as their God in Christ, and ascribe their salvation to him and to the Lamb, and not to the works of their hands; and when they attend his worship, and the duties of religion, and so glorify him with their bodies and spirits, which are his:

*for the hour of his judgement is come*; not of the great and last judgment, but of the government of the Lord Christ, committed to him by God the Father; in which sense the word is used in (<sup><RB2></sup>John 5:22) for now will the time be come, when the kingdoms of this world will be his; and he will take to himself his great power, and reign, in a spiritual manner, in the world; and now also will be his time of judging the dead, or of avenging his people, whose blood has been shed for him, and of his judging the great whore, or of inflicting his judgments upon antichrist and his followers; all which will be under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, to which this vision is contemporary; (see <sup><RB15></sup>Revelation 11:15,17,18 17:1 19:2)

*and worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters*; God, the Creator of all things; and not the beasts, nor idols, the works of men's hands.

**Ver. 8.** *And there followed another angel*, etc.] A “second”, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac version add;

and the Arabic version reads, “and the second angel followed”; another set of Gospel ministers, who will immediately follow upon the former, proclaiming the fall of Babylon, which will be brought about through the preaching of the everlasting Gospel. Some think the Waldenses and Albigenes are here designed, who gave a great blow to Babylon, and laid a foundation for her ruin. Others have thought that Luther, and the reformers of his times, are intended, who gave a deadly blow to Babylon, and she has been falling ever since: but to me it appears, that a set of ministers in the spiritual reign of Christ are meant, who will not only signify the fall of Babylon to be certain, and near at hand, but will live to see and declare her actual fall, as follows:

*saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city;* which is to be understood not of the world in general, which will not now be come to an end, for all nations of the world are distinguished from this Babylon in the next clause, and is only represented as a city, though a great one; nor of Babylon in Chaldea, which was fallen many hundreds of years before this vision; nor is there any likelihood of its being restored, nor any reason to believe that it will ever more be the seat of empire over all the nations and kings of the earth, as the Babylon mentioned in this book is, (<sup>f618</sup> Revelation 17:5,18) though undoubtedly the allusion is to that Babylon, and the very words are used which express the fall of it, and are taken from it; (see <sup>f309</sup> Isaiah 21:9) but this is to be understood of Rome, which all along in this book is called the great city; (see <sup>f618</sup> Revelation 11:8 16:19 17:18) and not of Rome Pagan, for that is fallen already; and the account of the fall of that is given before, at the opening of the sixth seal, and the casting the dragon out of heaven, upon the war there, between Michael and him, though Mr. Daubuz is of opinion that this is here meant; but of Rome Papal, called Babylon the great, (<sup>f615</sup> Revelation 16:5) (<sup>f682</sup> Revelation 18:2) and so the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions, read here; and the Romish antichrist is so called, because that city was famous for its pride and haughtiness, for its tyranny and cruelty, and for its idolatry; and indeed its name, which signifies “confusion”, well agrees with the Papacy, which is a confused mixture of Judaism, Paganism, and Christianity: so Rome is called Babel in some ancient writings of the Jews <sup>f351</sup>, where some copies read “Babel”, others read “Rome”; and Tertullian, who wrote long before the appearance of the Romish antichrist, says <sup>f352</sup>, with our John, Babylon is a figure of the Roman city: and of this it is said, that it “is fallen, is fallen”; which words are repeated for the certain

confirmation of it, as matter of fact; for the fall of antichrist will certainly be in the spiritual reign of Christ, in the Philadelphian church state; (see Gill on “<sup>488D</sup>Revelation 3:9”) now will Babylon come in remembrance before God, and he will pour out the vials of his wrath upon her, and will give men an aversion to her; and through the preaching of the Gospel she will fall, just as the walls of Jericho fell at the sounding of the rams' horns: the reason of which fall will be,

*because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication:* by her “fornication” is meant the idolatry of the church of Rome; so the idolatry of Israel and Judah is often expressed in the Old Testament by fornication and whoredoms; (see <sup>488E</sup>Jeremiah 3:6 <sup>488D</sup>Ezekiel 23:2,3) and the wine of it designs the alluring methods used to draw into it; such as the riches and honours, and pleasures of this world, promised to men, and the great appearances of holiness and religion, the deceivableness of unrighteousness, the miracles, signs, and lying wonders done by them, by which men are made sottish and stupid, and induced to believe a lie; just as wine intoxicates, and inclines and excites to lust: and by “the wrath” of it is meant either the heat of lust unto it, or the wrath of God against them which is stirred up by it; and now the aggravation of her sin is, that she not only drinks of this wine herself, or commits idolatry, being instigated to it by the allurements of it, though she hereby incurs the displeasure and wrath of God, but she draws all nations into the same idolatrous practices.

**Ver. 9.** *And the third angel followed them,* etc.] The two preceding ones, and that very quickly; by whom is meant not Luther, and his associates in the Reformation, as some think; nor his successors, or the ministers of the Gospel in general from his time till Christ's second coming, as others have thought; but a set of Gospel ministers in the spiritual reign of Christ: the first set of them publish the everlasting Gospel, which leads on to the ruin of antichrist; the second set proclaim the downfall of Rome, and this third set denounce the wrath of God upon all that have professed the Popish religion:

*saying with a loud voice;* as the first angel did, with like authority and vehemence, in order to strike terror, and express indignation:

*if any man worship the beast and his image;* give in to the idolatries of the church of Rome, and embrace, maintain, and defend the Popish religion, which bears a resemblance to the worship of the Heathens, and is the very image of Rome Pagan; (see <sup>488E</sup>Revelation 13:4,12,15)

*and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand*; openly profess Popery, and swear allegiance to the man of sin, and do all they can to support his interest; (see <sup><6136></sup>Revelation 13:16,17).

**Ver. 10.** *The same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God*, etc.] Which is a just punishment for their sin; that as such have drank of the wine of the wrath of Rome's fornication, (<sup><6448></sup>Revelation 14:8) so they shall now drink of the wine of God's wrath; it is usual in Scripture to express the punishment God inflicts upon wicked men by his wrath, and by the wine cup of his fury; and their suffering such punishment, by their drinking of it; (see <sup><2515></sup>Jeremiah 25:15 <sup><8211></sup>Job 21:20) so *azgwrđ`yy*, “the wine of wrath”, is a phrase used by the Jews <sup>f353</sup>:

*which is poured out without mixture, into the cup of his indignation*; sometimes called a cup of fury and of trembling, (<sup><2517></sup>Isaiah 51:17,22) and is sometimes said to be full of mixture, (<sup><9788></sup>Psalm 75:8) of various ingredients of wrath and fury; and the words may be rendered here, “which is mixed without mixture”: and though it seems to carry in it a contradiction, yet is true in different senses; it may be said to be mixed as wine with various sorts, which is the stronger, and sooner inebriates and intoxicates; or in allusion to the cup the Jews gave to malefactors, to stupefy them, when going to execution, which had various things put in it for that purpose; (see Gill on “<sup><4152></sup>Mark 15:23”) and so designs the several ingredients in the cup of divine indignation, or the several ways in which God expresses his wrath; and yet it is without mixture; it is judgment without mercy, pure wrath, without the least alloy; not so much as a drop of cold water granted, or the least your shown, or any mitigation of fury for a moment:

*and he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone*: in allusion to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, which are now a burning and a sulphurous lake, called Asphaltites, and is an example, pattern, and similitude of the vengeance of eternal fire, (Jude 7) and hence the beast and false prophet are said to be cast into such a lake, (<sup><6601></sup>Revelation 19:20) and here their followers will be punished; which is expressive of the horrible torments of hell, and the dreadful punishment of the antichristian party there; (see <sup><9106></sup>Psalm 11:6) and what will aggravate their misery is, that it will be

*in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb*; the latter will be their Judge, and will condemn them to everlasting burnings, and pronounce the sentence on them; and the former will be the executioners of it; they will gather them out, and sever them from the righteous, and cast them into the furnace of fire, and will be spectators of their punishment, and rejoice at it; and the sight of their power and glory will increase the torment of the sufferers.

**Ver. 11.** *And the smoke of their torment ascendeth up for ever and ever*, etc.] That is, the smoke of that fire which torments them will for ever arise; or, in other words, there will be no end of their torment; hence their misery is called everlasting fire, everlasting punishment, and everlasting destruction, (<sup><4254></sup>Matthew 25:41,46 <sup><5100></sup>2 Thessalonians 1:9) and smoke being very troublesome and distressing, is mentioned to set forth the very uncomfortable state of the wicked; and so it is used by Jewish writers: hence we read of *מִן־הַטֶּבַח הַשָּׁמַיִם*, “the smoke of hell” <sup>f354</sup>, with which the eyes of the wicked will be filled in the world to come:

*and they have no rest, day nor night*; the fire of divine wrath which tortures them is never quenched, and the worm of conscience which gnaws them never dies: this is directly contrary to a notion of the Jews, that the wicked in hell have rest sometimes; they talk of angels blowing away the smoke from them, so that they have rest an hour and a half; and which they say they have three times a day, and whenever Israel says Amen, let his great name be blessed <sup>f355</sup>; and particularly that hell fire never burns on the sabbath day, nor does the smoke of it ascend then, and that the wicked have always rest on that days <sup>f356</sup>; though sometimes they contradict themselves, and say they never have any rest <sup>f357</sup>, which is the truth:

*who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receiveth the mark of his name*; that is, whoever are the followers of antichrist, or the professors of the Popish religion; so far is salvation from being in the church of Rome, and only there, that there is none in it; and whoever live and die in the profession of Popery, shall surely be damned as this passage is true.

**Ver. 12.** *Here is the patience of the saints*, etc.] That which has required their patience, and about which it has been exercised, what they have been patiently waiting for, namely, the destruction of antichrist; and now it will

be come, and patience will have its perfect work; (see <sup>630</sup> Revelation 13:10)

*here are they that keep the commandments of God*; and not the inventions of men, and the traditions of antichrist, but the ordinances of the Gospel, as they were at first delivered, without any adulteration and corruption; and who kept them because they were enjoined by God, and from a principle of love to him, and with a view to his glory: these are distinguished from the worshippers of the beast, and were preserved throughout the apostasy; these are the witnesses who will now be risen, and the remnant of the woman's seed, with whom the dragon made war by the beast: and these are the hundred and forty and four thousand who are before described; these will be in a very glorious and comfortable church state; the word will be purely preached, and the ordinances truly administered, and the doctrines of the Gospel will be heartily embraced and professed: it follows,

*and the faith of Jesus*; meaning either the grace of faith, of which Jesus is the object, author, and finisher; and which these saints will have from him, and exercise upon him in a very strong and comfortable manner; and which, and the profession of it, they will hold fast to the end; or else the doctrine of faith, concerning the person, office, and grace of Jesus Christ, the faith once delivered to the saints, which they will have contended for, stood fast in, and now will hold in a pure conscience: these seem to be the words of John, declaring the faith, patience, and obedience of the saints of these times.

**Ver. 13.** *And I heard a voice from heaven*, etc.] Like that which was heard at Christ's baptism and transfiguration, certifying the truth of what follows, so that that may be depended upon as an undoubted verity:

*saying unto me, write*; which is a further confirmation of the following sayings being true and faithful; (see <sup>640</sup> Revelation 1:9 19:9 21:5)

*blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth*; merely to die is not an happiness, for death is common to all, good and bad; it is a disunion of soul and body, and cannot be in itself desirable; it is the fruit of sin, and has something in it awful and terrible; and though it is the privilege of believers, as its sting is removed by Christ, yet not as simply and absolutely considered; but to die in the Lord is a blessedness: some render the words, "which die for the Lord"; so the Arabic version, "which die for the faith of the Lord"; and the Ethiopic version, "which die for God"; and



so restrain them to the martyrs of Jesus: to suffer death for the sake of Christ and his Gospel is a gift and an honour, and what glorifies Christ; and there is a glory consequent upon it, which such shall enjoy; but then in the spiritual reign of Christ, to which this passage refers, and after the destruction of antichrist, there will be no more suffering for Christ, no more martyrdoms; wherefore this cannot be the sense of the words: nor do they mean dying in the lively exercise of faith and hope in the Lord; for though it is a happiness so to die, both to persons themselves, and to their friends and relations, yet these are not the only persons that are blessed; there are some who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, and go off in the dark, and yet are happy; but to die in the Lord is to die interested in him, in union to him; which union is not dissolved by death, and which preserves from all condemnation, at death or at judgment, and secures the soul's immediate entrance into happiness, and the resurrection of the body at the last day, and therefore such must be blessed: the phrase, "from henceforth", is differently placed; the Ethiopic version connects it with the word "write", rendering it, "write now"; and the Vulgate Latin version reads it with the next clause, "hereafter, yea, saith the Spirit"; and so the Latin interpreter of the Syriac version, though that itself seems rather to place it as ours does, and which is most correct; and is to be understood not of the time of John's writing, thenceforward to the resurrection; for those that died before his time were as happy as those who died after; nor of the time of death, though it is a truth, that from the time of the saints' death, and from the very moment of their separation, they are blessed, and are in a state of happiness until the resurrection; but of that period of time which the declarations made by the three preceding angels refer to, from thenceforward, and after the destruction of antichrist, and during the spiritual reign of Christ: and the sense is, that happy will those persons be that die in Christ within that time, and before the Laodicean church state takes place; when coldness, lukewarmness, and carnal security will seize upon men, and Christ will come upon them at an unawares; and those sharp and severe times will commence, signified by the harvest and vintage of the earth in the following verses, and which seem to be no other than the end of the world, and the destruction of it; wherefore happy will they be that are going to heaven before that time comes; (see <sup>2100</sup>Ecclesiastes 4:1,2 <sup>2501</sup>Isaiah 57:1,2)



*yea, saith the Spirit*; the third witness in heaven, who sets his seal to the truth of what the voice declares, and shows wherein this blessedness will consist:

*that they may rest from their labours*; both of body and soul; from all toil of body, and laborious work, from all diseases and distempers of body, and all outward sorrows and calamities men labour under, and are fatigued with in this life; and from all inward troubles, from a body of sin, from the temptations of Satan, and from all doubts and fears, from their present warfare state, and all conflicts with their spiritual enemies:

*and their works do follow them*; they do not go before them, to prepare heaven and happiness for them; nor do they take them along with them, and use them as pleas for their admission into the heavenly glory; but they will follow them, and will be found to praise, and honour, and glory, and will be taken notice of by Christ, and graciously rewarded by him, at his appearing and kingdom. This is directly opposite to the notions of the Jews, who say, that when a man departs this life, his works “go before him”, and say unto him, thou hast done so and so, in such a place, and on such a day<sup>f358</sup>; and that whoever does a good work in this world, it shall “go before him” in the world to come<sup>f359</sup>; and so they<sup>f360</sup> represent good works as saying to a man when he is about to die,

“go in peace; before thou gettest thither, *Ætwa μymydqm wna*, we will go before thee, as it is said, (<sup>298</sup>Isaiah 48:8) “thy righteousness shall go before thee”.”

Sometimes they say<sup>f361</sup>, they go along with him at the time of a man's departure: neither gold, nor silver, nor precious stones and pearls accompany him, but the law and good works, as it is said, (<sup>2062</sup>Proverbs 6:22) “when thou goest it shall lead thee”, etc.

**Ver. 14.** *And I looked, and behold a white cloud*, etc.] In this verse is a description of the person principally concerned in the harvest of the earth, hereafter mentioned; by whom is designed not some great potentate or prince, an encourager of the Reformation among his subjects; nor an angel in an human shape; nor Martin Luther, as others; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is described by his form, and by his seat, and by what he had on his head, and in his hand:

*and upon the cloud one sat like unto the son of man*; so Christ is said to be, (<sup><6113></sup>Revelation 1:13) and in (<sup><2073></sup>Daniel 7:13) where there is a like vision of him as here, and which refers to the same time; it is a name by which the Messiah is often called, and is expressive of the truth of his human nature, who was found in fashion as a man, and was really one; for his being like to the son of man designs reality and truth, and not mere appearance; (see <sup><0145></sup>Matthew 14:5 <sup><0114></sup>John 1:14) and besides, as this was in vision, it is very properly expressed, for Christ appeared to John in vision like to that human nature in which he is at the right hand of God: and here he is seen “sitting” upon the “white cloud”; which shows that he was come to judgment in the clouds of heaven, and was set on one of them, as on a throne; and a white cloud represents the purity, uprightness, and justness of his proceedings in judgment; for which reason he is said to be on a white throne, (<sup><6111></sup>Revelation 20:11)

*having on his head a golden crown*; as an ensign of royal majesty, showing that his kingdom was now come, the time for him to reign personally with his saints on earth a thousand years; and that it was a very glorious one; and that he should now reign before his ancients gloriously; and that it was pure, solid, and durable; (see <sup><0204></sup>Psalms 21:4)

*and in his hand a sharp sickle*: to reap the earth with, as hereafter, and is expressive of his power as King of saints and Judge of the world, to gather all nations before him; for the sickle is used to gather with, as well as to cut down.

**Ver. 15.** *And another angel came out of the temple*, etc.] Not the Holy Spirit, who, being God omniscient, knows the day and hour of judgment, which is a secret to men and angels, as Napier thinks; since though he dwells in the church as his temple, yet is never called an angel; nor does this angel represent the souls under the altar, who come out from thence, and importunately desire vengeance on the inhabitants of the earth, the worshippers of the beast, who had shed their blood; but rather the mighty angels who shall descend from heaven with Christ, and who shall be employed by him as reapers, to gather in his elect from the four winds, as well as to bind up the tares in bundles, and burn them; unless a set of Gospel ministers, as before, should be intended, who either by divine revelation, or by the signs of the time being come, and observed by them, will know that the harvest, or end of the world, is come; since this angel is said to come out of the temple, the church, which had been measured, and

was now opened in heaven, and from whence angels are said to come, (<sup><610></sup>Revelation 11:1,19 15:5,6)

*crying with a loud voice to him that sat on the cloud*: as the first and third angels did, (<sup><647></sup>Revelation 14:7,9) denoting great vehemence and importunity: thrust in thy sickle, and reap: which being spoken by an inferior angel, whether this designs the ministering spirits, or preachers of the word, must be understood not as commanding, nor even directing what should be done, but as beseeching and entreating: (see <sup><418></sup>Psalms 132:8). Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and not without reason, that there is here some allusion to the putting in of the sickle, and reaping the first corn in Judea, at the feast of the passover, by the order of the sanhedrim, which sat in the temple; nor did any reap till they had the word given them, “reap”, by the messengers of the court, called *ḥyd tyb yj wl q*, “the angels”, or messengers “of the sanhedrim”: to whom the reaper said, shall I reap? and they say to him, *rwqx* <sup>f362</sup>, “reap”: the reasons follow:

*for the time is come for thee to reap*; the time of the end of the world, and of the judgment of it, which is fixed by God; and of Christ's coming to judge both quick and dead, and of the first resurrection, or the resurrection of the saints:

*for the harvest of the earth is ripe*: the measure of the sins of wicked men will now be filled up, and the afflictions of the saints will be accomplished in them, and the number of God's elect will be completed in the effectual calling; they will be all called, and so things will be ripe for the second coming of Christ. There seems to be some reference to (<sup><213></sup>Joel 3:13) “put ye in the sickle, for the harvest is ripe”: the Jewish doctors ask <sup>f363</sup>, to whom is this said? R. Phineas, in the name of R. Hilkiyah, says, *ḥykal ml*, “to the angels”; so the mighty ones, in (<sup><641></sup>Revelation 14:11) are by Kimchi interpreted of the angels.

**Ver. 16.** *And he that sat on the cloud thrust in his sickle on the earth*, etc.] He put forth, and made use of that power which he had in his hand, in answer to the entreaty of the angel, the time being fully come which was fixed for this great event:

*and the earth was reaped*; and the harvest of it was got in; reaping and harvest sometimes are used in an ill sense, and design the wrath of God, and his judgments inflicted upon men; (see <sup><215></sup>Isaiah 17:5) (<sup><253></sup>Jeremiah 51:33 <sup><213></sup>Joel 3:13). Hence some think, that both this and the vintage

following intend the judgments of God upon antichrist, and that they are contemporary with the pouring out of the fifth and sixth vials upon the beast and his followers; and the rather, since the destruction of Babylon, literally taken, is expressed in such language, (<sup><2613></sup>Jeremiah 51:33) though these seem to have respect to times after the fall of the Romish Babylon, before declared in (<sup><6648></sup>Revelation 14:8) and most interpreters refer the harvest to the last judgment at the end of the world; and which sense is greatly countenanced, and to be illustrated by the parable of the tares and wheat, in (<sup><4033></sup>Matthew 13:30,39) (<sup><4034></sup>Matthew 13:41,42) sometimes these phrases are used in a good sense, and intend the gathering in of souls by the preaching of the Gospel; as there are the appointed weeks of the harvest, so there is a time fixed for the calling and conversion of God's elect; and when this time is come, and especially to any number of them in any particular place, it is an harvest, as in Galilee and Samaria in the times of Christ, (<sup><4037></sup>Matthew 9:37,38 <sup><4035></sup>John 4:35) the reapers are the ministers of the Gospel; such were the apostles of Christ, (<sup><4036></sup>John 4:36-38) and the sickle is the Gospel, by which not only men are cut to the heart, and cut down, and removed from their old bottom, and principles and practices, but are gathered to Christ, and into his churches; and when large numbers are brought in, it is an harvest time, as in the times of Christ and his apostles; (see <sup><2301></sup>Isaiah 9:1-3 <sup><4124></sup>Acts 2:41 <sup><4714></sup>2 Corinthians 2:14) hence some interpreters think that the harvest here has respect to the Reformation, which followed upon the preaching of Luther, Calvin, and others, when a large harvest of souls were gathered in, in Germany, France, England, and elsewhere; but rather it may be thought to refer to the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles in the latter day, in the spiritual reign of Christ, to which the preceding visions belong, as we have seen; the earth will be reaped indeed, and a great harvest it will be, when a nation shall be born at once, and the vast multitudes of the Gentiles shall be brought in, as in (<sup><2618></sup>Isaiah 66:8 49:20 60:3-11) and the rather this may be judged to be the meaning of it, since the passage from whence these phrases are borrowed respects the bringing again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem, (<sup><2301></sup>Joel 3:1,13) though it seems best to understand it of the Lord's wheat harvest at the end of the world, when the wheat of the earth shall be reaped, and gathered into Christ's barn, or garner, or into his and his Father's kingdom; this reaping of the earth is the removing of the saints out of it, not by death, but by the resurrection of them from the dead; for when Christ shall come in the clouds of heaven, and sit on the white cloud, or throne, the dead in him will

rise first, and the living saints will be changed, and both will be caught up together, to meet the Lord in the air; so that the earth will be reaped, and be clear of them, and there will be none left in it but the wicked of the world; and what will become of them is declared in the following verses, under the representation of a vintage.

**Ver. 17.** *And another angel came out of the temple which is in heaven,* etc.] It is a strange conceit of Mr. Brightman's, that this angel is Thomas Lord Cromwell, in the days of King Henry the Eighth, a sincere favourer of pure religion; and that the following angel is Thomas Cranmer, archbishop of Canterbury, a martyr, that had power over fire; and that the vintage, here spoken of, refers to the destroying of religious houses, and disposing of abbey lands to other uses; which was done under the king's authority, by the former of these, at the instigation of the latter, when those who were set over that business made such havoc of the goods of the Papists, that their houses seemed to swim in their spoils, as in a river of pressed grapes. Dr. Goodwin much better interprets it of God's vengeance upon the carnal Protestants and professors of religion; since it is an angel out of the temple that will execute it, and another from the altar, zealous of God's worship, that will provoke to it; and since the winepress will be trodden without the city, the church; and which began in the wars in Germany, in the last age, and will have its full accomplishment when the whole outward court is given to the Gentiles; but how these, who are but a few, when compared with the wicked of the world, should be called the vine of the earth, I see not. Mr. Daubuz thinks this vision of the vintage has had, at least in part, its fulfilment in the late wars in the times of Queen Anne, the Popish countries being then made the seat of war, in which they suffered much; rather they come nearest to the truth of the matter, who take this to be the battle of the great God Almighty, under the sixth vial, (~~6614~~ Revelation 16:14,16) fought by the word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who will tread the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God, (~~6615~~ Revelation 19:15) when the beast and false prophet will both be destroyed: but inasmuch as Babylon is before declared to be fallen, (~~6618~~ Revelation 14:8) and since the gathering in of the Lord's wheat at the first resurrection is designed by the harvest, it is best to understand this vintage of the perdition of ungodly men by fire, at the conflagration of the world, which will be at the beginning of the thousand years' reign, and of the gathering of them in at the second resurrection, at the end of it, for the destruction of them in hell, soul and body. And by this "angel" is meant,

not the saints of the most High; for though they may be said to come out of the temple, the church, and shall judge the world, yet they will not be employed in gathering together the wicked, and casting them into the lake of fire, or winepress of God's wrath: rather the ministering spirits are intended, who are the reapers at the end of the world, and who will gather the wicked, and bind them like tares in bundles, and cast them into the furnace of fire; though it is best to interpret this of Christ himself, who is often called an Angel in Scripture, as the Angel of God's presence; and the Angel of the covenant; and frequently in this book, as in (<sup>6602</sup> Revelation 7:2 8:3 10:1) because, as Mediator, he is God's messenger; and he may be said to do that, which he does by others, as instruments, as to gather the vine of the earth, and cast it into the winepress; and he may be said to "come out of the temple which is in heaven": whether this be understood of heaven itself, which the temple, and especially the most holy place in it, was a figure of; here Christ is, and from hence he is expected to come, and will come at the last day, as Judge of all the earth; or of the church of God, for here Christ dwells, and grants his gracious and spiritual presence until his second and personal coming, with all his saints: and now he will have them all with him, both quick and dead, and will be personally in his temple, the church, in the great congregation of the righteous, and out from among them will he display his power in the destruction of the wicked; and the rather he may be thought to be intended, since none but a divine person ever trod the winepress of God's wrath; (see <sup>2301</sup> Isaiah 63:1-3 <sup>6603</sup> Revelation 19:13,15,16) to which may be added what follows,

*he also having a sharp sickle*; the same who is described as like to the son of man, on a white cloud, with a golden crown on his head, and such a sickle in his hand, (<sup>6644</sup> Revelation 14:14) which is expressive of the same judiciary power and authority.

**Ver. 18.** *And another angel came out from the altar*, etc.] Where are the souls of the martyrs of Jesus, (<sup>6609</sup> Revelation 6:9) and whom this angel is thought by some to represent, in his address to him that had the sharp sickle, crying for vengeance on the wicked of the earth, who had shed their blood: the allusion seems to be to the altar of burnt offerings, where the sacrifices were slain, and on which they were burnt with fire; and which was an emblem of the strict justice of God, showing, that those persons, for whom these sacrifices were offered, deserved to be treated in like manner; and here the angel coming from thence signifies, that he came on the behalf of the justice of God, treating that he, to whom vengeance

belonged, would execute it upon all the ungodly, who were ripe for judgment: and hence it is further said of him,

*which had power over fire*; whether the angels, as they have presided over particular kingdoms and states, (<sup>(2711)</sup>Daniel 10:20,21) preside over the elements, since this angel had power over fire, and another angel is called the angel of the waters, (<sup>(6645)</sup>Revelation 16:5) may be considered. According to the Jews <sup>f364</sup> there are **ç a ykal m**, “angels of fire”, and **µym ykal m**, “angels of the waters”; particularly it is said <sup>f365</sup>, that Gabriel is **ç a l ç r ç**, “the prince of fire”, or “that has power over fire”, and Jurkemo is **drbh r ç**, “prince of hail”, or has power over it: however, fire is to be taken here, not for the Spirit, and his gifts, which not a created angel, but Christ only, has a power over, to baptize with; nor the Gospel, nor martyrdom, but rather the wrath of God, which in Scripture is often compared to fire, of which this angel was an executioner: and indeed here it may be referred, both literally to the burning of the world, and the wicked in it, in which the angels may be concerned, who will descend with Christ in flames of fire, taking vengeance on the wicked; and figuratively to hell fire, and the destruction of the wicked in it, who will be cast into it by the angels of God.

*And cried with a loud cry to him that had the sharp sickle*, as in (<sup>(6645)</sup>Revelation 14:15) expressing like vehemence and importunity,

*saying, thrust in thy sharp sickle*: not commanding or directing, but entreating as before:

*and gather the clusters of the vine of the earth*; not the vine of God's planting, the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the church of Christ; but the vine of the earth, of wicked and earthly men, whose vine is the vine of Sodom, etc. (<sup>(6622)</sup>Deuteronomy 32:32,33) and which is spread over the whole earth; a wild vine, whose grapes are gall, clusters bitter, and their wine the poison of dragons; and to such a vine the wicked are compared, for their emptiness and unfruitfulness, their uselessness and unprofitableness, and for their being fit fuel for everlasting burnings; (see <sup>(6340)</sup>Ezekiel 15:2-5). And the clusters of it may denote the great multitude of the wicked now to be cut down, gathered in, and destroyed, the reason given,



*for her grapes are fully ripe*; their wickedness very great, their iniquity full, the measure of their sins filled up, and they fitted for destruction, and ripe for ruin; (see <sup><281B></sup>Joel 3:13). Some understand this of the degenerate church of Rome, and the destruction of it; (see <sup><6915></sup>Revelation 19:15).

**Ver. 19.** *And the angel thrust in his sickle into the earth*, etc.] Before “upon the earth”, when the harvest was gathered in, the wheat being on the earth, but not belonging to it; but here “into the earth”, the vine being the vine of the earth, rooted in it, and natural to it:

*and gathered the vine of the earth*; the Arabic version reads, “of the whole earth”; in like manner as the tares in the parable are said to be gathered, and bound in bundles, and cast into the fire, which, as here, intends the destruction of the wicked, at the end of the world: this vine may be said to be cut down at the burning of the world, and to be gathered at the second resurrection, as the wheat harvest of the saints will be at the first resurrection:

*and cast it into the great winepress the wrath of God*; the same with the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, so often mentioned in this book: the torments of the wicked will lie in the wrath of God being poured forth upon them, and into them, which will be that fire that cannot be quenched, and that worm that never dies; and this is signified by the squeezing of grapes in a winepress, as God's judgments in this world sometimes are, (<sup><281B></sup>Isaiah 63:3,6) and which will be very heavy and intolerable, since this winepress will be trod by the Lord God Almighty: and it is said to be a great one, as it must needs be, to hold the vine of the whole earth, or all the wicked of the world, who will be like the sand of the sea, innumerable; and this will be big enough for them all, and they will all be cast into it at once. Tophet is deep and large, (<sup><281B></sup>Isaiah 30:33).

**Ver. 20.** *And the winepress was trodden without the city*, etc.] The beloved city, the new Jerusalem, into which none of the wicked will enter, and without which are dogs, etc. (<sup><6910></sup>Revelation 20:9 21:27 22:15). The allusion may be, as Dr. Lightfoot thinks, to the olive presses, which were without the city of Jerusalem, from whence Gethsemane had its name, whither our Lord went, and where his sorrows began the night he was betrayed: hell is sometimes expressed by outer darkness, and said to be far off from heaven, and between the one and the other a great gulf is fixed, the distance is considerable; hence men are said to go forth to behold the



miseries of the wicked; (see <sup><4213></sup>Matthew 22:13 <sup><4163></sup>Luke 16:23,26 <sup><3624></sup>Isaiah 66:24).

*and blood came out of the winepress*; alluding to the juice squeezed out of grapes, called the blood of grapes, (<sup><4491></sup>Genesis 49:11).

*Even unto the horses' bridles, for the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*; which is only an hyperbolical expression, setting forth the largeness and universality of the destruction of the wicked, and the impossibility of their escaping it. In like manner the Jews express a great slaughter of men; so of the slaughter at Bither, by Adrian, they say <sup>f366</sup>, they went on slaying **wmj wj d[ µdb swsh [qçç d[**, “until a horse plunged in blood up to his nostrils”, and the blood ran four miles into the sea; which is not to be understood literally, but as expressing a prodigious effusion of blood: and as to

*the space of a thousand and six hundred furlongs*, perhaps there may be an allusion to the measure of the land of Israel, and the common notion of it among the Jews, who make it to be the square of four hundred parsoe <sup>f367</sup>: hence they often speak of the land of Israel shaking and moving four hundred “parsoe”, upon some extraordinary occasions <sup>f368</sup>; and a “parsa” contained four miles <sup>f369</sup>, so that four hundred “parsoe” made a thousand and six hundred miles; and if miles and furlongs are the same, in which sense only the land of Israel could be so large, here is the exact space; for Jerom <sup>f370</sup>, who was an inhabitant of it, says, it was scarce 160 miles in length, to which agrees R. Menachem <sup>f371</sup>; and it may be observed, that the Arabic version renders the words, “by the space of a thousand and six hundred miles”. The Ethiopic version, very wrongly, reads, “sixteen furlongs”.

# CHAPTER 15

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 15

This chapter is a preparation to the pouring out of the seven vials, and contains a vision of the seven angels in heaven that should do this work, of a chorus of harpers on this occasion, and of the same seven angels coming out of the temple, and receiving the vials, in order to execute their commission. The vision of the seven angels, having the seven last plagues, so called because filled up with the wrath of God, is said to be a sign, great and marvellous, ([Revelation 15:1](#)) a sea of glass, mingled with fire, is seen, with persons standing on it, described by the victory they had got over the beast, his image, mark, and number of his name; by having the harps of God in their hands, and by the song they sung, called the song of Moses, and of the Lamb; in which they ascribe to Christ deity, dominion over the saints, omnipotence, justice, truth, and holiness; give him glory, celebrate his works, commend his ways, and suggest that he ought to be the object of the fear and worship of all, ([Revelation 15:2-4](#)). Next the temple in heaven is seen opened, out of which come the seven angels, described by the place they came from, the temple; by what they had, the seven plagues; by their habit, clothed in pure white linen; and by their golden girdles about their breasts, ([Revelation 15:5,6](#)) to whom one of the four living creatures, made mention of in ([Revelation 4:6](#)) delivers to them seven golden vials full of divine wrath, upon which the temple is filled with smoke from the Lord; so that it was not possible for anyone to enter into it, until these seven plagues were ended, ([Revelation 15:7,8](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw another sign in heaven, great and marvellous,* etc.] This chapter is a preparation to the pouring out of the seven vials, as ([Revelation 16:1-21](#)) is to the sending of the seven epistles, and ([Revelation 2:1-3:22](#)) to the seven seals and seven trumpets: the vision is called a “sign”, because what was seen was significative of future events; a sign of the coming of Christ, of his kingdom, and of the destruction of antichrist; and it is said to be a sign “in heaven”, where John was called up, and where he had his visions; and it was “another”, a different one from that in ([Revelation 12:1](#)) which represented the downfall of Paganism,

but this the downfall of Popery; and it is a very “great” one, it is expressive of great things, as the fall of Babylon the great, or the judgment of the great whore, and the great glory of the church and kingdom of Christ; and it is “marvellous”, for the two grand events it respects are very wonderful; as that antichrist, who was once in such power, should be destroyed, and that by such weak means, in the esteem of men, as the preaching of the Gospel, which is no less marvellous than the fall of Jericho by the sound of rams' horns; and that the church, which was in so low an estate in the wilderness, for the space of 1260 days or years, should become so glorious. The vision follows,

*seven angels, having the seven last plagues*; these are not the same angels that blew the seven trumpets, for they are not contemporary with them, but are more likely the same with those in the preceding chapter; though they seem rather to be different from them: if these were angels literally understood, their having plagues is no objection to their being good angels, since such are often the executioners of God's wrath; and that these good ones, appears from one of them talking with John, and showing him the judgment of antichrist, and another the bride, the Lamb's wife, and her glory, (~~617~~ Revelation 17:1 21:9) though they seem rather to be the ministers of the Gospel, since they are said to come out of the temple, (~~615~~ Revelation 15:6) and since the destruction of antichrist will be by the breath of Christ's mouth, or by the preaching of the Gospel; unless it should be thought that members of churches are designed, since these angels receive their vials from one of the four living creatures, (~~617~~ Revelation 15:7) or preachers of the word; and may denote some very principal men, as kings, who will now be come to Zion, and be members of Gospel churches, and will be the nursing fathers and protectors of them; and these will hate the whore, and burn her flesh with fire; but of these angels, see more on (~~615~~ Revelation 15:6). They are said to have “the seven last plagues”; that is, in their vials; for these seven plagues are the same with the seven vials of the wrath of God, to be poured out upon antichrist; and are no other than so many steps, ways, and means, by which God will bring on and finish his destruction: these are called the last plagues, because they will be in the last days: there have been plagues before, as at the destruction of the old world, and of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the plagues of Egypt, and the downfall of several monarchies and kingdoms, and of Paganism in the Roman empire; but these will fall upon antichrist, and will be the last upon him, for they will issue in his utter ruin; they will

be the last plagues upon the earth, there will be no other after them, but the conflagration of the world, and the general destruction of the wicked in hell. These plagues are the same with the third woe, and are an explanation of it, and belong to the sounding of the seventh trumpet, which brings in the kingdoms of this world to become the kingdoms of Christ, and the time of God's wrath upon the nations, or Gentiles, the Papists, and of judging the dead, and destroying them that destroyed the earth, (<sup><6115></sup>Revelation 11:15,18) for these plagues do not follow upon the harvest and vintage, nor has this vision any respect to them, nor to be connected with the preceding chapter, but with (<sup><610></sup>Revelation 11:1-19) and gives an enlarged view, both of the glory of Christ's kingdom, and of the ruin of antichrist, by these plagues, called the last:

*for in them is filled up the wrath of God*; upon the beast, and his followers.

**Ver. 2.** *And I saw, as it were, a sea of glass mingled with fire*, etc.] Not baptism, but rather the blood of Christ, which may be compared to a sea, for its abundant virtue and efficacy in cleansing from all sin; and to a sea “of glass”, since in it are clearly seen free justification, full pardon, peace and reconciliation; and may be said to be “mingled with fire”, being attended in the application of it with the Spirit of God, whose gifts and graces are sometimes signified by fire: and so, according to others, this sea may represent the pure church of God, as washed in the blood of the Lamb; compared to a sea for the multitude of which it consists, and to a sea of glass, because of the transparency and clearness of its principles and practices, and may be said to be mingled with the fire of love and zeal: most interpreters understand it of the world, which is like a sea for the multitude of its inhabitants; and sometimes to a troubled one, because of the restlessness and disquietude of the wicked in it; but here it is like a sea of glass, for the quiet, and peace, and rest it shall be in at this time; though it is commonly said to be like such a sea, partly because all things are manifest, and open to an omniscient God; and partly because of its outward splendour, and the brittleness, frailty, and transitoriness of it; and to be mixed with fire, either because of the light of the Gospel, and the operation of the Spirit in the hearts of some that are in it, or because of the afflictions and persecutions the saints in it; though it seems best of all to understand it of the Gospel, as in (see Gill on “<sup><6106></sup>Revelation 4:6”); and which may be said to be mingled with fire, either because of the powerful and clear demonstration of the Spirit that attends it to the minds of many, or that heat of persecution which is raised by it; (see <sup><6129></sup>Luke 12:49) or rather it

denotes the purity of the Gospel in those times, its general spread, and the great zeal and fervour of the professors of it, since persecution will now be at an end.

*And them that had gotten the victory over the beast*; over antichrist, signified the beast, that rose up out of the sea, and out of the earth, (<sup>6131</sup>Revelation 13:1,11) and which are the same, and were but one, though in different forms, as from hence appears: the beast first overcame the saints, by slaying of them; and they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony, by preaching and professing the Gospel, by their close and constant adherence to it, and by dying for it:

*and over his image*; caused by him to be made to the first beast; and is no other than the Popish religion, which bears a resemblance to Paganism; and which the saints may be said to get the victory over, by standing out against it, opposing and refuting it, not giving into it, but bearing their testimony against it:

*and over his mark*; refusing to receive it either in their forehead, or in their right hand; that is, either to swear allegiance to him, or profess his religion. This clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

*and over the number his name*; that is, they would not own his supremacy and authority, nor embrace his doctrines, nor obey his orders, nor be reckoned his followers in any form or shape; (see <sup>6135</sup>Revelation 13:15-18). These conquerors John saw

*stand on the sea of glass*; which, if applied to the blood of Christ, shows that these confessors were purified by it, and were more than conquerors through it; that they were come out of great tribulation, and had washed their garments, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb; and were just come up from the washing, and stood upon, or rather by, or “near the sea”, as the Arabic version renders it, in allusion to the priests at the molten sea, in the temple: but if the world is meant by the sea, their standing upon it designs their victory and triumph over it by faith, their having it under their feet, and their contempt of it; but rather, since the Gospel is intended, it may denote their solid standing upon the doctrines of it, the foundation of the apostles and prophets, and their steadfast continuance in them, and faithful abiding by them, whereby they got the victory over antichrist:

*having the harps of God:* their hearts in an excellent frame, tuned and disposed by God, to sing his praise, and set forth his glory; having them filled with spiritual joy and gladness, and with great thankfulness, on account of their victory, the happy state of Christ's church, and the destruction of its enemies: the allusion is to the people of Israel, Moses and the men, and Miriam and the women with timbrels and dances standing on the sea shore, when the Egyptians were destroyed, singing the praises of God; as is still more manifest from the following verse.

**Ver. 3.** *And they sing the song of Moses the servant of God,* etc.] Not that in (<sup>(481)</sup>Deuteronomy 32:1) but that in (<sup>(490)</sup>Exodus 15:1) and the sense is, either that they observed the law of Moses, which he as a servant in the Lord's house faithfully delivered, and kept it distinct from the Gospel, and did not blend them together, as in the times before; or rather, that they sung a song like that of Moses, and on a like occasion. Pharaoh was the very picture of the pope of Rome; his oppression and cruel usage of the Israelites represent the tyranny and cruelty of the Romish antichrist; and the deliverance of Israel out of Egypt, and the destruction of the Egyptians at the Red sea, which occasioned the song of Moses, were an emblem of God's bringing his people out of antichristian bondage, and of the ruin of antichrist, upon which this song is sung; and Rome, in this book, is called Egypt, (<sup>(618)</sup>Revelation 11:8). The Jews have a notion, that the very song of Moses itself will be sung in the world to come, in the days of the Messiah; for they say, there are in it the times of the Messiah, and of Gog and Magog, and of the resurrection of the dead, and the world to come <sup>f372</sup>. And this song was sung by the Levites in the daily service <sup>f373</sup>.

*And the song of the Lamb;* the Lamb of God, who was slain for the sins of men; the same song of which mention is made, (<sup>(618)</sup>Revelation 5:9 14:3) the song of redeeming love, a song of praise for the blessings of grace which come through him, and of deliverance by him:

*saying, great and marvellous are thy works, Lord God Almighty;* Christ is in this song addressed as a divine person, as Lord of all, God over all, blessed for ever, the Almighty God, as his works declare him to be; his works of creation, providence, and redemption, which are all great and marvellous, particularly the accomplishment of the glorious things spoken of his church, and the destruction of his enemies, which are here designed:

*just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints:* made so by his Father, and acknowledged by all his people, and especially at this time, when his

kingdom will more visibly and gloriously appear: the Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, the Complutensian edition, and Arabic version, read, King of nations, as in (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 10:7) from whence this, and the beginning of the next verse, seem to be taken; the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read, "King of ages", an everlasting King, as in (<sup>2400</sup>Jeremiah 10:10) but the generality of copies read as we have it: and the ways of this King are just and true; his purposes, decrees, and counsels of old, are faithfulness and truth; all his proceedings towards his own people, his subjects, are mercy and truth; his precepts and ordinances, his worship and service, are just and true, in opposition to every false way; and all his judgments upon his enemies, which are intended, are just, being what their sins deserved, and are true, being agreeably to his word and threatenings.

**Ver. 4.** *Who shall not fear thee, O Lord*, etc.] At this time the people of the Jews shall seek after Christ, and fear him and his goodness; the forces of the Gentiles shall be brought into Zion, whose heart shall then fear, and be enlarged; the fear of the Lord will be in all places, and in all men, both Jews and Gentiles, (<sup>3805</sup>Hosea 3:5 <sup>3905</sup>Isaiah 60:5)

*and glorify thy name?* by ascribing all divine perfections to him, giving him divine worship and adoration, and attributing the whole of salvation to him, and the glory of all that is done for his church, and against its enemies:

*for thou only art holy*; not only perfectly holy, as man, but infinitely and essentially holy, as God, and the fountain of holiness to his people, as Mediator: this character seems to be given in opposition to antichrist, who arrogantly assumes the title of holiness to himself, when it only belongs to Christ.

*For all nations shall come and worship before thee*; the Gospel shall now be preached to all nations, and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of it; the kingdoms of this world will become Christ's, and his kingdom shall be to the ends of the earth, and all people shall obey him: the words seem to be taken, with some other phrases before used, out of (<sup>3808</sup>Psalms 86:8-10)

*for thy judgments are made manifest*; or "thy justifications", or "righteousnesses"; the perfect righteousness of Christ, and the doctrine of justification by it, will now be most clearly revealed, and generally received, in opposition to the Popish doctrine of merits, works of supererogation, etc. or the judgments of the King of saints upon antichrist,

who will now avenge their blood, which he has shed; (see <sup>(670)</sup>Revelation 17:1 19:2) and the justice and righteousness of his proceedings against the man of sin will be notorious and manifest to all, and be acknowledged, as in (<sup>(665)</sup>Revelation 16:5,6 19:1,2).

**Ver. 5.** *And after that I looked*, etc.] That is, after John had seen the above vision, he looked again, and saw what follows:

*and behold, the temple of the tabernacle of the testimony in heaven was opened*; this does not refer to heaven itself, the antitype of the holy of holies, which is opened by the blood of Christ, by which he himself has entered, and his people have boldness to enter now by faith, and where their souls always enter upon their departure from their bodies; for of this temple cannot be said what is in (<sup>(658)</sup>Revelation 15:8) nor to the Jerusalem state, or the most glorious state of the church on earth, during the thousand years' reign; for in that there will be no temple, (<sup>(612)</sup>Revelation 21:22) much less to any material temple on earth; the temple at Jerusalem was destroyed before this vision was, and is never to be rebuilt; nor will there be any third temple, as the Jews vainly expect: but to the church of God in the spiritual reign of Christ, under the blowing of the seventh trumpet; and designs the same thing as in (<sup>(619)</sup>Revelation 11:19) and this is to be understood as what will be, not before, but after the seven angels have poured out their vials; for till they have fulfilled the seven plagues, there is no entering into the temple for smoke, (<sup>(658)</sup>Revelation 15:8) and besides, it was after these things; after John had seen the seven angels, with the seven last plagues, (<sup>(651)</sup>Revelation 15:1) that he beheld the temple opened. The church is called "the temple", in allusion to Solomon's temple, because of its builder, materials, situation, magnificence, strength, holiness, and use; (see Gill on "<sup>(616)</sup>2 Corinthians 6:16") and the tabernacle, in allusion to the tabernacle of Moses, which was before the temple, because God dwells in it, as he did in that; and because like that it is movable, and but for a while; and points at this church state, which will not always be so, but change and sink into the Laodicean state: and it is called "the tabernacle of the testimony", as that was; the testimony was the law, or the two tables of stone, so called, because they testified what was the good, and perfect, and acceptable will of God; and these being put into the ark, were a testimony of the covenant between God and the people of Israel, and were a witness against them, when they transgressed them, (<sup>(625)</sup>Deuteronomy 31:26,27) and over these were the mercy seat, and cherubim, as a testimony of the divine Presence; and the law being put into



the ark, hence the ark was called the ark of the testimony, and that being placed in the tabernacle, that was called the tabernacle of the testimony, or of witness, (~~4050~~Numbers 1:50 ~~4074~~Acts 7:44) and all these were types of, and came to signify Christ, and the covenant of grace, the Gospel, and the mysteries of it: so that by the opening of the temple, etc. is meant a free exercise of the true religion, a setting up of Gospel churches according to the original plan, a keeping of the ordinances, as they were first delivered, and a more clear discovery of Gospel truths: it is the same with the open door in the Philadelphian church state, (~~6688~~Revelation 3:8) as well as that at this time there will be a full manifestation of the judgments of God upon antichrist: the Alexandrian copy leaves out the word “behold”.

**Ver. 6.** *And the seven angels came out of the temple*, etc.] By which it appears, that they are such who are of, or belong to the church of Christ; and are either ministers, or members of churches, who will be the executioners of God's wrath upon the beast, and his followers; some copies, and the Complutensian edition, read, “out of heaven”:

*having the seven plagues*; that is, they were appointed to inflict them, and were preparing and furnishing for it, and quickly had orders to do it:

*clothed in pure and white linen*; in which habit angels have been used to appear, as at our Lord's resurrection and ascension, and is by some thought to be expressive of the purity and holiness of angels; but rather saints are meant, who appear in the habit of priests, being all made kings and priests; and denotes their being clothed with the pure and spotless robe of Christ's righteousness, which is fine linen, clean and white, and the righteousness of the saints, (~~6688~~Revelation 19:8) and also their spiritual joy in their present situation, and in the view of the destruction of antichrist, their sackcloth being put off, in which they, the witnesses, before appeared. So the linen garment of the high priest was, as Philo the Jew says <sup>f374</sup>, made of “fine linen”, *καψαρωτατος*, “most pure”. The Alexandrian copy, and some copies of the Vulgate Latin version, and some exemplars mentioned by Andreas Caesariensis, an ancient commentator on this book, read, “clothed with a stone, pure and white”; as if they were arrayed in garments of stone, which is not likely; unless reference is had to the stone asbestos, of an iron colour, found, as Pliny says <sup>f375</sup>, in the mountains of Arcadia, of which linen was made, called “asbestinum”, and of that garments; which were so far from being consumed by fire, that they became clean and brighter by it; or

to the Carystian stone, which the inhabitants of Carystus used to comb, spin, and weave, and make carpets of <sup>f376</sup>.

*And having their breasts girded with golden girdles*; such an one as Christ himself was girded with, (<sup><6113></sup>Revelation 1:13) and this some understand of the love, which the breasts of angels are filled with towards the saints, and their readiness to perform all good offices to them, and to execute the judgments of God upon their enemies, whenever they have orders: but since these angels come out of the temple, and members of Gospel churches seem designed, rather this is to be understood either of the grace of faith, which is much more precious than of gold that perisheth, which receives the righteousness of Christ, puts it on, and girds it about the believer; or of love, the love of God and Christ, which encompass the saints about, and constrain them, and engage them in fervent love to them, and one another: or of the girdle of truth, (<sup><6164></sup>Ephesians 6:14) which is near and close to them, and which keeps them close to Christ; nor can they depart totally and finally from him, or that; or in general, this may denote their strength and readiness for what service they shall be called to; (see <sup><6125></sup>Luke 12:35,36 <sup><6113></sup>1 Peter 1:13).

**Ver. 7.** *And one of the four beasts*, etc.] Or living creatures: now we hear of them, as of the four and twenty elders, under the blowing of the seventh trumpet, (<sup><6116></sup>Revelation 11:16) with which this vision is contemporary; these living creatures are the ministers of the Gospel; (see Gill on <sup><6116></sup>Revelation 4:6”) and this was one, or the first of them, who was like a lion, for fortitude and courage, and whose voice was as the noise of thunder, (<sup><6107></sup>Revelation 4:7 6:1) and so fitly represents those ministers who shall give out the vials of God's wrath: not any particular person is designed, who shall be at this time; and much less Luke the evangelist, as Lord Napier thinks; nor Peter, who prophesied of the last time, (<sup><6180></sup>2 Peter 3:10,11) as Grotius; but a set of Gospel ministers, comparable to one of the living creatures John had before seen; of whom it is said, that they

*gave unto the seven angels seven golden vials full of the wrath of God, who liveth for ever and ever*: these seven vials are for the seven last plagues to be put into, and out of which they are to be taken, or poured, and inflicted; (see <sup><6109></sup>Revelation 21:9) hence it appears, that the seven plagues, and the wrath of God, are the same thing, and both design God's judgments upon antichrist; and these being expressed by “vials”, which are measures, and large ones, show the large abundance and plenteous effusion

of God's wrath, and the secret, sudden, and irresistible power of it; and yet that it will be poured out in measure, according to righteous judgment, and therefore it is put into vials; and these golden ones, expressive of the purity, holiness, and justice of the divine proceedings: and it will be very terrible; it will be, not the wrath of men, but of God, and a cup of the fierceness of his wrath; it will be the wrath of the living God, of him that lives for ever, and as he is, such will his wrath be; it will continue for ever, for this wrath will issue in the everlasting destruction of antichrist: so the wrath of God is signified by a wine cup of fury, (<sup><2515></sup>Jeremiah 25:15) and that destruction, and those plagues which God designed to bring upon Pharaoh, are by Jonathan ben Uzziel, in his Targum on (<sup><0412></sup>Genesis 40:12) called **azgwr d al yyp**, “a vial of wrath”, which he should drink of: and in the pouring out of there seven vials, there is in some of them a manifest allusion to the plagues of Egypt. So the cup of trembling, in (<sup><2517></sup>Isaiah 51:17) is by the Targumists called **yl yp**, “a vial”, and also “the cup of fury”, (<sup><2512></sup>Isaiah 51:22) and that these vials were not small narrow mouthed vessels, but large broad mouthed ones, and more properly basins or bowls, is manifest from the use of the word with Jewish writers. The dishes on which the loaves of the shewbread were set, each of which loaves was ten hands breadth long, and five broad <sup>f377</sup>, are by the Targums of Jonathan and Jerusalem on (<sup><0259></sup>Exodus 25:29 <sup><0417></sup>Numbers 4:7) called **tl yyp**, “vials”; and so the chargers offered at the dedication of the tabernacle, (<sup><0473></sup>Numbers 7:13,84,85) are, by the same, rendered vials, which weighed 130 shekels; and so the silver bowl they offered, is, by Josephus <sup>f378</sup>, called a vial: the bowls in (<sup><3086></sup>Amos 6:6) are, by the Targum there, said to be “silver vials”. The lordly dish brought by Jael to Sisera, (<sup><0425></sup>Judges 5:25) the Targum calls the vial of the mighty ones; and the earthen vessels used at the trial of the suspected wife, and at the cleansing of the leper, are both by Jewish writers said to be “vials” <sup>f379</sup>. Now these vials were given to the seven angels by one of the living creatures, the ministers of the word; from whence it seems that these angels design members of churches, as distinct from ministers; and may intend civil magistrates, and very principal ones, as kings of the earth, who, in this state of things, and times, will belong to the churches, and will be the instruments of destroying antichrist: and these vials may be said to be given to them by the ministers, since they will execute this vengeance in consequence of their prayers, and the churches', called vials full of odours, (<sup><0418></sup>Revelation 5:8) and because these great men will be stirred up by the

ministers of the Gospel, and by their ministrations, to do this work; (see <sup><6684></sup>Revelation 18:4-6).

**Ver. 8.** *And the temple was filled with smoke*, etc.] Not with the smoke of false doctrine and superstition; that comes out of the bottomless pit, this from God, (<sup><6602></sup>Revelation 9:2) and besides, Gospel churches will grow purer and purer, while the seven angels are pouring out the vials: but rather this may be understood of judicial blindness and hardness of heart, upon the antichristian party, which will come upon them from God in righteous judgment; so that they will not be reformed by the plagues, and vials of wrath, nor repent of their sins; but blaspheme God, who has power over the plagues, and so shall not be able to enter into the temple: or else this may design God's powerful and gracious presence in his church, in allusion to the cloud which filled the tabernacle, so that Moses could not enter; and which filled the temple, so that the priests could not minister, (<sup><1204></sup>Exodus 40:34,35 <sup><1080></sup>1 Kings 8:10,11) since this is said to be

*from the glory of God, and from his power*; whose presence is the glory in the midst of his church, and a covert, a protection and defence, to the saints, so that none can come into the temple to hurt them: (see <sup><2045></sup>Isaiah 4:5,6) or rather this intends “the smoke of the anger of God”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, and which is intolerable; and it may have respect not only to the wrath of God, which is insupportable, but to that great affliction which will befall the saints in those times, through the last struggle of the beast; called the earthquake, and the hour of temptation, and a time of trouble, as never the like was, and which will be shortened for the elect's sake:

*and no man was able to enter into the temple till the seven plagues of the seven angels were fulfilled.* None of the anti-Christian party will attempt to enter in, because of their blindness and obduracy; nor can they get in to do any mischief, because the glorious and powerful presence of God is a defence against them: and this may also have some respect to the darkness of God's judgments, which will not be clearly manifest until these seven plagues are accomplished; till that time God's judgments on antichrist will remain a great deep, and be unsearchable; there will be no entering into the temple, so as fully to understand them, which is meant by going into the sanctuary of God, (<sup><4931></sup>Psalms 73:17) and this makes the interpretation of the pouring out of these vials, in the next chapter, very difficult.

# CHAPTER 16

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 16

This chapter gives an account of the pouring out of the seven vials by the angels; their orders for it are in (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:1). The first angel pours out his vial on the earth, the effect of which is a noisome and grievous sore upon the followers of antichrist, and the worshippers of his image, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:2). The second pours out his upon the sea; the events of it are, the sea became blood, and every living creature in it died, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:3). The third pours out his upon the rivers and fountains of water, which thereby became blood; upon which the angel of the waters applauds the justice of God, declaring the righteousness of his judgments, and giving a reason for it; and which is confirmed by another angel from the altar, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:4-7). The fourth angel pours out his vial on the sun, the effects of which are, scorching men with heat, their blasphemy against God, and impenitence, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:8,9). The fifth pours out his on the seat of the beast, the consequences of which are darkness in his kingdom, men gnawing their tongues because of their pains, their blasphemy of the name of God because of them, and their impenitence, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:10,11). The sixth angel pours out his on the river Euphrates, and what followed upon it are, the drying up of that river to make way for the kings of the east; there unclean spirits are seen, described by their original, coming out of the mouths of the dragon, beast, and false prophet; by their form, like frogs; by their internal nature, spirits of devils; by their works, doing miracles; by the errand they are sent, and go upon, to gather the kings of the earth to the battle of God Almighty, which they succeed in; but before this is done, a declaration is made of the suddenness of Christ's coming, exciting the saints to watchfulness, and to keep their garments, that they might not be naked, and exposed to shame, (~~ref16~~ Revelation 16:12-16) Then the seventh angel pours out his vial into the air, the consequences of which are, a voice from heaven declaring it is done: other voices, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake; a rupture of the great city into three parts; the fall of other cities; the remembrance of Babylon before God; the flight of every island and mountain, and a great

hail storm, which causes men to blaspheme God, (~~667~~ Revelation 16:17-21).

**Ver. 1.** *And I heard a great voice out of the temple*, etc.] The church, which in the preceding chapter is said to be opened; this was either the voice of God, whose temple the church is, and where he dwells, and who, has power over these plagues, (~~669~~ Revelation 16:9) and who, when he is about to bring judgments on the earth, is said to roar out of Zion, (~~666~~ Revelation 16:16) or of Christ, who is always in the midst of his church and people, and whose voice is as the voice of many waters; (see ~~665~~ Revelation 16:15) or it may be of one of the four living creatures, the ministers of the word, in and by whom Christ often speaks; and the rather, since one of these gave the seven angels the golden vials of the wrath of God, they are now bid to pour out.

*Saying to the seven angels, go your ways and pour out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth*; for though these angels had the seven last plagues to inflict, and the seven vials of God's wrath to pour out, and were in a readiness to do it, yet they did not move without an order, which is here given them; and they are bid to go their ways, from the temple, the church, where they were, and of which they were members, to the several parts of the antichristian empire; and there pour out all the wrath and vengeance of God upon his enemies, and theirs, and leave nothing behind, but give them the dregs of every cup of his fury: the earth here is to be taken in a larger sense than in the following verse, and includes the land and sea, the fountains and rivers, and even the ambient air, and also the sun in the firmament, as the pouring out of these vials upon them show; and designs the whole apostate church, consisting of earthly men, all the inhabitants of the earth, that worship the beast. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, and the Complutensian edition, read, "the seven vials of the wrath of God"; these seven vials are not contemporary, much less the same with the seven trumpets; there is indeed a likeness between them in some things, especially in the first four; for as the first four trumpets affect the earth, the sea, the fountains, and rivers of water, and the sun, so the first four vials are poured out on the same, and that in the same order; first on the earth, and then on the sea, etc. and which will give some light, and be a direction to observe the several parts of the antichristian empire, which will suffer by these vials, and the in which their ruin will proceed; and as the trumpets were so many gradual steps to the ruin of the Roman empire, eastern and western, when become

Christian, so these vials are so many gradual steps to, and which issue in the ruin of, both the eastern and western antichrist; though they do not respect the same things, nor the same times: the trumpets respect the Roman empire as Christian, under the government of emperors, after the downfall of Paganism in it; and the vials respect the antichristian powers in their several branches, under the pope and Turk. Antichrist did not appear until the fifth trumpet sounded, whereas the first vial is poured out upon his followers and worshippers, (<sup>(6642)</sup> Revelation 16:2) from whence it is a clear point, that the first trumpet and the first vial cannot be contemporary; and the same judgment may be made of the rest: and it may be further observed, that these vials are only poured out on the enemies of God and of Christ, and of his church and people; for no wrath can be poured out upon the saints, not the least drop of it can fall upon them; this would not be consistent with God's everlasting love to them, with the satisfaction of Christ made for them, nor with the blessings of justification, pardon, adoption, etc. bestowed on them; not but that they may meet with trouble in the of these vials, through the wars that will be in the world, and through the struggles of the beast of Rome, especially its last, which will be the hour of temptation, and that time of trouble than which never was the like; yet all will work for, and issue in their good, and they will rejoice in God's righteous judgments; the blow will be upon antichrist, the vengeance of God will fall upon those that have the mark of the beast, and the worshippers of his image, upon the seat of the beast, even upon Babylon, and the whole Romish jurisdiction, as appears from (<sup>(6642)</sup> Revelation 16:2,10,19,20) and also upon the Turkish empire, and all the nations engaged in the interest of both pope and Turk, (<sup>(6642)</sup> Revelation 16:12-14,16) and it is easy to observe, that there is in many of these vials an allusion to the plagues of Egypt; in the first, (<sup>(6642)</sup> Revelation 16:2) to the plague of boils, (<sup>(1198)</sup> Exodus 9:8,11) in the second and third, (<sup>(6643)</sup> Revelation 16:3,4) to that of turning the waters of Egypt into blood, (<sup>(1179)</sup> Exodus 7:19-21) in the fourth, (<sup>(6643)</sup> Revelation 16:10) to the darkness that was over all the land of Egypt, (<sup>(1212)</sup> Exodus 10:21,23) and in the fifth there is a manifest reference to the frogs that distressed the Egyptians, (<sup>(1185)</sup> Exodus 8:5,6) and in the seventh, to the plague of hail, (<sup>(1123)</sup> Exodus 9:23-26) and they have much the same effect, even the hardening of those on whom they fall, being far from being brought to repentance by them, (<sup>(6643)</sup> Revelation 16:9,11) and this confirms the application of the vials to the destruction of Rome, which is spiritually called Egypt, (<sup>(6618)</sup> Revelation 11:8) and may assure that they will issue in the ruin of antichrist, and in the salvation of God's people, as



the plagues of Egypt did in the destruction of Pharaoh, and in the deliverance of the children of Israel; and may also lead us to conclude, that there will be a like quick execution of the one as of the other; for as the plagues of Egypt came very quick one after another, so it seems as if the pouring out of these vials would be in like manner; the angels receive them together, and have their orders at the same time; and they go forth immediately, one after another, if not together, to the respective parts where they are to pour them forth, and which they do directly; (see ~~6108~~ Revelation 16:8). Moreover, these vials will affect antichrist both with respect to his civil and ecclesiastic capacity, or both in temporals and spirituals, and, both antichrists, eastern and western: whether they are begun to be poured out or not, is a question. I am ready to think they are not, because they seem to me to refer to the seventh trumpet, which as yet has not sounded, and are the same with the wrath of God, and the time of the judging the dead, or avenging the blood of the saints, which will be come when that sounds, (~~6118~~ Revelation 11:18). Besides, the outer court is not entirely given to the Gentiles, nor the witnesses slain, which must be before this time of wrath upon antichrist; not but that there has been some manifest marks of the divine displeasure upon the whore of Rome, and she has been sinking ever since the Reformation, at which time some begin these vials, or before; and she is reduced to a low estate; yet I think not to such a degree as these vials express.

**Ver. 2.** *And the first went*, etc.] The Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, “the first angel”, and who undoubtedly is meant, who readily and cheerfully obeyed the orders given him, as did the rest; by this angel cannot be meant Pope Adrian, as Lyra, a Popish interpreter, imagines; for a pope would never hurt the worshippers of the beast, as this angel does; rather some Christian Protestant prince or magistrate is designed, and Brightman applies it to Queen Elizabeth; though a set of kings and princes yet to come seem to be intended:

*and poured out his vial upon the earth*; not upon the whole earth, and the inhabitants of it; not upon the temple or church of God, and the worshippers in it, which are measured, hid, and protected; nor upon the Roman Pagan empire, which was destroyed under the sixth seal, and which never had any worshippers of the beast and his image in it, for then he was not risen; nor upon the whole apostate church, only a part of it: some think the meaner and vulgar sort of Papists are meant, who were reformed by the Waldenses, Wycliff, Huss, and others before Luther; but rather the



antichristian powers on the continent are designed, and particularly Germany; for as the first trumpet affected the earth, (~~687~~ Revelation 8:7) and brought the Goths into Germany, and other inland countries on the continent; so this first vial affects the earth, and brings distress upon the Popish party in the same place: and this respects not the Reformation by Luther, as some have thought, nor the wars of the Turks here in the last age; though were it not for some things unfulfilled, which are to precede these vials, one would be tempted to think that this vial was now pouring out upon the empire; but I rather think this refers to a time of distress yet to come on those parts, and which will issue in a reformation from Popery again; for it should be observed, and it may be observed once for all, that though these vials are so many plagues upon antichrist, they are each of them so many steps to the advancement of Christ's kingdom and glory:

*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; that is, who were professors of the Popish religion, and adherents of the pope of Rome in those parts; (see ~~635~~ Revelation 13:15-17) who will only feel the effects of this vial, and that by a noisome and grievous sore falling on them, in allusion to the plague of boils in Egypt, (~~608~~ Exodus 9:8-11) by which may be meant, either literally something external, but not the plague in Dioclesian's time, for then the beast was not risen; and there were none that could have his mark or worship his image: some have thought the French disease is intended, which first appeared in the world in 1490, among the Papists, as a just judgment upon them for the horrible and unnatural lusts and uncleanness of the Romish clergy; and others understand it of a very great heat, which will be before the burning of the world, and will raise blisters and boils upon men: or rather this may design something internal, either the remorse of their consciences, reflections on their past practices, and black despair and horror of mind; and their madness, wrath, and fury, their malice and envy at the success of the preachers of the Gospel, and of Protestant states and princes against them; (see ~~627~~ Deuteronomy 28:27,28,34,35). Moreover, their secret and wicked practices, both in political and ecclesiastical affairs, will be discovered, and they will appear with boils and blotches upon them all over, which will render them odious to the people, and be the means of a general reformation. Mr. Daubuz thinks the curse of wickedness in the ninth and tenth centuries, after the invocation of saints and angels, and the worship of images were settled, is meant.

**Ver. 3.** *And the second angel poured out his vial upon the sea,* etc.] Not literally; and so does not design the stagnation of it, which it is thought will be before the general conflagration; (see <sup><3004></sup>Amos 7:4) nor is it to be understood of the sea of this world, and the men of it, who are like a troubled sea; but rather of Popish doctrines and councils, which are a sea of errors, and will now be confuted and put an end to. Brightman applies it to the council of Trent, and makes this angel to be Chemnitius, a German divine, who wrote a confutation of it; but as the sea is a collection of many waters, and many waters in this book signify the people and nations under the Romish yoke, sea here may design the whole jurisdiction of Rome, or mystical Babylon; (see <sup><2613></sup>Jeremiah 51:36) and particularly its maritime powers, Spain and Portugal: and as the second trumpet affected the sea, (<sup><4008></sup>Revelation 8:8) and brought the Vandals into Spain and Portugal, so this second vial affects the sea, and brings great wars, slaughter, and bloodshed into these parts, when they also will be reformed from Popery:

*and it became as the blood of a dead man;* thick, clotted together, and putrid, and so never to be returned to their former state:

*and every living soul died in the sea:* those, that are not reformed will either die by the sword, or fly into other parts; for there will be no comfortable living for the Popish party in those countries where now they live in power, ease, and affluence. This, and the following vial, are referred by Mr. Daubuz, the one to the first crusades, or holy wars, for the regaining of the holy land, and the other to the latter of them.

**Ver. 4.** *And the third angel poured his vial upon the rivers and fountains of waters,* etc.] Which also is not to be literally understood of a stagnation of them, before the burning of the world; nor of the destruction of Popish fleets and navies, such as the Spanish armada in 1588, and others since; but rather of Popish writings, of the most learned and subtle men among them, who like rivers and fountains, which supply and fill the sea, support and keep up the Romish jurisdiction and hierarchy; and of the confutation of them by Protestant writers; and of the utter destruction of their principal orders, and chief men among them, as cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, Jesuits, etc. though it seems chiefly to design the places near to Rome, such as Italy and Savoy; for as the third trumpet affects the rivers and fountains, (<sup><4010></sup>Revelation 8:10) and brings in the Huns into Italy, and issued in the destruction of the empire; so the third vial affects the same, and brings terrible wars, and great effusion of blood, where so much of the

blood of the saints have been shed: hence it follows, and they became blood; these countries will be covered with blood, and a reformation will ensue upon it; the allusion is to (<sup>(1079)</sup>Exodus 7:19-21).

**Ver. 5.** *And I heard the angel of the waters say*, etc.] So we read in Jewish writings <sup>f380</sup> of an angel that was *amyd arç*, “the prince of the sea”, and of angels that were over the waters, and others over fire <sup>f381</sup>; though here is designed not one of the *µym ykal m* “angels of the water”, that presided over the waters, as another over fire; (see Gill on “<sup>(448)</sup>Revelation 14:18”), but the third angel that poured out his vial upon the waters; when he had so done, he said as follows. Dr. Lightfoot thinks, and that not without reason, that since these angels appeared in the garb of priests, (<sup>(656)</sup>Revelation 15:6) and since there was a priest appointed to take care of the wells, and fountains, and ditches about Jerusalem, that the people might have water at the feasts <sup>f382</sup>, there is an allusion to him; and certain it is that there was such an officer; there was one Nechoniah, who was over the fountains and ditches <sup>f383</sup>; and in the same office was Nicodemon ben Gorion <sup>f384</sup>, thought to be the Nicodemus mentioned in the New Testament.

*Thou art righteous, O Lord, which art, and wast, and shall be*: which may be understood either of God the Father, who had power over these plagues, (<sup>(640)</sup>Revelation 16:9) and sent them; or of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, and is righteous in all his ways and works, in all his judgments on antichrist, and is the eternal “I AM”, which is, and was, and shall be; (see <sup>(1008)</sup>Revelation 1:8). The Alexandrian copy, and most others, and the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions, read “holy”, instead of “shalt be”; for the purity and holiness of Christ will be seen in the judgments which he will exercise, as follows:

*because thou hast judged thus*; or “these things”; or “them”, as the Ethiopic version reads; that is, has brought these judgments upon the men signified by rivers and fountains, and made great havoc and slaughter of them, expressed by their becoming blood; the justice of which appears from the following reason.

**Ver. 6.** *For they have shed the blood of saints and prophets*, etc.] Which shows that rivers and fountains cannot be literally understood, but men are designed, wicked and bloody men; and it is notorious to all, how much of the blood of the saints, of the preachers of the Gospel, of the prophets and

witnesses, have been shed in Italy, Savoy, and other places near Rome, as well as in Rome itself; (see <sup><667B></sup>Revelation 17:6 18:24).

*And thou hast given them blood to drink*; sent the sword among them, making great slaughter and devastation; (see <sup><24B></sup>Isaiah 49:26)

*for they are worthy*; or deserving, to have their blood shed by the law of retaliation.

**Ver. 7.** *And I heard another out of the altar say*, etc.] That is, another angel that came out of the altar; (see <sup><664B></sup>Revelation 14:18) and who represents the souls under the altar, whose blood had been shed by the above persons; compare with this (<sup><66B></sup>Revelation 6:9) though, there, such whose blood had been shed by Rome Pagan are described; the Ethiopic version calls this angel as before, “the angel of the fountains of water”; and the Alexandrian copy, and Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “I heard the altar saying”: as follows,

*even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments*; the same as in (<sup><665B></sup>Revelation 15:3 19:2). This angel joins the other, and approves and confirms what he says; applauding the judgements of Christ upon the worshippers of the beast, from the verity of them, being what were threatened, and from the justice of them, being what they deserved.

**Ver. 8.** *And the fourth angel poured out his vial upon the sun*, etc.] Not literally; and so designs not a violent heat, which shall go before, and be a preparation for the burning of the world; nor any sore famine arising from it, which would be common to all, good and bad; but mystically: some understand this of Christ, the sun of righteousness, not of any wrath that shall be poured forth on him again, being now justified in the Spirit; but either of that clear shining of Christ in the ministry of the word, in those times this vial refers to; when Zion's light will be come, and the light of the sun will be seven fold, and Christ alone will be exalted; which clear ministration of Christ, though it will not savingly enlighten, yet will convict and confound the antichristian party; they will be scorched with the beams of heat and light, which will dart from hence; these will torture them, and fill them with envy, rage, and malice, because they will not be able to obscure this light, or stop the progress of it; they themselves will be so enlightened by it, as to see and know the truth of Christ's person, and offices, and grace, and yet will sin against it, and so be guilty of blasphemy against the Spirit of God, a sin which will greatly prevail among them; and

they will, like the clay, be the more hardened by this light and heat, and will not repent of their sins and errors, nor confess them, nor own the light and conviction they have received: or else of the wrath of Christ, which he will be moved by this angel to stir up against the antichristian party, and which they will be sensible of, and be fearfully looking for. Others, and which comes much to the same sense, understand this of the Scriptures, the fountain of spiritual light, and of the clear interpretation of them in those times; when the watchmen shall see eye to eye, and when the day shall declare and make manifest every man's work, and the fire reveal and try it; and the same effects upon the antichristian party shall follow as before: but I rather think this refers to some part of the antichristian state, as in the other vials, or to something belonging to it; some have thought that the house of Austria, the chief family in the empire, or the king of Spain, or the emperor, who were both formerly of that house, or Germany itself, is meant; but the empire, as we have seen, seems to be designed by the earth in the first vial; wherefore, rather as the smiting of the third part of the sun, moon, and stars, under the fourth trumpet, signifies the utter extirpation of the Roman emperor, and all other Roman magistrates, who were the sun, moon, and stars in that empire; so this vial upon the sun refers to the pope, and his creatures, the cardinals, etc. who is the sun in the antichristian kingdom; and this angel may design the kings of the earth, who will be stirred up against him, by whom he and his dependents will suffer sorely, if not destroyed.

*And power was given unto him to scorch men with fire;* which may either respect the burning of Rome, and the adjacent parts; or rather the filling of the antichristian party with rage and malice, at the destruction of the pope, and his creatures; for these men are the same with those in (<sup>666</sup> Revelation 16:2).

**Ver. 9.** *And men were scorched with great heat,* etc.] Burned with rage against the followers of Christ; were filled with envy at the success of his Gospel, and with fury and madness at the ruinous condition of the antichristian state, being deprived of its head, and chief officers:

*and blasphemed the name of God, which hath power over these plagues;* plagues or judgments are from God, when and wherever they come; they are sent and inflicted by him, and he can lessen or increase them, continue or remove them, as he pleases; and these, unless sanctified, will not reform men, but harden them, and set them a blaspheming the author of them. And

this blasphemy may either respect the nature and perfections of God, charging him with inequality in his ways, and with injustice and unfaithfulness; or the Gospel, and the truths of it, which declare his glory, and his greatness; and which will now have a general spread, to the great mortification and confusion of the followers of antichrist:

*and they repented not to give him glory*; that is, they did not repent of their wicked deeds, their idolatries, murders, sorceries, fornications, and thefts, as in (<sup>660B</sup>Revelation 9:20,21) so as to own and confess them, which is, the meaning of giving glory to God in repentance; (see <sup>667B</sup>Joshua 7:19). This shows that repentance is not in man's power, but in the gift of God's grace; for though he may give space, yet if he does not give grace to repent, no man will repent; nor will any means of themselves produce it; as not the most powerful and awakening ministry, as the ministry of John the Baptist, and of Christ, and of the Gospel preachers that will be in those times, this vial refers to, nor the greatest mercies and favours, so not the severest judgments; (see <sup>300B</sup>Amos 6:6-11). The event of this vial, or the plague of it, is applied, by Mr. Daubuz, to the wars between the emperors and the popes, and between the Guelphs and Gibelines.

**Ver. 10.** *And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast*, etc.] The beast is the same with that in (<sup>663B</sup>Revelation 13:1,11) and which again shows that to be one and the same: the seat or throne of the beast is Rome, which, when the empire was Pagan, was the seat of Satan, or the dragon, (<sup>662B</sup>Revelation 2:13) and when the beast or antichrist was risen, the dragon gave this seat, as well as his authority to him, (<sup>663B</sup>Revelation 13:2) and is that city which is so often called, in this book, the great city, and is manifestly pointed out by its seven mountains, on which the city of Rome stood, (<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:9) and the pouring out of this vial upon it denotes the destruction of it, when it will be burnt down, and become desolate, an habitation of devils, of every foul spirit, and hateful bird, (<sup>668B</sup>Revelation 18:2,9) and this corresponds with the fifth trumpet; for as that brings in the rise of antichrist, both eastern and western, who rose much about the same time, so this vial affects him particularly; the western antichrist, his seat and kingdom. Mr. Daubuz refers this plague to the expulsion of the western and eastern emperors from their capital cities, Rome and Constantinople, and to the mischiefs caused by the antipopes in the west, and to the quarrels and schism in the Greek churches in the fourteenth century.

*And his kingdom was full of darkness*; not only of the darkness of false doctrine and superstition, for so it was always, being filled with the smoke of the bottomless pit; nor only of judicial blindness and darkness, which the subjects of the antichristian state are given up unto; but rather of a discovery of all this, with all their hidden works of darkness, which will now be brought to light; though it seems chiefly to design the great affliction and distress the antichristian state will be in at this time, which darkness sometimes signifies; (see <sup><2130></sup>Isaiah 9:1,2 <sup><2436></sup>Jeremiah 13:16 <sup><3058></sup>Amos 5:18) it having lost its sun, the pope, under the preceding vial, and its seat, the city of Rome, under this: the sense is, that it will be greatly obscured in its glory and magnificence, in its traffic and riches, (<sup><6811></sup>Revelation 18:11-19) its power and authority will be greatly diminished, and it will be had in contempt by the princes of the earth; though it will not as yet be utterly destroyed, for its utter destruction is reserved for the seventh and last vial. The allusion is to the plague of darkness in Egypt, (<sup><1212></sup>Exodus 10:21-23). And they gnawed their tongues for pain; these are the men of the antichristian party, the subjects of the antichristian kingdom, now become full of darkness, the worshippers of the beast, and his image; these will gnaw their tongues, which expresses their inward anguish and distress, their anger, wrath, and fury, their being filled with revenge, and yet in an incapacity to execute it, and will even be afraid to express it; and therefore will bite their tongues in madness; and this for pain, for the pain of their mind, at the sad and low estate of the antichristian kingdom.

**Ver. 11.** *And blasphemed the God of heaven*, etc.] Who made it, and dwells in it, and from whence wrath is revealed, and comes upon the seat of the beast, upon the kingdom of antichrist, and the subjects of that kingdom; they will curse him who is of right their King, and their God, and look upwards to heaven, where he is, (<sup><2132></sup>Isaiah 8:21,22) and this,

*because of their pains and their sores*: (see <sup><6612></sup>Revelation 16:2) the inward frettings and distresses of their minds, the gallings and gnawings of their consciences, the horror and terror of their souls, and their fearful looking for of judgment, which the present face of things upon antichrist will bring upon them; just as the Egyptians, in the time of their darkness, were distressed with internal guilt, and black horror of mind, and with evil spirits, which were sent among them, and haunted them during that season; (see <sup><1784></sup>Psalms 78:49) and repented not of their deeds; their antichristian works of darkness; (see <sup><6612></sup>Revelation 9:20,21).



**Ver. 12.** *And the sixth angel poured his vial on the great river Euphrates,* etc.] Which is not to be understood literally of the river Euphrates, which ran through Mesopotamia and Chaldea, and by the walls of Babylon; and of the drying of it up to make way for the Jews in the eastern parts of the world, to pass into their own land, and possess it; when a like miracle will be wrought for them as was when they came out of Egypt, by dividing the Red sea for them; and as when they entered into Canaan's land, by laying the waters of Jordan on heaps, so that they passed over as on dry land; in favour of which sense the passage in (<sup>23115</sup>Isaiah 11:15,16) is thought to be, which the Targum interprets of God's smiting the river Euphrates; though the river Nile in Egypt seems rather to be meant: but it does not appear that there is any number of Jews beyond the river Euphrates; the far greater number of them is in the western and northern parts of the world; so that there will be no need for the drying up of this river for their passage into their own land; nor, if there were any in those parts, can any reason be given why they should be called the kings of the east, who, wherever they are, are a poor contemptible people, and have never had any ensigns of royalty among them for many hundreds of years; nor can that river be thought much to hinder, were all other impediments out of the way, nor the drying of it up much facilitate their passage to Judea, and much less affect their conversion: besides, this vial, as the rest, is a plague on antichrist, in some branch or other, or on some part or other, of the antichristian state; which, if not designed here, is nowhere in the account of this vial, and therefore this must be understood mystically; there is no doubt an allusion to the draining of this river at the taking of Babylon by Cyrus, according as was predicted in prophecy, (<sup>23427</sup>Isaiah 44:27,28 <sup>23518</sup>Jeremiah 50:38 51:31,32,36,37) who, making sluices and drains, turned the river another way, and marched through it with his army, and surprised and took the city at once, while Belshazzar and his nobles were indulging themselves in rioting and drunkenness, as Daniel relates, (<sup>27300</sup>Daniel 5:1-30). Now some, because that Babylon was situated upon the river Euphrates, and Rome, or the Romish antichrist, is mystical Babylon, think that is here designed, and is the object of this vial; and that the drying up of this river designs the withdrawing of nations and kingdoms, signified by waters, (<sup>66715</sup>Revelation 17:15) from its jurisdiction and power, which will bring on its ruin; and also the stoppage of dues and tithes, annates, Peter's pence, and of all its traffic in indulgences, pardons, etc. whereby it will be greatly impoverished, and brought to nothing: but it should be observed, that the fifth vial affects Rome, the seat of the beast; and as for the beast himself, he



will not be destroyed till the battle of Armageddon; and mystical Babylon, or the antichristian state, in the whole compass of it, will not be destroyed until the pouring out of the seventh vial; wherefore rather the eastern antichrist, the Turks are meant, in whose dominions this river is; for as the Assyrian monarch is signified by the waters of this river, when he was in his glory, and had his seat at Babylon, by which this river ran, (<sup><2387></sup>Isaiah 8:7,8) so may the Turks, who inhabit by this river, be intended by it; and the rather, as this sense exactly corresponds with the sixth trumpet; for as the sounding of that trumpet looses the four angels bound in the great river Euphrates, which founded the Turkish empire, as we have seen; so the pouring out of this sixth vial affects the same empire, and brings it to ruin. Mr. Daubuz is of opinion that this plague refers to the depopulation and destruction of the Grecian empire, and the bringing of the Turks into Europe, who have greatly distressed and tormented the corrupted Christians or Papists.

*And the water thereof was dried up*; the Ottoman empire will be extinct, just as the destruction of the Babylonish monarchy is expressed by the drying up of its sea, (<sup><2513></sup>Jeremiah 51:36) so the destruction of the Turkish empire is signified by the drying up of the water of this river, which is in the heart of it: and this is the passing away of the second woe, (<sup><6914></sup>Revelation 11:14)

*that the way of the kings of the east might be prepared*; which some understand of Christians in general, who are made kings and priests unto God, and of Christian kings in particular, whose way will be prepared, by the declining state of antichrist, to express their hatred to the whore of Rome, and burn her flesh with fire; but the Romish antichrist is not here intended: others think, as before observed, that the Jews are designed; that the Jews will be converted in the last days seems manifest from (<sup><2385></sup>Hosea 3:5 <sup><6125></sup>Romans 11:25,26) and other places; and that they will return to their own land is suggested in abundance of prophecies, particularly in (<sup><2372></sup>Ezekiel 37:21) (<sup><2194></sup>Amos 9:14,15) and it must be allowed that the eastern, as well as the western antichrist, is a stumbling to them; and especially the advantage which the Turks have gained over the powers that go under the Christian name, and their possession of their land is an hinderance to their return to it; so that the destruction of the Turkish empire will undoubtedly make way for their conversion, and restoration to their own land; but then this will be equally advantageous to the Jews in the west as to those in the east, if there be any numbers of them there,

which does not appear, and therefore there seems no reason why they should be pointed at, and be called the kings of the east: rather therefore to me it seems, that, through the fall of the Ottoman empire, way will be made for the kings and princes of the east, literally understood, to have and embrace the Gospel of Christ; for, the Turks being destroyed, the Mahometan religion will decline, the Gospel will be carried into the eastern parts of the world, into those vast kingdoms and countries which lie in those parts, when they will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and the kings and princes of them will come to the brightness of Zion's rising; so that the ruin of this monarchy will pave the way for the spread of Christ's kingdom from sea to sea, and front the river, the river Euphrates, to the ends of the earth; and this also will prepare the way, and lead on for all the saints, who are kings, and shall reign with Christ a thousand years, who is said to come from the east, (~~Rev~~ Revelation 7:2) or from the rising of the sun, as these are said to do, as the words may be rendered, to possess the kingdom under the whole heaven: Philo the Jew <sup>f385</sup> has some expressions illustrating the literal sense of this, where he speaks of a Roman army on the banks of Euphrates, which kept the passage of "the eastern kings".

**Ver. 13.** *And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs*, etc.] Rome, the seat of antichrist, being destroyed, and the kingdom of the beast darkened, and brought into great contempt, Mahometanism greatly declining, the Gospel succeeding everywhere, the Jews being converted, and resettled in their own land, the devil bestirs himself more than ordinary; and dispatches his, and the emissaries of antichrist, to the kings of the whole earth, that can any ways be engaged on their side, and against the saints; and these are no other than the creatures of antichrist, such as cardinals, priests, and particularly Jesuits, as their original from the dragon, the beast, and the false prophet, show. Mr. Daubuz thinks these "three" are the "monks", the "religious knights", and "secular clergy": and these are called "spirits"; not because they are what are called familiar spirits, or devils themselves, for they are the spirits of devils, as in the next verse; but either because they pretend to be spiritual men, ecclesiastics, men in spiritual offices, and indeed are spiritual wickednesses in high places; or because of their agility, swiftness, and expeditiousness in going to and fro, Satan like, to do mischief: and they are said to be "unclean"; as the evil spirits and devils are, being so by nature, and delighting in uncleanness, and giving themselves up to work it with greediness: and they are "like frogs"; the allusion is to the plague of frogs in Egypt, (~~Exod~~ Exodus 8:5,6) and these antichristian

emissaries are fitly compared to them, for their impurity, and pleasure they take in it, as frogs do in dirt and filth; and for their being talkative, impudent, and troublesome, like the noisy croaking frogs; so “rhetoricians” are by Cicero <sup>f386</sup> compared to frogs; and as the frogs of Egypt got into the king's bedchamber, (<sup><1188></sup>Exodus 8:3 <sup><19450></sup>Psalm 105:30) so these get into the private retirements of princes, into their cabinet councils, and stir them up to war and bloodshed: and as for the number, “three”, this is only used to express a sufficient number of them, or to make the account square with the dragon, beast, and false prophet, from whom they proceed; and besides, this is omitted in the king's manuscript. Now John saw these, in a visionary way,

*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*; by the dragon is meant the devil, (<sup><6120></sup>Revelation 12:9) not as acting in Rome Pagan, which has been long ago destroyed, rather as in the Pagan parts of the world, and as in the Turkish empire, now ruined; who, seeing his cause declining everywhere, bestirs himself to support and revive it, though this issues in the binding of him for a thousand years, (<sup><6110></sup>Revelation 20:2). By the beast is meant the first beast, in (<sup><6130></sup>Revelation 13:1) and so the Ethiopic version renders it; the antichristian civil state, now sadly shattered and weakened, by the pouring out of the fifth vial: and by “the false prophet” is meant, not Mahomet, or the supporters of his religion, but the second beast in (<sup><6131></sup>Revelation 13:11,12,14,15) or the antichristian ecclesiastic state, as appears from the description of this prophet in (<sup><6120></sup>Revelation 19:20) compared with that: so then these spirits manifestly appear to be the emissaries of antichrist, under a diabolical influence; his creatures, that are made, and sent forth by him, have their commissions and orders from him, to act for him in every shape, to support his interest, civil and religious, by lies, murders, and false doctrine; a further account is given of them in the next verse.

**Ver. 14.** *For they are the spirits of devils*, etc.] They are of their father the devil; they are acted and influenced by him, he works effectually in them, and leads them captive at his will; they do his lusts, and are murderers and liars, and false teachers, like him:

*working miracles*; lying ones, to deceive men; this clearly points out who are meant, namely, the followers of antichrist, who, as they spread the doctrines of devils, endeavour to confirm them by signs and lying wonders:

*which go forth unto the kings of the earth*: those who have committed fornication with the Romish antichrist, such of them as will remain:

*and of the whole world*; as many Pagan princes as they can come at, and engage by any ways and means in their interest; they will go forth to them like the lying spirit to Ahab's prophets, (<sup><1222></sup>1 Kings 22:22)

*to gather them to the battle of that great day of God Almighty*; that is, they will persuade them to gather together, to fight against the saints, the Gentile Christians in the several parts of the world, and the Jewish Christians, now settled in their own land; and this will be the battle of the Lord, who is God Almighty, and it will be fighting against him; and therefore the attempt must be vain and fruitless, and issue in the ruin of those who are gathered to it, who will be deceived and drawn into it by these diabolical spirits: and this is called “the battle of that great day of God”; not of the day of judgment, for it will be before that time; but of that day of vengeance upon all the remains of his and his church's enemies, both Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, who will for this purpose be gathered together; “which”, as the Ethiopic version renders it, “God has appointed”.

**Ver. 15.** *Behold I come as a thief*, etc.] These are the words of Christ, inserted in a parenthesis in this account, before it is concluded, to acquaint his people with his near and sudden approach, and to give them a word of caution and exhortation in these times of difficulty; for he is the Lord God Almighty, who sent forth these angels to pour out their vials, and whose judgments are applauded as righteous, (<sup><611></sup>Revelation 16:1,5,7,14) and who so often in (<sup><612></sup>Revelation 22:7,12,20) says “I come quickly”; and which is to be understood not of his spiritual coming, which will be already at this time, but of his personal coming; and which will be “as a thief”: as it is often expressed, (<sup><512></sup>1 Thessalonians 5:2 <sup><613></sup>2 Peter 3:10 <sup><614></sup>Revelation 3:3) not in the bad sense, to steal and kill, and to destroy, though Christ's coming will issue in the everlasting destruction of the wicked; but the phrase is designed to express the suddenness of his coming, and the surprise of it:

*blessed is he that watcheth*; against sin, the lusts of the flesh, and the cares of this life, lest they bring a sleepiness upon him, and so the day of the Lord come upon him at an unawares; and against Satan and his temptations, who goes about seeking whom he may devour; and against his emissaries and false teachers, who lie in wait to deceive; and blessed is he also who is wishing and waiting for the coming of Christ, and so, being

ready, will enter with him into the marriage chamber, and partake of the supper of the Lamb:

*and keepeth his garments*: either his conversation garments, unspotted from the world, and whenever defiled washes them, and makes them white in the blood of the Lamb; and keeps them from being stripped of them, by those who would lead them into sinful ways; or that keeps and holds fast the robe of Christ's righteousness, and garments of his salvation, which are the righteousness of the saints, that fine linen clean and white, that white raiment which only can cover their nakedness, that the shame thereof does not appear, (<sup><6698></sup>Revelation 19:8 3:18)

*lest he walk naked*; *twxmh ʾm pwr* [<sup>f387</sup>, “naked of the commandments”, or good works, according to the Jewish phrase; having lost, or dropped his conversation garments:

*and they see his shame*; or lest, being naked, he be exposed to shame and confusion, yea, to everlasting ruin and destruction; (see <sup><4022></sup>Matthew 22:12,13) the allusion is to the burning of the garments of those priests who were found asleep when upon their watch in the temple: the account that is given is this <sup>f388</sup>;

“the man of the mountain of the house (the governor of the temple) goes round all the wards (every night) with burning torches before him; and in every ward where the person does not stand upon his feet, the man of the mountain of the house says to him, peace be to thee; if he finds he is asleep, he strikes him with his staff, and he has power to burn his clothes; and they say (in Jerusalem) what voice is that in the court? (it is answered) the voice of a Levite beaten, and his clothes burnt, because he slept in the time of his watch; R. Eliezer ben Jacob says, once they found my mother's brother asleep, and they burnt his clothes:”

now imagine with what shame the poor Levite so served must appear the next morning among his brethren, with his clothes burnt, and he naked; and with greater shame and confusions must he appear at the last day that is destitute of the righteousness of Christ.

**Ver. 16.** *And he gathered them together*, etc.] Or rather “they gathered them together”, as the Syriac version renders it; for though the verb is singular, a noun plural goes before it, as in (<sup><6654></sup>Revelation 16:14) and the

same spirits that are there said to go forth, to gather the kings together, these will gather them together; will persuade the Papal, Pagan, and Mahometan powers, the remains of them in the several parts of the world, to join together, and make one effort for the reviving of their declining, and almost ruined interests: for which purpose they will be brought together,

*into a place called in the Hebrew tongue Armageddon*; which may be the same with Har-megiddo, the mountain of Megiddo; for the Hebrew word **rh** is read “Ar” by the Greeks; so the city Argarize is interpreted the mountain of the most High <sup>f389</sup>: and this refers either to the slaying of Josiah in the valley of Megiddo, which occasioned such mourning, that it became proverbial for any great sorrow; (see <sup><4872></sup>2 Chronicles 35:22,25 <sup><3821></sup>Zechariah 12:11) where it is called the valley of Megiddon; or rather to the slaughter of Sisera's army at the waters of Megiddo, by Barak, (<sup><1059></sup>Judges 5:19) suggesting that the same would be the fate of these united powers. Some derive the word from **whdg** and **amrj**, which signify “the destruction of their troops”, or “armies”; and so designs not any place, that has been or is, but which will be so called from the issue of this battle; and since it is an Hebrew name that will be given it, it may lead us to conclude it will be somewhere in Judea, and very likely no other than the valley of Jehoshaphat, where all nations will be gathered; and which is called the valley of decision, where will be the day of the Lord, and multitudes will be slain, (<sup><2100></sup>Joel 3:2,13,14) though the name will suit any place where there will be a defeat of these enemies; but this vial only brings them together; the utter destruction of them is reserved for the next.

**Ver. 17.** *And the seventh angel poured out his vial into the air*, etc.] Or “upon the air”, as the Alexandrian copy, Syriac and Arabic versions, read; by which is meant the kingdom of Satan, he being the prince of the power of the air, (<sup><4100></sup>Ephesians 2:2) not that he has power over the air, to raise or lay winds and storms in it at pleasure; but he is so called because he is the prince of that posse of devils, the principalities and powers of darkness, that have their dwelling in the air; hence the air, encompassing the whole earth, stands for the kingdom of Satan all the world over: and this vial differs from all the rest; that whereas the rest only affect some part or branch of the antichristian state, this will affect all the remains of the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan powers, gathered and united together at Armageddon; and the pouring out of this vial is the execution of divine wrath and vengeance upon them all at once; and the effects of this vial will

not only reach to the kings of the earth, and of the whole world, and their armies, or the united forces of the remains of Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, who will be slain, and their flesh given to the fowls of the air; and not only to the beast and false prophet, who will be taken in this battle, and cast alive into the lake of fire, which is expressive both of their temporal and eternal punishment, (<sup>(~~1917~~)</sup> Revelation 19:17-21) but to the binding of Satan upon the second coming of Christ, of which notice is before given, (<sup>(~~1615~~)</sup> Revelation 16:15) and even to the destruction of Gog and Magog at the end of the thousand years' reign; yea, to the casting of the devil into everlasting fire, since this vial is the last plague, in which the wrath of God is filled up, and so brings to the end of all things, (<sup>(~~2011~~)</sup> Revelation 20:1-10). The first accomplishment of this vial will be the decisive battle at Armageddon, when the remains of all Christ's and his church's enemies will have a total defeat; and this will be the third and last woe, which will utterly destroy those that have destroyed the earth, Pagans, Papists, and Mahometans, even all the open enemies of Christ, so that nothing will lie in the way of his kingdom; now will the spiritual reign of Christ, which has been gradually advancing by the pouring out of each vial, be in its full glory: but though antichrist will be no more, and Satan will have no more in form an open kingdom upon earth; yet, towards the close of this reign, great lukewarmness and coldness will seize professors of religion, and immorality and profaneness will abound again; which will bring on the times of the coming of the son of man; who, upon his personal descent from the third heaven into the air, will drive Satan and his posse of devils from their territories, and quickly will the general conflagration begin, when the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; and which is no inconsiderable part of the pouring out of this vial into the air.

*And there came a great voice out of the temple of heaven, from the throne;* this voice is said to come “out of the temple of heaven”, that is, out of the temple which is in heaven, which will now be opened, as under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, with which this vial corresponds, and indeed is contemporary; and which designs the church, enjoying the pure worship of God, the word and ordinances, and the free exercise of religion; and this shows that when this voice will be uttered, as yet the Jerusalem church state will not be begun, since there will be no temple in that; (see <sup>(~~1119~~)</sup> Revelation 11:19 14:17 15:5 21:22) the words, “of heaven”, are left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic



versions, which read, “out of the temple from the throne”; the seat of government in the church, described in (<sup><604B></sup>Revelation 4:2-6) the voice came with power, authority, and majesty; not from any of the four and twenty elders, or four living creatures, or angels about the throne; but either from God the Father that sits upon it; or from Christ the Lamb in the midst of it, and rather from the latter, since a like phrase was used by him on the cross, (<sup><610A></sup>John 19:30) and the same is expressed by him who is the Alpha and Omega, (<sup><601B></sup>Revelation 21:6) and this voice is called a great one, being the voice of a great person, the King of kings, and coming with great power, and was spoken aloud:

*saying, it is done*; what the angel swore should be in the days of the seventh angel, namely, that time, antichristian time, should be no more, and the mystery of God in his purposes and providences should be finished, and all the glorious things spoken of his church and people be accomplished; (see Gill on “<sup><601B></sup>Revelation 10:6”), (see Gill on “<sup><601B></sup>Revelation 10:7”) the word **γ̅ε̅γ̅ο̅υ̅ε̅** may be rendered “it has been”, or “it was”, and the sense is, but now is not; and the meaning may be, Babylon was, but is not, it is now fallen; the beast and false prophet were, but now are not; the Turk, or Mahomet, was, but is no more; all the antichristian powers are destroyed; Christ's body, the church, will be completed, the Jews will be converted, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in, all the elect called, and the new Jerusalem prepared as a bride for her husband; and when the utmost effects of this vial will take place, the end of all things will be; by the same “fiat” that made the heavens and the earth, they will disappear, and new heavens and earth succeed in their room.

**Ver. 18.** *And there were voices, and thunders, and lightnings*, etc.] As at the giving of the law, (<sup><1096></sup>Exodus 19:16) and at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, (see Gill on “<sup><6015></sup>Revelation 11:15”) and may intend either the pure ministry of the Gospel in the spiritual reign, the voices of Christ's ministers, and the effects of them, who will be “Boanergeses”, sons of thunder, and will be the means of enlightening the minds of many, as well as of shaking the consciences of men, signified by the earthquake following; or rather, the tremendous and awful judgments of God upon the remains of the antichristian party, as the very great commotions and changes that will be made in the world are expressed in the next clause:

*and there was a great earthquake, such as was not since men were upon the earth, so mighty an earthquake, and so great*: for as the changes made



in the Jewish state, civil and ecclesiastical, are signified by the shaking of the heavens and the earth, and as the fall of Paganism is expressed by an earthquake, and the fall of the tenth part of the city is the effect of another; so the destruction of all the antichristian powers, and the mutations made in the earth thereby, are designed by this; (see <sup><826></sup>Hebrews 12:26,27 <sup><612></sup>Revelation 6:12 11:13) (<sup><2816></sup>Joel 3:16). Mr. Daubuz applies the whole of this vial to the, Reformation, when such a revolution was made in a short time, as has not been known since the world was, or men became worshippers of the beast; at which time Christendom was divided into three parts, the eastern or Greek church, the western or Latin church, and the reformed churches.

**Ver. 19.** And the great city was divided into three parts, etc.] By which is meant not Christendom, distinguished into Protestants, Papists, and neutrals, which has been long the case; nor the city of Jerusalem, as inhabited by Christians, Jews, and Turks; nor the city of Rome itself, the seat of the beast, which will have suffered under the fifth vial; but the whole Romish jurisdiction, which is the great city, that reigns over the kings of the earth, as it will now be; though some think the Turkish empire is meant, which they suppose was only afflicted under the preceding vial, but will now be divided into three parts, and afterwards into six, (<sup><330></sup>Ezekiel 39:1,2) and so come to ruin; and others are of opinion that it is included in this great city at least; and doubtless the remains of it are to be taken into this account, and probably are considered in the following clause; wherefore it is better to understand this of the Romish jurisdiction, so often called the great city in this book, (<sup><618></sup>Revelation 11:8 14:8 17:18) and its division into three parts is either in reference to the three heads of it, the dragon, beast, and false prophet, or to the three unclean spirits that come out of them, which will lead on to this ruin; though the allusion seems rather to be to the destruction of Jerusalem, (<sup><482></sup>Ezekiel 5:2,12) and denotes the utter ruin of the Romish antichrist, in all its branches and remains; a tenth part of this city will fall towards the close of the sixth trumpet, (<sup><613></sup>Revelation 11:13) and now all the other nine parts will fall, a threefold division will be made of the city, each division containing three parts: the Jews <sup>f390</sup> have a prophecy, that upon an appearance of a star at Rome, which they suppose will be when the Messiah comes, the three upper walls of that city will fall, and the great temple, or church (St. Peter's), will fall, and the governor of that city (the pope) will die:

*and the cities of the nations fell*; of the Pagans and Mahometaus; or as there will be an utter extirpation of the Papacy, so of Paganism and Mahometanism, in the several nations where they have obtained, and where there will be now any remains of them;

*and great Babylon came in remembrance before God*; not Constantinople, as Brightman thinks, because that Rome, the seat of the beast, is affected under the fifth vial, and the great city under this; but since no other is called Babylon in this book but the Romish antichristian state, it must be meant here; (see <sup><648></sup>Revelation 14:8) (<sup><675></sup>Revelation 17:5 18:2,10,21) for many hundreds of years Babylon seemed to be forgotten by God, no notice being taken of her sins and iniquities in a judicial way; but now God will remember her sins, (<sup><685></sup>Revelation 18:5) and inflict deserved punishment upon her:

*to give unto her the cup of the wine of the fierceness of his wrath*; as a just retaliation for the wine of her fornication, with which she has intoxicated the kings and inhabitants of the earth; the wrath of God is sometimes signified in the Old Testament by a cup, a wine cup, a wine cup of fury, (see <sup><578></sup>Psalms 75:8 <sup><255></sup>Jeremiah 25:15) and here the exceeding greatness of his wrath is expressed by the phrases used, and intends the pouring out of all his vengeance, to the utter ruin of the Romish antichrist.

**Ver. 20.** *And every island fled away*, etc.] This may be understood either of the dissolution of the world, the present heavens and earth, when there will be no more sea, (<sup><621></sup>Revelation 21:1) and so consequently no islands:

*and the mountains were not found*; for the earth and the heaven will be fled away at the appearance of Christ the Judge, and there will be no place found for them, (<sup><611></sup>Revelation 20:11) and new heavens, and a new earth, without sea or mountains, will succeed: or rather this may signify the utter extirpation of all the antichristian powers in every shape, whether on islands or on the continent; for this day of the Lord will be upon every high mountain and hill, to bring them low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted, (<sup><214></sup>Isaiah 2:14,15,17) and may particularly respect the dissolution of monasteries, and the plundering them of their riches and revenues.

**Ver. 21.** *And there fell upon men a great hail out of heaven*, etc.] Which must be understood not as after the fall of the cities, and the flight of the islands and mountains, but at the same time; and it looks as if such men that shall escape at the battle of Armageddon, that hail stones from heaven

will fall upon them and destroy them; just as the kings of the Amorites and their men were killed by hail stones, cast down by the Lord from heaven, as they fled before Joshua, when more were killed by the stones than were slain by the sword, (<sup><6001></sup>Joshua 10:11) the allusion seems to be to the plague of hail in (<sup><0023></sup>Exodus 9:23-26)

*every stone about the weight of a talent*; which is threescore pound weight, a prodigious weight indeed for a single hailstone! such hail stones were never known to fall; the largest I have read of is what Caspar Wesserus assured Mr. Broughton <sup>f391</sup> of, at Zurich, which being brought from a field afar off, to the consul, and so must melt in carriage, yet weighed a pound. It may be said of this hail storm, as of the earthquake in a preceding verse, that it will be such as never was since men were upon earth; and denotes the sore, heavy, and even intolerable judgments of God upon the antichristian party: God's judgments are sometimes signified by hail storms, (<sup><2305></sup>Isaiah 30:26-30) and particularly the judgments upon Gog and Magog, (<sup><3802></sup>Ezekiel 38:22) which may respect the same as here: the Jews <sup>f392</sup> now expect a great hail in the times of Gog and Magog:

*and men blasphemed God because of the plague of the hail*; the plague of hail brought down the hard heart of Pharaoh, and humbled him, so that he acknowledged his wickedness, and the sin of his people, and owned the justice of God; but this more terrible storm will have no effect upon these men, to convince and reform them, but, on the contrary, they will break out into blasphemy against God, who caused it to fall on them; it will have the same effect as the fourth and fifth vials:

*for the plague thereof was exceeding great*; it must beat down all before it, and be intolerable: whether this hail storm may not also have some regard to coldness and lukewarmness, as Naplet suggests, and so may point at the close of the spiritual reign of Christ, or the Laodicean state, which will bring on the second coming of Christ, and so this effect of the seventh vial will end where the seven churches and seven trumpets do, may be considered; (see Gill on "<sup><6115></sup>Revelation 11:15").

# CHAPTER 17

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 17

This chapter contains a vision of a beast, and a woman on it, and the interpretation of it; one of the seven angels that had the seven vials proposes to John to show him the whore of Babylon, the Jezabel before spoken of, who sits on many waters, with whom the kings and inhabitants of the earth have committed fornication, being intoxicated by her, (~~6670~~ Revelation 17:1,2) in order to which he carries him into the wilderness, and there he sees a woman, who is described by the beast she sat on, of a scarlet colour, full of blasphemous names, with seven heads and ten horns; by her array, in purple and scarlet, decked with gold, pearls, and precious stones; by a cup she had in her hand, full of abominable filth; by a name written on her forehead, given at large, and by the condition she was in, drunk with the blood of the saints; which sight filled John with great wonder and admiration, (~~6678~~ Revelation 17:3-6) wherefore, to remove his astonishment, the angel proposes to explain to him the mystery of the woman, and the beast she sat on, (~~6670~~ Revelation 17:7) and first the mystery of the beast is explained, by its several states, past, present, and to come; by its original and end, ascending out of the bottomless pit, and going into perdition; by the veneration it would be had in by the reprobate part of the world, (~~6678~~ Revelation 17:8) its seven heads are interpreted of the seven mountains on which the city of Rome, designed by the woman, stood, and of seven kings, or forms of government, five of which had ceased, and one was in being in John's time, another was to come, which should not continue long, and the beast would be an eighth, (~~6670~~ Revelation 17:9-11) its ten horns are explained of ten kings, described by their kingdom they had not as yet received, and which they should have one hour with the beast; by their agreement in mind and conduct; and by their war with the Lamb, the King of kings, and Lord of lords, and those that are with him, the called, chosen, and faithful, and the issue of it, (~~66712~~ Revelation 17:12-14) the waters on which the whore sat are interpreted of a multitude of people, nations, and tongues, (~~66715~~ Revelation 17:15) the hatred and destruction of her by the ten kings, and the manner of it, are declared, (~~66716~~ Revelation 17:16) which is owing to the will of God, who put it into

their hearts to agree to give their kingdom to the beast till the prophecies and promises were fulfilled respecting this matter, and now to destroy the whore that sat upon it, (<sup><6671></sup>Revelation 17:17) which woman is explained of the great city of Rome, that reigns over the kings of the earth, (<sup><6678></sup>Revelation 17:18).

**Ver. 1.** *And there came one of the seven angels that had the seven vials,* etc.] It may be the first of them, since one of the four beasts designs the first of them, in (<sup><6610></sup>Revelation 6:1,3) though Brightman thinks the fifth angel is meant, because he poured out his vial on the seat of the beast, who is by this angel described; but rather this is the seventh and last angel, concerned in the utter destruction of antichrist: and therefore proposes to John to show him the judgment of the great whore:

*and talked with me, saying unto me, come hither:* he conversed with him in a friendly manner, (see <sup><3009></sup>Zechariah 1:9) and desires him to come nearer to him, and go along with him, adding,

*I will show unto thee the judgment of the great whore;* that noted and famous one, known before to John by the names of Jezabel and Babylon, who taught and caused many to commit fornication, (<sup><6621></sup>Revelation 2:20) (<sup><6648></sup>Revelation 14:8) and is no other than Rome Papal; for that a city or state is meant is clear from (<sup><6678></sup>Revelation 17:18) and it is usual for idolatrous or apostate cities to be called whores or harlots, (see <sup><2012></sup>Isaiah 1:21) (<sup><2320></sup>Ezekiel 23:2-4 Na 3:4) and she is called a “great” one, because of the largeness of the Papal see; and because of the multitude of persons, the kings of the earth, and the inhabitants of it, with whom the Romish antichrist has committed spiritual fornication, or idolatry: her “judgment” signifies either her sin and wickedness; in which sense the word is used in (<sup><6516></sup>Romans 5:16) and which is exposed, (<sup><6675></sup>Revelation 17:5,6) namely, her idolatry and cruelty; or else her condemnation, and the execution of it, suggested in (<sup><6678></sup>Revelation 17:8,16) and more largely described in the following chapter:

*that sitteth upon many waters;* which in (<sup><6675></sup>Revelation 17:15) are interpreted of people, multitudes, nations, and tongues, subject to the jurisdiction of Rome; and so several antichristian states are in the preceding chapter signified by the sea, and by rivers and fountains of water: and this is said in reference to Babylon, an emblem of the Romish harlot, which was situated upon the river Euphrates, and is therefore said to dwell upon many waters, (<sup><2513></sup>Jeremiah 51:13) her sitting here may be in allusion to the

posture of harlots plying of men; or may denote her ease, rest, and grandeur, sitting as a queen; and is chiefly expressive of her power and dominion over the kings and nations of the earth, (<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:18).

**Ver. 2.** *With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication*, etc.]

These are the ten kings, who being of the same mind, and of one religion, the Popish religion, gave their power, strength, and kingdom to the beast, (<sup>667D</sup>Revelation 17:12,17) and have been enticed by the whore of Rome to commit spiritual fornication with her; that is, idolatry, to worship, as that church enjoins, idols of gold, silver, brass, and wood, the images of the virgin Mary, and other saints; hence this whore appears to be no mean strumpet, but one of great note, and in much vogue, being sought after and made use of by the great men of the earth;

*and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication*;

that is, the inhabitants of the Roman empire, or earthly minded men, mere carnal persons, have been drawn into idolatrous practices by the allurements of the church of Rome; such as riches, honours, pleasures, lying miracles, and great pretensions to devotion and religion; whereby they have been intoxicated as men with wine, and have been filled with a blind zeal for that church, and the false doctrines and worship of it, and with madness and fury against the true professors of religion.07834-Re17.3 Ver. 3. *So he carried me away in the spirit*, etc.]

Not in body, as if he was removed from the isle of Patmos to some other place; but in a visionary way, just as Ezekiel was carried between earth and heaven, in the visions of God, to Jerusalem, (<sup>208B</sup>Ezekiel 8:3). It was represented to the mind of John, to his spirit, or soul, as if he had been taken up by the angel and carried through the air:

*into the wilderness*; by which may be meant either the wilderness of the people, the world, the church hereafter described, being a worldly one, and consisting of worldly men; or Gentilism, the Gentile world is often in the prophecies of the Old Testament called a wilderness; the Romish church having much of Heathen worship, and Heathen customs and practices in it, hence its votaries are called Gentiles, (<sup>661D</sup>Revelation 11:2) or this circumstance may be mentioned, and the thing so represented to John, because that a wilderness is a solitary place, and fit for retirement and meditation; and where he might, without any interruption, take a full view of the following sight, and make proper observations upon it; and it is worth notice, that this is the place where the true church and became out of

sight, in the room of which this apostate church appears: or, as others have thought, John is had into the wilderness, where the true church was hid and nourished, and the false one is there shown him, that seeing both together, he might compare them, and observe the difference between them; to all which may be added, that a wilderness is a fit place for such a beast as hereafter described to be seen in:

*and I saw a woman sit upon a scarlet coloured beast*; the beast is the same with that in (~~f610~~ Revelation 13:1) as the description shows, and is no other than the Roman empire as Papal; the “scarlet” colour is expressive of its imperial dignity, its power and authority, it received from the dragon; and also of this beast's cruelty and tyranny, and of its shedding the blood of the saints: the woman sitting upon it is the great city of Rome, as is manifest from (~~f678~~ Revelation 17:18) or the Romish antichrist, the apostate church of Rome, represented by a woman, as the true church is, (~~f621~~ Revelation 12:1) but in a very different form, and is the same with the second beast in (~~f631~~ Revelation 13:11) and the false prophet; and as the two beasts respect the same, under different considerations, namely, the Papacy, in its civil and ecclesiastic capacity, so this strange phenomenon, a woman sitting on such a beast, means one and the same thing as the horse and his rider in the seals, though in different views; the woman designs the Romish church, with the pope at the head of it, and the beast the Roman Papal empire as civil, by which the former is supported and upheld, bore up on high, and exalted in the manner it has been: moreover, as purple and scarlet are the colours of garments wore by the pope, and cardinals, hence the woman in the next verse is said to be “arrayed in purple and scarlet colour”, so even the very beasts on which they rode were covered with scarlet. Platina <sup>f393</sup> says that Pope Paul the Second

“ordered by a public decree, on pain or punishment, that no man should wear a scarlet cap but cardinals; to whom also, in the first year of his popedom, he gave cloth of the same colour, to put upon their horses and mules when they rode; and besides, would have put into the decree, that the cardinals' hats should be of scarlet silk:”

upon which Du Maulin <sup>f394</sup> makes this remark;

“Pope Paul the Second was the first that gave scarlet to the cardinals, as well for themselves as for their mules, to the end that this prophecy, which agreeth in general with the see of Rome,



might likewise appertain particularly to everyone of the pillars of the said see, which is to be set upon a “scarlet coloured beast”.”

It follows,

*full of names of blasphemy*: that is, the beast, or Roman Papal empire, was full of them; in (<sup>6610</sup>Revelation 13:1,5) a name of blasphemy is said to be upon his head, and he to have a mouth speaking blasphemy; but here his whole body is represented as full of them, and may refer to the blasphemous doctrines of worshipping of images, of pardons and indulgences, of transubstantiation, etc. and to the multitude of images, of the virgin Mary, and other saints, in the antichristian state, in every part of it; and to those blaspheming persons, the cardinals, priests, and Jesuits, which abound in it; as well as to those blasphemous names and titles which are given to the pope, the head of it, or assumed by him; such as God on earth, the vicar of Christ, the head, and husband, and foundation of the church, with many others:

*having seven heads, and ten horns*: the seven heads are the seven mountains, on which the city of Rome, the metropolis of the empire, is seated; and the seven kings, or seven forms of government, under which it has been, as appears from (<sup>6670</sup>Revelation 17:9,10) (see Gill on <sup>6613</sup>Revelation 12:3”), (see Gill on <sup>6610</sup>Revelation 13:1”) and the “ten horns” signify the ten kings over the ten kingdoms, into which the empire was divided, when overrun by the Goths and Vandals; and which ten kings gave their kingdoms to the beast, the Romish antichrist; they gave their strength and power to him, being of his religion, and have been his horns, his defenders and supporters, ever since, as may be gathered from (<sup>6672</sup>Revelation 17:12,13,17).

**Ver. 4.** *And the woman was arrayed in purple and scarlet colour*, etc.] Which may be expressive of her grandeur, authority, and power, sitting as a queen, and sovereign in the empire, ruling over kingdoms and nations in it; and also of her bloody disposition to the saints, with whose blood she is afterwards said to be drunk;

*and decked with gold and precious stones, and pearls*; which may denote her hypocrisy, she being gilded with these things, as the word signifies, when she was inwardly rotten, corrupt, and filthy; and may point out the things by which persons have been enticed into the communion of the church of Rome, and to comply with her idolatrous worship and practices;

and may also respect the prodigious riches, which have, by various methods, been brought into the pope's coffers; these, with other things, are reckoned among the merchandise of Babylon, (<sup><6682></sup>Revelation 18:12) and particularly this may have reference to the adorning of their temples, or churches, and the decking of their images, with those things; which gaudy pompous shows strike the minds of carnal men, amuse them, and engage their attention. So Philo<sup>f395</sup> the Jew describes an whore as arrayed in purple, and adorned with gold and precious stones; (see <sup><3170></sup>Proverbs 7:10).

*Having a golden cup in her hand full of abominations and filthiness of her fornication*; in allusion to Babylon, (<sup><2510></sup>Jeremiah 51:7) and also to harlots, who give philters or love potions to men, to excite lust, and draw their affections to them; and this being a golden cup may design the external lustre and splendour of the worship of the church of Rome, by which many have been drawn into a compliance with it, which is attended with many abominable, filthy, and idolatrous practices: and perhaps some regard may be had to the golden chalice, in which, it is pretended, is the very blood of Christ, which the priests take as such, and worship and adore, and is no other than an abominable and filthy piece of idolatry; and such are the persons that partake of it; like the Pharisees of old, they make clean the outside of the cup and platter; glisten, and make a great show of devotion, but within are full of extortion and excess.

**Ver. 5.** *And upon her forehead was a name written*, etc.] As the high priest had on his mitre upon his forehead written, holiness to the Lord, (<sup><0286></sup>Exodus 28:36) only a different inscription from that; the allusion is thought to be to harlots, who not only used to put their names over their doors, but some of them upon their foreheads, that all might know who they were; of which Mr. Daubuz has given proofs out of Seneca, Martial, Juvenal, and Petronius; and such might be said to have an whore's forehead indeed: and this is expressive of the openness and impudence of the church of Rome, in her idolatrous worship; she openly declares it, and pleads for it, and invites and ensnares persons to join with her in it: the name follows,

*mystery, Babylon the great, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth*; her name is "mystery"; not the mystery of godliness, that she dislikes and opposes, but the mystery of iniquity; which is the name antichrist went by in the Apostle Paul's time, when he was but in embryo, (<sup><3117></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:7). Some reference may be had to the mystery of the Mass, in which the Papists pretend are the very body and blood of Christ;

to their seven sacraments, for wherever almost they find the word mystery, they make a sacrament of that to which it is applied; and to their unwritten traditions, and the sense of the Scriptures, which are locked up in the pope's breast: and it is very remarkable what has been observed by some, that the word "mystery" was formerly upon the frontlet of the pope's mitre, and was removed by Pope Julius the Third, when it was observed that the Protestants made use of this passage of Scripture, and applied it to the Romish antichrist. Joseph Scaliger<sup>1396</sup> affirms, that he saw mitres at Rome with this inscription on them. Though others think that this is not any part of the name, but only signifies that this woman was, in a mysterious or mystical sense, called Babylon, etc. just as the great city is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, (~~6108~~ Revelation 11:8) but to me it seems to be a part of the name, as well as what follows, "Babylon the great"; that is, the great city, (~~6448~~ Revelation 14:8) by which name the church of Rome may well be called, because of the signification of it, confusion, (~~0110~~ Genesis 11:9) its doctrine and worship being a confused mixture of Paganism, Judaism, and Christianity; and because of the pride and haughtiness of it, its tyranny and cruelty, and its sorceries and idolatry; (see ~~2342~~ Isaiah 14:12-14 47:6,7,12,13 ~~2878~~ Jeremiah 50:38).

*And the mother of harlots*, of all antichristian states and kingdoms; and is different from the heavenly Jerusalem, the Gospel church, which is the mother of true believers, (~~8005~~ Galatians 4:26) or the "mother of fornications": as some copies read, and the Vulgate Latin and eastern versions render it; that is, the author and encourager of them, as the church of Rome has been; of corporeal fornication, by commanding celibacy, and forbidding marriage to priests, and setting up of brothel houses; and of spiritual fornication or idolatry, everywhere required and encouraged by it: and of "the abominations of the earth"; of abominable doctrines and practices; all manner of wickedness that is to be found in the earth, as murder, adultery, sodomy, perjury, etc. these, with everything that is vile and wicked, are practised and connived at by her.

**Ver. 6.** *And I saw the woman drunken with the blood of the saints*, etc.] To see a woman drunk is a shameful sight; but to see one drunk, not with wine, but with blood, is monstrous, cruel, and shocking; the sword, when it devours, and is satiate, is said to be drunk with blood, (~~2450~~ Jeremiah 46:10) but for a woman to be so is unexampled; and not with her own blood, as she will be, (~~2342~~ Isaiah 49:26 ~~6106~~ Revelation 16:6) but with the blood of others; and not with the blood of wicked men, but with the blood of saints;

such as God the Father has set apart from everlasting, and chosen to be holy; whom Christ has sanctified by his blood, or whose sins he has expiated, and to whom he is made sanctification; and who have principles of grace and holiness wrought in them by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations:

*and of the martyrs of Jesus*; the saints, whose blood is shed by antichrist, are martyrs also; but they seem to design the common people, and these the ministers of the Gospel, who are the martyrs of Jesus, both in life and death; they are his martyrs or witnesses, by their doctrine and ministry, bearing testimony to him as Jesus, a Saviour; testifying that he is the only Saviour, that there is salvation in no other, in opposition to the antichristian doctrines of merit, penance, purgatory, etc. for which they have been cruelly put to death, and in great numbers, and so have sealed their doctrine by their blood. Now the woman being drunk with their blood, denotes the blood thirstiness of the church of Rome, her greedy and insatiable desire after the blood of the saints, and her delight in it, being exceeding mad against them; and the multitude of it shed by her, as the slaughters of the Waldenses and Albigenses, the butcheries of the duke d'Alva in the Low Countries, the massacres in France, Ireland, and other places, the burning of the martyrs in Queen Mary's days here, with numerous other instances, show.

*And when I saw her, I wondered with great admiration*; not at the sight of the beast, which he had seen before, but at the sight of the woman, as, upon the beast; he wondered that one of her sex, generally timorous and fearful, should ride on such a monstrous creature; he was amazed at her dress, and grand appearance, whereas the church in his time consisted of poor persons, meanly arrayed; it was astonishing to him that one bearing the name of a Christian church should rise to such grandeur; and he wondered at the name upon her forehead, what the whole of that inscription should mean; but, above all, at her drunkenness with the blood of the saints; at her inhumanity and cruelty, being as savage as the beast she rode on; and also at God's forbearance of her, that he, who is a pure and holy Being, a lover of his saints, an avenger of his elect, should suffer such a brutish, barbarous, and blood thirsty creature, to live upon earth; (see <sup><601B></sup>Habakkuk 1:13).

**Ver. 7.** *And the angel said unto me*, etc.] The same as in (<sup><601B></sup>Revelation 17:1)

*wherefore didst thou marvel?* which is not said by way of reproof, as questions of this kind sometimes are, (<sup><44B12></sup>Acts 3:12) for John did not wonder at her with a sinful admiration, so as to have her in great veneration, and to do homage and worship to her, as the inhabitants of the world wondered after the beast, (<sup><66B3B></sup>Revelation 13:3 17:8) but his admiration was an amazement, or stupefaction of mind, joined with indignation at her; and this is said by the angel to lead on to what he had to declare unto him.

*I will tell thee the mystery of the woman;* that is, what is mysteriously or mystically designed by her; for till it was made known to John by the angel, it was a mystery to him; and when it was revealed, the interpretation is given in such an obscure manner, that it is only understood by the mind that has spiritual wisdom; and still remains a mystery to carnal men, just as the Gospel itself does. The hidden meaning of this woman, or the mystery of her, is told by the angel in (<sup><66B7B></sup>Revelation 17:18).

*And of the beast that carried her, which hath the seven heads, and ten horns;* the mystical sense of the beast, its heads and horns, and which is also delivered in a mysterious manner, is given in (<sup><66B7B></sup>Revelation 17:8-12).

**Ver. 8.** *The beast which thou sawest was, and is not,* etc.] It is added at the end of the verse where the same description is given, “and yet is”; this beast is to be understood not of the devil, who “was” the god of this world, “is not”, being cast out by Christ, and yet is in being; for he, the dragon, is distinguished from this beast, and indeed from him the beast has his seat, power, and authority, (<sup><66B3B></sup>Revelation 13:1,2) nor any particular emperor, as Domitian, a cruel and savage one, who was in power in Vespasian's time, when he was abroad, and then was out of it upon his return, and yet afterwards was in again, being as one sent from hell, and went at last into perdition; but the Roman empire itself is intended, as we have seen, which carried and supported the Papacy; and variously may this be interpreted; as that it was in the hands of the Romans originally, and long continued with them, but now “is not”, in John's time, being in the hands of Trajan, a Spaniard, “and yet is” in being, Rome being the metropolis of it: it was a very powerful and flourishing empire, “and is not”, being destroyed by the Goths and Vandals, “and yet is” a large empire under the jurisdiction of antichrist; it was an idolatrous empire, which encouraged the worshipping of Heathen gods, “and is not” guilty of the same idolatrous practices it was, as the worshipping of Jupiter, Mars, etc. “and yet is” much given to

idolatry in another way, worshipping the virgin Mary, and other saints; it “was” under kings, consuls, dictators, tribunes, decemvirs, and emperors, it “is not” in such a form of government, “and yet is” under its seventh head the pope; “Rome was”, but “is not” the same it has been, in some respects, and yet is the same, for idolatry, cruelty, etc. it has the image of old Rome, when Pagan, and under the power of the dragon; and though antichrist was not risen up in the empire to an head, to supreme power yet it was in being in the apostles' times, and began to work, and by degrees to show itself. In short, the meaning is, that this beast “was” the Roman empire, as Pagan, described by a dragon with seven heads, and ten horns, with crowns on the heads, but is not as yet in the Apostle John's time, as Papal, described with seven heads, and ten horns, and crowns on the horns.

*And shall ascend out of the bottomless pit:* out of hell, from whence the antichristian beast has its power; (see <sup>6118</sup>Revelation 11:8 13:2) otherwise all civil power is from God, but not antichristian power, that is from the devil:

*and go into perdition;* everlasting destruction, the lake which burns with fire and brimstone; this will be the end of the beast, (<sup>6690</sup>Revelation 19:20).

*and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder;* the inhabitants of the Roman empire, earthly minded men, shall have the beast in great veneration, and follow and worship him; (see <sup>6618</sup>Revelation 13:3,4,12)

*whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world;* none but reprobates, not any of the elect of God, are the admirers and worshippers of antichrist; (see Gill on “<sup>6618</sup>Revelation 13:8”)

*when they beheld the beast that was, and is not, and yet is;* the Roman empire in glory, under the emperors, destroyed by the Goths, and revived in the Papacy. The Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions leave out the last clause,

*and yet is.*

**Ver. 9.** *And here is the mind which hath wisdom,* etc.] This refers either to what goes before, concerning the beast, his various states, rise, and ruin, and his admirers; or to what follows after, concerning the meaning of his heads and horns, or to both; and the sense is, that notwithstanding the interpretation of these things by the angel, yet it requires a large share of wisdom to understand them; and here is enough to exercise the mind that is

ever so well stored with knowledge and understanding; and so the Arabic version renders it, “here it is required that one should have judgment and wisdom”; for to a man that has not, the affair will still be obscure and unintelligible. The words may be rendered, “here is the mind, he that hath wisdom”; that is, let him make use of it, as in (<sup>6638</sup>Revelation 13:18) and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it, “and this is the sense, he that hath wisdom”; this is the sense of the beast, and of his heads and horns; and he that has wisdom, let him consider it, and take it in, and apply it to proper persons, things, and times; and so the Ethiopic version, “he that has wisdom and understanding, let him know this”; or take cognizance of it, it being a matter of importance, and attended with difficulty:

*the seven heads are seven mountains of which the woman sitteth* that is, they signify seven mountains, or are symbolical representations of them; just as the seven good kine, and seven good ears, in Pharaoh's dream, signified seven years of plenty, and seven thin kine, and seven empty ears, seven years of famine, (<sup>0425</sup>Genesis 41:26,27). As the woman is a city, (<sup>6678</sup>Revelation 17:18) these seven mountains, on which she sits, must be so many mountains on which the city is built; and what city can this be but Rome, which is so famous for being built on seven hills? This is taken notice of by Virgil <sup>f397</sup>, Horace <sup>f398</sup>, Ovid <sup>f399</sup>, Claudian <sup>f400</sup>, Starius <sup>f401</sup>, Martial <sup>f402</sup>, and others; and indeed there is scarce a poet that speaks of Rome but observes it: hence it has been sometimes called, by writers, the seven hilled city, and sometimes Septiceps, the seven headed city, which comes near to the language here: the names of the seven mountains were these, Capitolinus, Palatinus, Aventinus, Esquilinus, Coelius, Viminalis, and Quirinalis; the four first of these were taken in by Romulus, the first founder of it, and the three last by Servius Tullius, when he enlarged it; and upon the addition of the seventh mountain there was a feast kept, called Septimontium; and which was kept in seven places in the city <sup>f403</sup>; and was annually observed; and in this situation it was in John's time; for Pliny <sup>f404</sup>, who was contemporary with him, expressly says, that in his time it took in seven mountains; and that this refers to a city in John's time, then reigning over the kings of the earth, is certain from (<sup>6678</sup>Revelation 17:18). Now there was no imperial city, so built in his time, but Rome: for though Constantinople is built on seven hills, yet this was not in being in John's time, but was built by Constantine many years after, in imitation of Rome; and though the situation is much altered now, being in Campus Martius, it being greatly reduced, and in a less compass, yet this hinders not but that it



is the same city here designed: and this confirms that the beast before spoken of, on whom the woman sat, is the Roman empire, since she is here said to sit on the seven mountains, on which Rome, the metropolis of that empire, was built; and this shows the pope of Rome to be antichrist, the great whore, Babylon, the mother of harlots, since no other has his seat at Rome but he.

**Ver. 10.** *And there are seven kings*, etc.] The Arabic version renders it, “who are seven kings”; and it should be rendered, as it is by the Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Ethiopic versions, “and they are seven kings”; that is, the seven heads signify seven kings also, for they have in them a double representation, first of seven mountains, and then of seven kings; by which are meant not seven ages of the world, as from Adam to Noah; from Noah to Abraham; from Abraham to David; from David to the Babylonish captivity; from the Babylonish captivity to Christ; from Christ to antichrist; and from antichrist to the end of the world; the five first of which were gone in John's time, the sixth was then in being, and when the seventh shall come it will continue for a short time: this is a foolish and absurd interpretation of the Papists, who make the beast to be the devil, and these his seven heads; whereas he rather is the head, or god of the world: nor are seven emperors of Rome intended, which are differently reckoned, according to the different times John is supposed to have had this revelation. Grotius, who is followed by Hammond, supposes this was written in the times of Vespasian, and reckons them thus; Claudius, Nero, Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, and Titus; the first five of these were dead in John's time, one was then, the sixth, Vespasian, the then reigning emperor, and the other, Titus, was yet to come to the empire; and when he came to it, continued but a short time, two years and two mouths: others, who more rightly judge that John wrote in Domitian's time, reckon them after this manner; Galba, Otho, Vitellius, Vespasian, Titus, Domitian, and Nerva; the first five of these were dead; Domitian was then living, and Nerva, the other that was to come and succeed him, reigned but a little while, not quite two years; but to this sense must be objected, that there were other emperors before either Galba or Claudius; and before John's time there were more than five fallen or dead; according to the first account, there must be nine dead, and according to the latter eleven; for before Claudius there were Julius, Augustus, Tiberius, and Caius: besides, if these were the seven heads of the beast, the beast must have been long ago without any head, and consequently must have expired; whereas it is

still in being, and will be under the fifth, sixth, and seventh vials, which are yet to come; it will be at the battle of Armageddon, and will be taken then, and cast alive into the lake of fire; to which may be added, that the beast, in the form in which John now saw it, was not yet risen in the times of these emperors; but by the seven heads are meant so many forms of government which took place successively in the Roman empire, and were all of them idolatrous heads, as kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, tribunes, emperors, and popes; it being usual for any sort of governors, or governments and monarchies, to be called kings, (<sup>(633)</sup>Deuteronomy 33:5 <sup>(237)</sup>Daniel 7:17,23).

*Five are fallen*; or ceased, are no longer in being as kings, consuls, dictators, decemvirs, and tribunes; at least, the supreme power was not lodged in any bearing either of these names in John's time:

*and one is*; the Pagan emperors; an Heathen emperor, Domitian, then reigning, when John had this vision; and these continued to the opening of the sixth seal, which put an end to that succession, as Pagan, and till the woman brought forth the man child, or till Constantine's time:

*and the other is not yet come*; which some understand of the Christian emperors, who immediately succeeded the Pagan ones, and were another, and different from them, as to religion, though the form of government was the same, and were not another head; for they were not an idolatrous head, on which were names of blasphemy, but another king; for from the following verse it appears, that there are eight kings, and but seven heads, and therefore one of them should seem not to be a head; and these, when they came, continued but a short time in comparison of the Heathen emperors that reigned before them, and of the hope, or antichrist, who was to reign after them 1260 years; for they reigned not, put them all together, more than 150 years; and especially at Rome their stay was short, for Constantine removed from thence to Constantinople, in the nineteenth year of his empire. But these emperors, though in religion they differed from the others, yet their form of government and title were the same, and therefore must be included in the sixth head: according to some, Theodoricus the Ostrogoth, and his successors, are meant, who continued about an hundred years; others have thought that the exarchs of Ravenna, who rose up upon the destruction of the western empire, are intended, and who continued but a short time; but then these had not their seat at Rome, which it seems necessary each head of this beast should have; it is better, therefore, to

understand this of the popes of Rome, the seventh and last head of the Roman empire; these were not yet come, in John's time, to their supreme dignity and authority:

*and when he cometh he must continue a short space*; forty two months, or 1260 days; that is, so many years, which, though a long time in itself, and in the account of man, yet with God, with whom a thousand years is as one day, and in comparison of the everlasting kingdom of Christ, and his people, it is but a short space; and so the reign of the beast, and of the ten kings with him, is said to be one hour, (<sup>66712</sup>Revelation 17:12) and this is said for the comfort of the saints, and to keep up their faith and patience under their sufferings in antichristian states. Mr. Daubuz makes these seven heads, or kings, signified by seven mountains, seven capital cities, which by degrees came to belong to the Roman empire; as first Rome itself, the capital of Italy; next Carthage, the capital of Africa; then Aege, the capital of Macedonia; after that Antiochia, the capital of the east; then Augustodunum, the capital of the Gauls; and Alexandria, the capital of Egypt; five of these six, with the monarchies belonging to them, were fallen; one, or the first of them now, was the mistress of all; and the other seventh was to come, namely, Byzantium, or Constantinople, which continued not long. This passage is so interpreted, as also the seven heads, in (<sup>6633</sup>Revelation 13:1) by this writer.

**Ver. 11.** *And the beast that was, and is not, even he is the eighth*, etc.]

That was in embryo in John's time, and yet was not come to its power and grandeur, is the eighth king; and this is the Papacy, which takes the name of the beast, because it is the head of the beast, and the only surviving head of the beast, or Roman empire, now become Papal:

*and is of the seven*; one of the seven heads, and the last of them, and is an idolatrous one, as the rest were, requiring and encouraging the worship of angels, of the virgin Mary, and saints parted: the pope of Rome is the eighth king, and seventh head, the latter with respect to his temporal power, and the former with respect to his ecclesiastical authority; for his government is quite of a different sort from the rest, being of a mixed kind, partly civil, and partly ecclesiastical, and therefore is signified by two beasts in the thirteenth chapter:

*and goes into perdition*; being the son of perdition, and is justly deserving of it; (see Gill on "<sup>6678</sup>Revelation 17:8").

**Ver. 12.** *And the ten horns which thou sawest are ten kings*, etc.] Not ten Christian emperors, which are reckoned up by Brightman from Constantine to Theodosius; for these did not reign with the beast, or give their kingdoms to him, and much less did they make war with the Lamb; they are rather the angels of Michael, that fought for him, the Lamb, against the dragon, and his angels, (<sup>401</sup>Revelation 12:7) nor ten kings that will rise up and divide the Roman empire between them, towards the end of the world, which is a sense devised by Papists to obscure and hide from men the true meaning of the passage; but the ten kingdoms which rose up, and into which the Roman empire was divided upon its being ruined, and torn to pieces by the Goths, Huns, and Vandals. They are the same with the “ten toes” of Nebuchadnezzar's image, and the “ten horns” of the fourth beast, or kingdom, in (<sup>402</sup>Daniel 2:42 7:7,23,24). These are differently reckoned up by interpreters: by Napier thus; Spain, France, Lombardy, England, Scotland, Denmark, Sweden, Hungary, Italy, and the exarchate of Ravenna: by Mr. Mede after this manner; the Britains in Britain, under Vortimer their king; the Saxons in the same place, under Hengist; the Franks in Gallia Belgica, or Celts, under Childeric; the Burgundians in another part of France, under Gunderic; the Wisigoths in Aquitain, and part of Spain, under Theodoric; the Sueves and Alans in Gallaecia and Portugal, under Riciarius; the Vandals in Spain and Africa, under Genseric; the Almans in that part of Germany called Rhetia, under Sumanus; the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and after in Italy, under Theodimir; and the Greeks in the rest of the empire, under Marcianus: and by another <sup>405</sup>writer they are accounted for in this way; the Almans in both the Rhetia, and in Pannonia, who rose in the year 356; the Ostrogoths, first in Pannonia, and then in Italy, in 377; the Wisigoths in Pannonia, and then in Italy, afterwards in France, and last of all in Spain, in 378; the Huns in Pannonia, and for some time throughout all Europe, in 378; the Britian Romans in Britain, and afterwards the Saxons, in 406; the Sueves, first in France, and then in Spain, in 407; the Alans, first in France, and then in Spain, in 407; the Vandals, first in France, then in Spain, afterwards in Africa, in 407; the Burgundians in France, in 407; the Franks in France, in 410. And it is generally thought all these ten kingdoms were up by the year 450 at least. Though Dr. Allix makes the epocha of them A. D. 486, when the western empire was taken from the Romans, and fixes them in the following order; the Almans in Rhetia and Pannonia; the Franks in Belgica; the Anglo-Saxons in Britain; the Wisigoths in Gallia Aquitania and Hispania Tarraconensis; the Sueves and Alans in Portugal; the Vandals in

Africa; the Burgundians in Gallia Sequanensis; the Ostrogoths in Pannonia, and afterwards in Italy; the Lombards in Pannonia, and the Heruli and Turcilingi, who conquered Augustulus: and though these kingdoms were thrown into different forms and shapes afterwards, yet it is remarkable they were just of this number; as,

1. Italy and Germany;
2. France;
3. Spain;
4. England with Ireland;
5. Scotland;
6. Hungary;
7. Poland with Lithuania;
8. Denmark, with Sweden and Norway, Sweden being since divided;
9. Portugal;
10. The Grecian empire seized by the Ottomans.

And as these kings cannot be understood of single persons at the head of these kingdoms, or of so many kings succeeding one another; so neither is it necessary to consider these kingdoms as being in the same state, and made up of the same sort of people always; it is enough that they are in the same place, and within the empire; for we, may observe, that different things, at different times, are ascribed to them, or at least to some. They all are at first of one mind, and give their kingdom to the beast; then they, at least some of them, hate the whore, and burn her with fire; and yet others lament the destruction and burning of Rome, (~~667~~ Revelation 17:16,17 18:9).

*Which have received no kingdom as yet:* in John's time, when the Pagan empire was in being, and the beast was not risen, with whom they were to reign; hence these horns have no crowns on them, (~~668~~ Revelation 12:3).

*But receive power as kings one hour with the beast;* as soon as he was risen; and therefore the horns are represented with crowns upon them, (~~669~~ Revelation 13:1). Their rise was with the Papal beast, who rose not to his supreme power and dignity until the western emperor, which let and hindered, was removed out of the way; which was done by the barbarous nations, who set up these kingdoms, which made way for the lordly and tyrannical government of the pope of Rome; so that he and they rose up together: and this may he meant by the "one hour"; namely, that at one and the same hour or season he came to his supreme authority and grandeur,

and they received their kingly power with him; or this may denote the time of their continuance in their honour and greatness; it was but for an hour, or a short time, as that phrase sometimes signifies, (<sup><5015></sup>Philemon 1:15) and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “for one hour”; to which agrees the Arabic version,

*and their power shall be of one hour*: and this shall be “as kings”; for they only have the title of kings, but not sovereign power; they are vassals to the beast, the pope, who reigns over them, (<sup><6178></sup>Revelation 17:18) and sets up kings in these kingdoms, and deposes them at pleasure; exalting himself above all that is called God, or above all civil magistrates; so that these have only the name, not the thing; they are as kings, and look like such, but are not really so; though what power they have, they receive not from the beast, but from God; the beast receives his power and authority, as well as seat, from the dragon; but civil power and magistracy is from God, who suffers these princes, and gives them up to such stupidity as to give their kingdom to the beast, and to exercise their power as he directs.

**Ver. 13.** *These have one mind*, etc.] The princes of these kingdoms, and their subjects, become, in time, of one religion; first they were Arians, and then Papists; and for a long series of time there was great unity between them, with respect to religious sentiments, being zealously attached to the church of Rome, its principles and practices:

*and shall give their power and strength unto the beast*; the Papal antichrist, the eighth king, and seventh head; to him they have given power to exercise all ecclesiastical authority in their kingdoms; as to ordain bishops, and deliver the pall to whom they will; to excommunicate offenders, and even lay their kingdoms under an interdict when they pleased; and have assisted and defended the popes of Rome with all their force, with all their might and main, and to the utmost of their power, and have engaged in what have been called the holy wars, at their motion; they have given their riches and wealth, which are called the forces of strength, (<sup><1339></sup>Job 36:19) which they have, by various methods, drained them of; hence the whore of Rome came to be decked with gold, and pearls, and precious stones; yea, they have given them their kingdoms, and have received them from them, and become tributary to them.

**Ver. 14.** *These shall make war with the Lamb*, etc.] The Lord Jesus Christ, so often spoken of in this book under this character, (<sup><6178></sup>Revelation 5:6,12 6:1 7:10 14:1). And this war is not to be understood of a war with him

personally, or of that last and decisive, battle at Armageddon, in which will be the kings of the earth; but of a war with his members, of their persecuting of the saints, and faithful witnesses of Christ in all ages, within their jurisdictions, being instigated to it by the beast, under whose influence they are:

*and the Lamb shall overcome them:* partly through the constancy of his people, who will not love their lives to the death, but freely lay them down for him; nor can anything separate them from the love of Christ, or prevail upon them to desert him, his truths and ordinances, cause and interest, but are more than conquerors through him, and so he overcomes in them; and partly through a reformation which he effects, as in some of those kingdoms already, as Sweden, Denmark, England, Scotland, and Ireland, and others, and will do in others hereafter; (see <sup><66776></sup>Revelation 17:16)

*for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings;* he is so by nature, as God and Creator, to whom the kingdom of nature and providence belongs; and by office, as Mediator, being made higher than the kings of the earth; hence he is more than a match for them, they cannot stand before him; this is a reason why he overcomes them, and it cannot be thought it should be otherwise: this Lamb is the lion of the tribe of Judah, and when he rouses himself, and stirs up his wrath, and exerts his power, kings and great men flee from him; (see <sup><66165></sup>Revelation 6:15-17 <sup><66116></sup>Psalms 2:6,9-12). This is a proof of Christ's proper deity, the same titles being given to him, the Word and Son of God, as to God himself, (<sup><66916></sup>Revelation 19:16 <sup><66165></sup>1 Timothy 6:15,16).

*And they that are with him:* his servants and his soldiers, that fight under him, and abide by him,

*are called, and chosen, and faithful;* they are chosen in Christ from all eternity, to grace here, and glory hereafter, and so stand opposed to the admirers of the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life, (<sup><66708></sup>Revelation 17:8) for this is to be understood of their eternal election, and not of their separation by the effectual calling in time, for that is expressed by their being "called"; and though their calling is here set before election, as in (<sup><66010></sup>2 Peter 1:10) yet it does not precede it; the Arabic version reads, "chosen, called, faithful"; first "chosen" by God the Father, then "called", not with the bare external call by the ministry of the word, for, so, many are called, and not chosen; but by special grace to special benefits, and with an holy and heavenly calling, and which is irresistible,



and without repentance; and being called they remain “faithful”: the meaning is, either that they have faith, or are believers in Christ; which faith they have bestowed on them in the effectual calling, as a fruit of electing grace; and by this they overcome the world: or else, that they are persons of integrity and uprightness, that are on the side of Christ; they are the faithful in the Lord, and are made so by him; and they are faithful to him, and abide by his Gospel and ordinances, and in his cause and interest, even unto death; and so this character is expressive of the perseverance of those who are chosen and called, even unto the end.

**Ver. 15.** *And he saith unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel, who proposed to give John the interpretation of the vision, he went on with it as follows:

*the waters which thou sawest, where the whore sitteth*, (see Gill on “<sup><670></sup>Revelation 17:1”),

*are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues*; denoting the vast multitude of people, of which the several kingdoms, of divers languages, consist, which belong to the jurisdiction of Rome Papal: it is an eastern way of speaking, and is particularly used to express the various kingdoms, and infinite number of people belonging to the Babylonish monarchy, which was an emblem of the antichristian state, (<sup><2784></sup>Daniel 3:4,7,29 4:1) and these are compared to waters, to many waters; which phrase sometimes is used for the sea, (<sup><19473></sup>Psalms 107:23) because of the vast numbers of them; the whole world wondered after the beast, and the kings and inhabitants of the earth have been subject to the see of Rome; and because of their overbearing force, carrying all before them; (see <sup><2307></sup>Isaiah 8:7,8 <sup><2402></sup>Jeremiah 47:2) (<sup><6618></sup>Revelation 13:3,4) and because, like waters, they are continually upon the flux, one generation succeeding another; and because of their instability, fickleness, and inconstancy, as in religion, so in their constitution, they will hate the whore they love; and as they frequently change and alter in their form, at last they will utterly cease: so the Jews <sup><406></sup>interpret many waters, in (<sup><2207></sup>Song of Solomon 8:7) of all people, and of the kings of the earth, and of the nations of the world; and they say, that many waters never signify any other than all the nations, and those that are appointed over them <sup><407></sup>. So, “he drew me out of many waters”, (<sup><19316></sup>Psalms 18:16) is by the Targum on the place explained, he delivered me from many people. And so (<sup><19401></sup>Psalms 46:4) is paraphrased by the Targumist;

“people, “as rivers”, and their streams, shall come, and make glad the city of the Lord;”

see the Targum on (<sup>2180</sup>Isaiah 8:7) and in (<sup>2630</sup>Ezekiel 32:2) where it is observed kingdoms are compared to waters <sup>f408</sup>.

**Ver. 16.** *And the ten horns which thou sawest upon the beast*, etc.]

(<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:3) and which are interpreted of ten kings, (<sup>667D</sup>Revelation 17:12). The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, and the Syriac Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, read, “and the beast”; and then the sense is, that the ten kings and states in particular, who have defended antichrist, and the whole empire in general, which has bore up and supported the whore of Rome:

*these shall hate the whore*; her principles and sentiments, her doctrines, which are doctrines of devils, her wicked practices, her idolatries, adulteries, murders, and thefts; they will repent of their fornications with her, and cease from them; their love will be turned to hatred, and the latter will be greater than ever the former was, like Amnon's to Tamar; and as it usually is with men towards harlots, when they see their follies, and how they have been deceived and abused by them:

*and shall make her desolate*; leave her, quit her communion; no more commit fornication with her, or join with her in her idolatrous worship; but come out from that apostate church, and renounce all fellowship with her, and persuade and engage as many as they can influence to do the same:

*and naked*; strip her of her purple, scarlet colour, gold, pearls, and precious stones; cease to give their power and strength, withhold their taxes and tribute, deprive her of her power and authority, civil and ecclesiastical, in their realms, and take away even her patrimony from her; and not only so, but expose her shame and filthiness, her abominable principles and practices, to all the world; which has been in part done already:

*and shall eat her flesh*; not literally, but mystically; not out of love, but hatred; they shall take that to themselves, and make use of, which have fattened her, as bishoprics, and other benefices, lands, endowments belonging to abbeys, and monasteries, and other religious houses; an instance and example of which we have in King Henry the Eighth's time; so some understand this phrase of devouring the substance of others, in (<sup>192D</sup>Psalms 27:2 <sup>200E</sup>Daniel 7:5). So the Targumists often interpret “flesh and fatness”; by “riches, goods”, or substance; the phrase in (<sup>237A</sup>Isaiah 17:4) “the fatness of his flesh shall wax lean”, is paraphrased, **hyrqy rtw** [“the riches of his glory shall be carried away”; and the words in

(<sup>3818</sup>Micah 3:3) who shall also eat the flesh of my people”, etc. are rendered, “and they who spoil” *ym[ yskn*, “the goods”, or “substance of my people, and take away their precious mammon, or money, from them. And again, (<sup>3819</sup>Zechariah 11:9) “let the rest eat, everyone the flesh of another”, is in the Targum, “let a man spoil” *yskn*, “the goods or substance of his neighbour”; and in (<sup>6576</sup>Revelation 17:16) he shall eat the flesh of the fat; the paraphrase is, “he shall” spoil *yskn*, “the goods or substance of the rich”.

*And burn her with fire*: alluding to the law in (<sup>4219</sup>Leviticus 21:9) which required that the daughter of a priest, that played the whore, should be burnt with fire; and this is to be understood literally of burning the city of Rome, the seat of the whore, with fire; of which (see <sup>6688</sup>Revelation 18:8,9,18). It has been very near being burnt in times past, as by Alaricus the Goth, Attila the Hun, Genseric the Vandal, and by Totilas, and in later times by Charles the Fifth; and would have been, had they not been dissuaded or diverted from it; and which were so many preludes and warnings of its future fate: and we may learn from hence, that Rome, and the Romish antichrist, will not be destroyed by the Turks, but by the Christians; and by the same states, and kingdoms, and princes, by which the whore of Rome has been supported in her grandeur, power, and authority, who will revolt from Popery, and embrace the pure Gospel of Christ: and this shows, that the ten horns, or kingdoms, into which the Roman empire has been divided, will subsist in this form at the destruction of Rome; wherefore, it has been rightly observed by some, that not one of these kingdoms shall ever be able to rise to universal monarchy. France has been for many years attempting it, but in vain; and we may sit down easy and satisfied, assuring ourselves with the greatest confidence, that all attempts this way will be fruitless; there never will be another universal monarchy on earth but that of Christ's; (see <sup>2197</sup>Daniel 2:37,39,40 7:3,23, 27).

**Ver. 17.** *For God hath put in their hearts to fulfil his will*, etc.] By doing the preceding things to the whore of Rome, whose destruction is according to the will of God; it is his approving will, what he likes of, and will be well pleased with; it is his will of command, what he will order to be done, (<sup>6816</sup>Revelation 18:6,7) and it is his determining will, his will of purpose, his decree, what he has resolved shall be done; he has fixed the time of her reign, and longer than that she shall not continue: and these kings, in

destroying her, will not do so much their own will, as the will of God, and God will put it into their hearts to do it; he will work in them both to will and to do; he will fill them with hatred to her; he will incline their minds to do the above things, as it will be in the power of their hands to do them; he who has the hearts of all men, and even of kings in his hands, and can turn them as rivers of water, will move them hereunto, (<sup>3100b</sup>Proverbs 21:1) he that turned the hearts of the Egyptians to hate his people Israel, (<sup>19A55</sup>Psalm 105:25) will turn the hearts of these kings to hate the whore, and do unto her as is here predicted; and the same God will do this, who has, on the other hand, already put into their hearts to do the following things:

*and to agree*: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin version, and is the same with that of having one mind, (<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:13) that is, being of the same religion; God giving them up to a reprobate mind, to believe a lie, that they might be damned; which must be understood not of the same individuals, but of their predecessors; unless this is to be interpreted of their agreeing together against the whore, to pull her down, and set up the pure worship and service of God; for this is a blessing of grace from God, who gives his people one heart and one way, that they may fear him, (<sup>2439</sup>Jeremiah 32:39) but the former sense seems best, since it follows,

*and give their kingdom unto the beast*; the eighth king, and seventh head, the pope of Rome; to whom they have given their power and strength in things civil and ecclesiastical, their wealth and riches; and have received their crowns from him, and have held their kingdoms by him, and become tributary to him: and this is done, and will be,

*until the words of God shall be fulfilled*; concerning the afflictions of his church and people, and the reign of antichrist, for the space of forty and two months, (<sup>611D</sup>Revelation 11:2 13:5) all which while they are fulfilling the secret will of God, unknown to them, and yet act against his revealed will, and break his commands; just as the Jews, ignorant of the prophecies of the Old Testament, fulfilled them in condemning Christ, (<sup>4413D</sup>Acts 13:27). That God should put it into the hearts of these kings to fulfil his will, in destroying the whore of Rome, is easily received; but there seems some difficulty that he should put it into their hearts to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, which was sinful: now this he did, not by infusing sin into them, which is contrary to his pure and holy nature; but by leaving them, and giving them up to their own hearts' lusts; stirring up, and moving

upon their minds, and directing the motions of it, to such and such objects, which they readily and voluntarily fell in with; and yet the concern of God herein does not, nor do his decrees about sin infringe the liberty of the will in acting, or excuse the sinfulness of the action, or make God the author of sin; as the instances of selling of Joseph by his brethren, and the crucifixion of Christ by the Jews, show.

**Ver. 18.** *And the woman which thou sawest*, etc.] (<sup><667B></sup>Revelation 17:3) as there described,

*is that great city*, often mentioned in this book; great Babylon, the city of Rome, (<sup><661B></sup>Revelation 11:8 14:8 16:19) which reigneth over the kings of the earth; which then reigned in John's time over the kings of the earth; and this clearly points out the city of Rome, for there was no other city then, but that, which reigned over the kings of the earth; that was then the metropolis of the Roman empire, to which the whole world was subject; and therefore it is called all the world, (<sup><661B></sup>Luke 2:1) and since, all the kings of the empire have been under the jurisdiction of Rome Papal. It was formerly called *Urbs Regum*, a “city of kings”, <sup>f409</sup>, either for the reason in the text, or because its inhabitants looked like kings.

# CHAPTER 18

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 18

This chapter gives an account of the fall of Babylon, and of the lamentation of many, and of the joy of others, by reason of it; which account is published by several angels: the first that declares her fall is described by his original, descending from heaven; by the great power he had; by his resplendent glory, and by his mighty cry in publishing her destruction; which is illustrated by the desolate condition she will be in upon her fall; the reasons of which are given, because the nations and kings of the earth had committed fornication with her, and the merchants of the earth were enriched by her luxury, (~~66814~~ Revelation 18:1-3). Another voice is heard from heaven, calling upon the people of God, first to come out of her, lest partaking of her sins they should share in her plagues, seeing her iniquities had reached to heaven, and were remembered before God; and next to take full vengeance on her, because she had glorified herself, lived deliciously, and in great security, (~~66814~~ Revelation 18:4-7). And then follows a continuation of the account of her destruction, what her plagues would be, death, mourning, famine, and fire; and which would be sudden, in one hour, and certain, from the power and justice of God, (~~66818~~ Revelation 18:8). Next follow the lamentations of the kings, merchants, and masters of ships, because of her greatness, riches, and merchandise, which are all come to nothing, (~~66819~~ Revelation 18:9-19). And then the church; the saints, apostles, and prophets, are called upon to rejoice at the vengeance taken on her, (~~66820~~ Revelation 18:20) upon which a mighty angel appears, who by an action signifies the manner of her destruction, and the irrecoverableness of her state and condition, (~~66821~~ Revelation 18:21) and declares her utter ruin, by affirming that nothing that was either delightful or profitable, or necessary or comfortable, should any more be found in her; giving the reasons of it, because of her luxury, idolatry, and bloodshed, (~~66822~~ Revelation 18:22-24).

**Ver. 1.** *And after these things*, etc.] The vision of the woman on the scarlet coloured beast, and the interpretation of both by the angel:

*I saw another angel*; not the Lord Jesus Christ, though the several things said of this angel agree with him; nor one of the ministering spirits, though the characters of him will also suit with one of them, but rather a minister of the Gospel, or a set of Gospel ministers, who will arise a little before the downfall of Babylon, in the spiritual reign of Christ; though not the same with the angel of fire, (<sup><6148></sup>Revelation 14:18) as some have thought, because of his illustrious appearance, and the loudness of his voice; but the same with the angel, or third thundering voice in (<sup><6146></sup>Revelation 14:6) for not only the times of both agree, but the selfsame words are expressed by one as by the other; and this angel is distinct from him that showed John the preceding vision, and gave him the interpretation of it, and from all the seven angels that had the vials, and is described as follows: and first by the place from whence he came, John saw him

*come down from heaven*; denoting the suddenness of his appearance and cry; he came down at once, and cried out immediately; the subject of his cry, the destruction of Babylon, being what will be at an unawares; and also the commission and authority of the ministers signified by him, who will have their warrant from heaven to say what they will deliver; so that this likewise expresses the truth of their message, since both that and they come from heaven:

*having great power*; to do great work, to declare the fall of Babylon the great: or “having great authority”; being sent from the King of kings, in his name, as his ambassador, to proclaim what shortly will come to pass; an event of the greatest importance to the glory of God, the interest of Christ, and the comfort of his people:

*and the earth was lightened with his glory*; (see <sup><260D></sup>Ezekiel 43:2) by which is meant the glorious Gospel of Christ, the light of which will at this then be very great: these ministers will run to and fro the earth, and knowledge will be increased, and the earth will be filled with it: the Arabic version reads, “with the splendour of his countenance”; and the Ethiopic version, “with the splendour of his countenance, and his glory”; (see <sup><280D></sup>Isaiah 60:1-3).

**Ver. 2.** *And he cried mightily with a strong voice*, etc.] Which shows not only the vehemence and affection of the ministers of the word, who will publish what follows, but the greatness and importance of it; and this loud voice may be, as for the sake of the whole church in general, that all may bear, so for the sake of those of the Lord's people in particular, that will be



in Babylon at this time; and it may have regard to that deep sleep and spirit of slumber that Babylon itself will be in, which, notwithstanding this loud cry, will remain insensible of its ruin till it comes upon her, as was the case of old Babylon, (<sup>2513</sup>Jeremiah 51:39-41),

*saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen:* the whole world is not designed by Babylon, for it is distinguished from all nations in the following verse; nor Babylon in Chaldea, which was fallen long before John saw this vision, but Rome Papal; (see Gill on "<sup>648</sup>Revelation 14:8") so the woman is called in (<sup>675</sup>Revelation 17:5) who sits on seven mountains, and is that great city, the city of Rome, that reigns over the kings of the earth, (<sup>689</sup>Revelation 18:9,18) this is said to be fallen, because, in a very little time after this declaration, it will fall; for as yet it was not destroyed, since after this the Lord's people are called upon to come out of her, and are bid to reward her double; and it is declared, that her plagues, should come in one day, and she should be burnt with fire; and an angel after this throws a millstone into the sea, saying, that so should Babylon be thrown down, (<sup>684</sup>Revelation 18:4,6,8,21) and it is repeated to denote the certainty and utter destruction of her: and which is more fully expressed by what follows,

*and is become the habitation of devils;* as old Babylon was of satyrs, (<sup>232</sup>Isaiah 13:21) demons, which appeared in a hairy form, like goats, and the word is rendered devils in (<sup>670</sup>Leviticus 17:7) and the inhabitants of Rome now are no other; the pope and his cardinals, the priests, Jesuits, monks, and friars, are the spirits of devils, and their doctrines the doctrines of devils; (see <sup>664</sup>Revelation 16:14 <sup>401</sup>1 Timothy 4:1)

*and the hold of every foul spirit:* devils are frequently called unclean spirits, and these appear in desert and desolate places, (<sup>428</sup>Matthew 12:43) where they are either of choice, or rather are obliged to it; and so the word translated "hold" signifies a prison, or place of confinement; and such as are comparable to unclean spirits now haunt and abound in Rome, and its territories; (see <sup>663</sup>Revelation 16:13)

*and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird;* such, as vultures, kites, owls, etc. which generally reside in desolate and uninhabited places; the Alexandrian copy, the Syriac and Ethiopic versions, add, "and the hold", or "seat of every unclean and hateful beast"; and so the desolation of old Babylon is described by wild beasts and doleful creatures dwelling in it, (<sup>232</sup>Isaiah 13:21,22 <sup>289</sup>Jeremiah 50:39 51:37). Some consider all this as a reason of the destruction of Babylon or Rome, because it now is the

residence of persons comparable to devils, foul spirits, hateful birds, and beasts of prey; but this account rather describes its state and case in which it will be after its ruin, being never more to be inhabited by men, in allusion to old Babylon, (<sup>23139</sup>Isaiah 13:19,20 <sup>24506</sup>Jeremiah 51:62).

**Ver. 3.** *For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication*, etc.] That is, all the nations of the Roman empire, the European nations, otherwise the Pagan and Mahometan nations have not; but these have, being made to drink by her, and made drunk therewith, that is, with her idolatries; (see Gill on “<sup>6648</sup>Revelation 14:8”).

*And the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her*; joined with her in her idolatrous worship and practices, and encouraged the same, and obliged their subjects to them in their dominions; (see Gill on “<sup>6670</sup>Revelation 17:2”).

*And the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies*; or “luxury”; which is not to be understood in a literal sense; though it is true that many merchants, in all ages, have enriched themselves by sending their commodities to Rome, where, through the vast consumption and luxuriousness of the place, they have bore a good price; but this is to be interpreted of spiritual merchants; these are such who do not merchandise by sea, but are land merchants, the merchants of the earth, and are said to be the great men of the earth, (<sup>66823</sup>Revelation 18:23) such as are equal to princes, lords, and nobles; such are the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; though the inferior clergy of the Romish church, who are under these, may be included: to which may be added, that one part of their wares is said to be the souls of men, (<sup>66813</sup>Revelation 18:13) which plainly shows what sort of merchants these are; they are such who make merchandise of men, and pretend to sell them heaven, and the salvation of their souls; these are they that deal in pardons and indulgences, which they sell to ignorant people, and for a sum of money say Mass to fetch souls out of purgatory: all things have been saleable at Rome, crucifixes, priests, altars, temples, prayers, heaven, Christ, yea, God himself, as the poet Mantuan expresses it; and because of these idolatries, and wicked practices, Rome will be at last destroyed.

**Ver. 4.** *And I heard another voice from heaven*, etc.] Either of another, or of the same angel, or rather of God, or Christ himself, since the persons addressed are called his people:

*saying, come out of her, my people*; meaning either his elect ones, till now uncalled, being such whom God had chosen for his people, and were so by virtue of the covenant of grace, were given to Christ as his people, and were redeemed by him, though, till this call, in an unconverted state; or else such who had been secretly called by the grace of God, but had not made a public profession of the Gospel, nor bore an open testimony against the Romish idolatry; for as the Lord had a righteous Lot in Sodom, and saints where Satan's seat was, Rome Pagan, so he will have a people in Rome Papal, at the time when its destruction draws near; and these wilt be called out, not only in a spiritual sense, to quit the communion of the church, to forsake its idolatries, and not touch the unclean thing, separate themselves from her, and bear a testimony against her doctrines and worship, but in a literal sense, locally; they shall be bid to come out of her, as Lot was ordered to go out of Sodom before its burning, and the people of the Jews out of Babylon before the taking of it, (<sup>2610</sup>Jeremiah 50:8 51:45) to which reference is here had: and as the Christians were called out of Jerusalem before the destruction of it: this shows the particular knowledge the Lord has of his people, be they where they will, and the gracious care he takes of them, that they perish not with others; and that it is his will they should be a separate people from the rest of the world; and this call of his sufficiently justifies the Protestants in their separation from the church of Rome, and every separation from any apostate church;

*that ye be not partakers of her sins*: by conniving at them, or committing the same; and all such are partakers of them, and have fellowship with these unfruitful works of darkness, that are in the communion of that church; and those that dwell at Rome are in great danger of being so, and cannot well avoid it: yea, even those that only go to see it, and stay but for a time in it, and that not only through the strength and influence of example, but through the force of power and authority:

*and that ye receive not of her plagues*; or punishments; the seven last plagues, which belong to her, the vials of which will be poured out upon one or other of the antichristian states, and the fifth particularly will fall upon Rome, the seat of the beast, and is what is here referred to.

**Ver. 5.** *For her sins have reached unto heaven*, etc.] Or “have followed unto heaven”; one after another, in one age after another, until they have been as it were heaped up together, and have reached the heavens; the phrase denotes the multitude of them, God's knowledge and notice of

them, and the cry of them to him; (see <sup><0180></sup>Genesis 18:20 Jon 1:2) the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “have cleaved”, or “glued”, and so the Syriac and Arabic versions seem to have read; her sins were as it were soldered together, and stuck fast to her, and being joined and linked together, made a long chain, and reached to heaven, and cleaved to that, and cried for vengeance:

*and God hath remembered her iniquities*; and is about to punish her for them; for as forgiveness of sin is signified by a non-remembrance of it, so punishment of sin by a remembrance of it, and of the persons that commit it; (see <sup><669></sup>Revelation 16:19).

**Ver. 6.** *Reward her even as she rewarded you*, etc.] This is spoken to the people of God, who are before called out of Babylon; and the chief of them are the seven angels with the seven last plagues of the wrath of God, and the same with the ten kings that will burn the whore with fire; these are called upon to take vengeance, by way of retaliation, for what she had done to them, in allusion to what is said of old Babylon, (<sup><2015></sup>Jeremiah 1:15 51:24,35) and must be understood not of what she will have done to them personally, but to their predecessors in the faith of Christ in former ages; that as she had hated them, and made war with them, so now they should hate her, and make war with her; and as she had stripped them naked of their clothes, and spoiled them of their worldly goods and substance, so now they should strip her naked of her harlot's attire, of her gold, silver, and precious stones, and make her and her territories desolate; and as she has burnt many of the precious saints in the flames, as here in England, and elsewhere, so now they shall utterly burn her with fire; and as she has shed the blood of the righteous, and drank it, and been drunk with it, they shall give her blood to drink; and as she hath killed multitudes with the sword, so now shall they kill her and her children; (see <sup><632></sup>Revelation 13:12) nor is this contrary to the doctrine of Christ and his apostles, and the spirit of Christianity, which will not admit of revenge, (<sup><058></sup>Matthew 5:38,39) (<sup><627></sup>Romans 12:17,19-21) since this will not be private, but public revenge, inflicted by Christian princes and magistrates, who are ministers of God, and revengers to execute wrath on them that do evil:

*and double unto her double according to her works*: the meaning is not to inflict upon her a punishment doubly greater than her sins, for this would be contrary to the justice of God; nor does ever God punish men in this life more, but less, than their iniquities deserve; nor can any temporal

punishment be doubly greater than sin, which deserves eternal death; and with this she will be punished hereafter, and therefore will not have her full punishment now, and much less a greater than her sins required; to which may be added, that this will be according to her works, her wicked works, and therefore will not exceed the demerit of her sins: but the sense is, that if it was possible to be done, they should use her with double severity to that she had used them with; seeing her sins deserved a severer treatment than even they had had from her; the phrase signifies an abundant and utter destruction, a punishment which was suitable and sufficient; (see <sup><2410></sup>Isaiah 40:2 <sup><2410></sup>Jeremiah 16:18 17:18) and it suggests that they should not spare her, nor pity her, but use her with the greatest severity imaginable, it being not possible to exceed her due deserts, or what her works required:

*in the cup which he hath filled, fill to her double*: not in the cup of her abominations, her errors, idolatries, and wickedness; but in the cup of afflictions and trouble, which she wrung out to the people of God, in that give her double portion: the sense is the same as before.

**Ver. 7.** *How much she hath glorified herself*, etc.] And acted the proud and haughty part in exalting herself above all emperors, kings, and princes, above all kingdoms and states, and also above all churches, assuming arrogant titles, and even blasphemous names; (see <sup><6310></sup>Revelation 13:1,5)

*and lived deliciously*: in a very luxuriant manner, as the popes, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars have done; some being clothed in purple and scarlet, and in gold and silver, and all living upon the fat of the land, and in rioting and drunkenness, in chambering and wantonness:

*so much torment and sorrow give her*: by pulling down her pride, which goes before a fall, than which nothing could more torment and afflict her; by stripping her of her fine clothes and rich apparel; and by taking away her fat benefices from her, which will cut her to the heart; and by burning her with fire, which will be very excruciating:

*for she saith in her heart, I sit a queen*; a lady of kingdoms, as in (<sup><2410></sup>Isaiah 47:5) to which the reference is; having a temporal power and authority over the kings of the earth, and a spiritual jurisdiction over all churches, apostate ones, being the mother of harlots; and her “sitting” as such, as it well agrees with the whore on many waters, and the woman on the scarlet coloured beast and seven mountains, who are all the same, and

is very suitable to antichrist, who pretends to sit in Peter's chair, and does sit in the temple of God, as if he was God; so it is expressive of her empire and government over nations and churches, and of the continuance of it, as she imagines, (see <sup>2347</sup>Isaiah 46:7) and so the Ethiopic version renders it, “I shall reign always”: to which she adds,

*and am no widow*; nor never shall be, as she flatters herself, (see <sup>2378</sup>Isaiah 47:8). Were she the true spouse of Christ, as she boasts herself, she indeed would be no widow, for Christ is an everlasting and never dying husband; but she is the whore of the kings of the earth, and though she fancies she shall be no widow, that is, bereft of people and power, (see <sup>2300</sup>Lamentations 1:1) because she now sits on many waters, people, multitudes, and nations and tongues; yet ere long, like old Babylon, she will have no men in her, but will be inhabited by devils, foul spirits, and hateful birds:

*and shall see no sorrow*; through loss of children, power, and authority; (see <sup>2378</sup>Isaiah 47:8) but in this also she will be mistaken; her children will be killed with death, as is threatened to Jezebel, (<sup>6123</sup>Revelation 2:23) and her plagues shall come upon her at once: now these words may be considered either as spoken by her when in the height of her power and glory, as she was about three or four hundred years ago; or just before her destruction, which seems to be the case, and looks as if she would regain her power, and be in her former state before her utter ruin; (see Gill on <sup>6112</sup>Revelation 11:2”).

**Ver. 8.** *Therefore shall her plagues come in one day*, etc.] The seven last plagues, which will be in a very little time executed upon her, very speedily and very quickly, one after another, if not all together; and particularly the fifth vial may be respected, as well as the plagues that follow; (see <sup>2379</sup>Isaiah 47:9)

*death*; not the second death, which will not be till after the decisive battle at Armageddon, when the beast will be taken, and cast alive into the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death; but either the pestilence, which is called so, (<sup>6118</sup>Revelation 6:8) or rather death by the sword, war, which will be brought upon her, and in which she and her children will be slain with the sword:

*mourning*; for the loss of her children, the destruction of the city of Rome itself, the seat of the beast, and for the darkness of his kingdom, the inhabitants of which shall be in such pain, as to gnaw their tongues for it:

*famine*; which generally attends war, at least sieges; and it looks as if Rome would be besieged awhile before it is destroyed, which will produce a grievous famine in it; this is opposed to her living deliciously, as well as the two former are to her notion of sitting a queen for ever, and knowing no sorrow:

*and she shall be utterly burnt with fire*; the burning of Rome has been attempted several times, by different persons, and has been burnt in part, but not wholly, (see Gill on “<sup><6716></sup>Revelation 17:16”) but now it will be entirely destroyed by fire; either by fire from heaven, as Sodom and Gomorrah were; or by fire breaking out of the earth, it being very manifest that there are volcanos, burning mountains, and subterraneous fires in those parts, which seem to be so many preparations in nature for the burning of that city; or rather by the ten kings, who will set fire to it; and it may be by all these ways. The Jews have a notion, that, at the coming of the Messiah, Rome will be burnt <sup>f410</sup>, as Sodom has been; you will find, say they <sup>f411</sup>, that of Sodom and of that kingdom (Rome, of which they are speaking, and which they afterwards call the fourth kingdom), it is decreed concerning them both, that they “should be burnt with fire”; of Sodom, (<sup><01924></sup>Genesis 19:24) and of the fourth kingdom (Rome), (<sup><2349></sup>Isaiah 34:9).

*for strong is the Lord God that judgeth her*; the Alexandrian copy reads, “that has judged”: and so the Syriac and Arabic versions; that is, has purposed and determined her destruction, and therefore it is unavoidable; he that has resolved upon it, and foretold it, and has condemned her to it, is the Lord God Almighty; and he is able to execute the sentence determined and pronounced, and it is impossible she should escape: it may be understood of Christ the mighty God, the Judge of quick and dead; (see <sup><2534></sup>Jeremiah 50:34).

**Ver. 9.** *And the kings of the earth, who have committed fornication*, etc.] Idolatry, (<sup><6702></sup>Revelation 17:2 18:3)

*and lived deliciously with her*; (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:3,7) joining with her in her sensual, as well as in her idolatrous practices:

*shall bewail her, and lament for her*: shall mourn inwardly, and by various gestures outwardly express their sorrow at her desolation; (see <sup><3721></sup>Ezekiel



27:30-32) these will not be the ten kings who will burn the whore with fire, and then repent of what they have done, and weep over her, as Titus did at the destruction of Jerusalem, as some Popish writers have fancied, for they will hate the whore, and eat her flesh; but earthly and idolatrous kings, who will be in the communion of the church of Rome:

*when they shall see the smoke of her burning:* as Abraham saw the smoke of Sodom and Gomorrah go up like the smoke of a furnace; by which they will perceive that her judgment is come, and her ruin begun.

**Ver. 10.** *Standing afar off for the fear of her torment,* etc.] Lest they themselves should share in it, who have partook of her sins; either they will not be in a capacity to help her, or they will be dispirited, and will be in awe and dread of God's righteous judgments:

*saying, alas! alas! that great city Babylon! that mighty city!* it will aggravate their sorrow, when they reflect upon the former grandeur, magnificence, power, and authority, of the city and see of Rome, so often called in this book the great city; and so it is by other writers; the Jews call it so: they say <sup>f412</sup>, when the Messiah comes,

“the kings of the world shall be gathered to **atbr atrq**, “the great city” of Rome; and the holy blessed God will cast upon them fire and hail, and great hail stones, (with which compare <sup>(-6621-)</sup> Revelation 16:21)), and they shall perish from the world, except those kings that do not come there.”

It is common with the Jewish writers to call the Roman empire Edom; and Magdiel, one of the dukes of Edom, (<sup>(-0368-)</sup> Genesis 36:43) who has his name from “greatness”, is interpreted by one of their commentators <sup>f413</sup> of Rome; the reason of which, another of them says <sup>f414</sup>, is because Rome is become great above all kingdoms: the mount of Esau in (Obidiah 1:21) is interpreted **abr akrk ty**, “that great city” of Esau, which is Rome <sup>f415</sup>, and the same epithet it has in the Talmud <sup>f516</sup>; and Porphyry calls it **την μεγαλην πολιν**, “that great city”, without making mention of its name, as here; so among the Latins <sup>f417</sup>, “Magne spe altera” Romae:

*for in one hour is thy judgment come:* the Ethiopic version reads, “the hour of her judgment”; the time of her punishment fixed by God; but the sense is, that her vengeance was suddenly come upon her; this is the judgment of

the great whore, which the angel proposed to show to John, (<sup>6670b</sup>Revelation 17:1).

**Ver. 11.** *And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her*, etc.] Who these are, (see Gill on “<sup>6688b</sup>Revelation 18:3”) and, what their lamentation, (<sup>6686b</sup>Revelation 18:16) the reason of their weeping and mourning follows: for no man buyeth their merchandise any more; what their merchandise is, is expressed in the two next verses; and this shows that it is not to be understood merely in a literal sense; for such commodities in general as are there mentioned, if they do not sell at one place, they will at another; and the decline of trade in one city does not put a stop to business all the world over; and often so it is, that the ruin of commerce in one place is the rise of it in another; and all the things hereafter spoken of, excepting the last article, are what will be merchandised in one place or another to the end of the world; unless the sense should be, that no man at Rome, and the parts adjacent, will buy of this merchandise any more; but though they should not, this could not be cause of such lamentation as is afterwards expressed, since their goods might be sold elsewhere; but it looks as if this must be understood of such kind of wares as will be disused and despised all the world over, and they will meet with no customers any where to deal with them in them.

**Ver. 12.** *The merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls*, etc.] Things for treasure and ornament, and with which the great whore is said to be decked, (<sup>6670b</sup>Revelation 17:4) and, literally understood, may denote the vast riches which these spiritual merchants, or factors for Rome, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, priests, monks, and friars, bring into their own coffers and the pope's, by the trade they drive in her wares with the souls of men; and may have also a regard to what their images, chalices, crowns, mitres, etc. are made of, and what some of them are adorned with; and as Tyre, to whom the reference is in the several particulars of this account, had her merchants for these things, (<sup>3570c</sup>Ezekiel 27:12,16,22) so Mr. Brightman thinks that in these, and in some following ones, Spain is Rome's merchant, which fetches them from the Indies for her: but these things, mystically taken, sometimes design the doctrines of the Gospel, (<sup>4682c</sup>1 Corinthians 3:12) and which are to be preferred to, and more to be esteemed than thousands of gold and silver; and these Rome's merchants pretended to deliver out; but instead of them, they put off wood, hay, and stubble, yea, doctrines of devils, and lies in hypocrisy; and sometimes the grace of God is meant, (<sup>6688b</sup>Revelation 3:18) which is more

precious than gold that perisheth; and this they pretend to convey to men “ex opere operato”, in the ordinances, as baptism, etc. and to communicate the Spirit, with his gifts and graces, for money, which is direct simony; yea, they pretend to sell eternal life, nay, Christ, and God himself:

*and fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet:* things which belong to apparel and dress; and, literally taken, the “fine linen” is for their copes, wore by bishops and by chanters, and sub-chanters, and for surplices wore by their priests, in imitation of the Jewish priests, and for Mass clothes, etc. the “purple, silk”, and “scarlet”, were for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops; so the woman on the scarlet coloured beast is said to be arrayed in purple and scarlet, (<sup><6170></sup>Revelation 17:4), Tyre had its merchants for these, (<sup><620></sup>Ezekiel 27:7,16,24) the fine linen and silk may mystically denote the holy lives, good works, and merits of the saints, those of them called works of supererogation, which become the church's stock, and they sell out for others that want; which is a monstrous kind of ware, and a dreadful imposition upon men, since men cannot be saved and justified by works; and the best of men are so far from having a redundancy of works, that in everything they sin and offend, and are greatly deficient: and they are so far from helping others, that they are unprofitable servants themselves: the purple and scarlet may signify the blood of Christ, which they pretend to sell in the Mass; nay, they have pretended to have had the very liquid blood of Christ, which they have carried in a crystal glass, thick on one side, and transparent on the other; and so could not be seen by persons in a mortal sin, until they had given a good deal of money, and then the clear side was by sleight of hand turned to them; and which was no other than the blood of a duck, renewed weekly by the priest; which trick for a long time brought in vast sums of money, and was detected at Hales in Gloucestershire, in Henry the Eighth's time; or these may intend the sufferings of the saints, which likewise come into the treasure of the church, and are at its dispose for money, the virtue of which being very great for the salvation of men's souls:

*and all thyine wood, and all manner vessels of ivory, and all manner vessels of most precious wood, and of brass, and iron, and marble:* things for utensils and furniture, not so much for their houses, as for their churches; Tyre had its merchants for these, (<sup><621></sup>Ezekiel 27:5,6,12,13,15). “Thyine wood”, Pliny says <sup>f418</sup>, was very durable, and of it the rafters of ancient temples were made; and may design such like lasting and odoriferous wood as cypress, cedar, etc. used in the Popish churches, for

the embellishing of them, and for images in them; it may be the same with the wood of the Almug, or Algum trees, since these are rendered thynine wood in the Vulgate Latin version in (<sup><1101></sup>1 Kings 10:11,12 <sup><490></sup>2 Chronicles 9:10,11) vessels of ivory may be boxes made thereof, in which the host is put, and the relics of saints are preserved: and “vessels of most precious wood”, or “stone”, as the Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, and Ethiopic versions read,

*and of brass, iron, and marble*, may intend various vessels used in their churches; as vessels for holy water, fonts of marble, and other valuable stones, for baptism, censers of iron and brass to burn incense in. Cocceius thinks that by these vessels of different materials are meant good men; who are like sweet smelling wood for the fragrancy of their doctrines and lives; and like iron, brass, and marble, for their courage, constancy, and patience; and who have been canonized for saints, which has brought in much money into the pope's coffers: this is a practice in imitation of the Heathens, who deified men, and set them over particular days and affairs; and the privileges of such canonization among the Papists are, that such a saint has his name set in the calendar in red letters, may have churches and altars dedicated to him, and his image set up in them, and a holiday be kept for him, and may be prayed to, and worshipped; a practice dreadfully derogatory to the glory of Christ's person and office, but is that in which these merchants have found their account; for through references, commissions, and reports, for proof of the saint's character and miracles, his friends are at very great expense before the affair is issued, especially if rich; our King Henry the Seventh was very desirous of having his kinsman Henry the Sixth canonized, and solicited the pope for it, but he would not do it under fifteen hundred ducats of gold, which the king thought was too much, and so declined it.

**Ver. 13.** *And cinnamon, and odours, and ointments, and frankincense*, etc.] Things for delight and pleasure, for the gratifying of the senses; cinnamon, and odours were used for perfuming, (<sup><1077></sup>Proverbs 7:17) anointing with oil was used at feasts, (<sup><925></sup>Psalms 23:5) and “frankincense”, or censings, at banquets, and for the regaling of persons after food<sup>f419</sup>: these customs obtained among the eastern people. Tyre had its merchants for these things, (<sup><3279></sup>Ezekiel 27:19,22) and Mr. Brightman thinks Italy is Rome's merchant in these, which it fetches from Greece, Arabia, and Egypt; it may be these rather respect the ecclesiastical use of them; “cinnamon, odours”, and “frankincense”, may signify the perfumings and

censings used in churches, or the burning incense in imitation of the sweet incense under the law; and “ointments” may denote their chrism, or anointing with oil at baptism, imagining that Christ was anointed with material oil at his baptism, whereas it was with the Holy Ghost: moreover, these things may be mystically understood, “cinnamon” being used by harlots in perfuming their bed, (<sup><3077></sup>Proverbs 7:17) may intend the stews and brothel houses erected at Rome, and licensed by authority, each whore paying so much per week; the revenues of which would sometimes yearly amount to twenty thousand ducats: “ointments” may be understood of chrism in baptism, and extreme unction at death: “odours” and “frankincense” may mean their prayers and pater noster, their prayers for the dead, which were never made without the pence; hence that proverbial expression, no pence, no pater noster.

*And wine, and oil, and fine flour, and wheat, and beasts, and sheep:* things for civil use; these are things which belong to food, to eating and drinking, and are the most material and necessary things of life, (<sup><3907></sup>Psalm 4:7 <sup><3512></sup>Jeremiah 31:12 <sup><3821></sup>Hosea 2:21,22 <sup><0043></sup>Genesis 4:3 <sup><2323></sup>Isaiah 22:13).

Tyre had her merchants for these, (<sup><3577></sup>Ezekiel 27:17,18,21) and Mr. Brightman will have Italy to be Rome's merchant for wine and oil; Sardinia and Sicily her merchants for fine flour and wheat; Germany for beasts, and England for sheep: and with respect to the ecclesiastical use of these things, wine is for the chalice, used in daily Masses, and drank only by the priests; “oil” for chrism at baptism, and for the extreme unction: “fine flour” for the Mass, or to make their breaden god of; and “wheat, beasts, and sheep” for tithes for the clergy:

*and horses, and chariots, and slaves;* things for splendour, equipage, and attendance; horses and chariots for the popes, cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, to ride in state and grandeur, and slaves to wait upon them. Tyre had her merchants for these (<sup><3574></sup>Ezekiel 27:14,20) and Mr. Brightman's opinion is, that the French are Rome's merchants for horses and chariots, and the Swiss for slaves, or “bodies”, as the word may be rendered, who live by exercising their bodies, and hiring them out in war; and who are many of them the guards of the person of the pope of Rome: and last of all it is added,

*and souls of men;* still in allusion to the merchandise of Tyre, some of whose merchants are said to trade in the persons of men, (<sup><3573></sup>Ezekiel 27:13) which the Targum and Septuagint render, in the souls of men; the

popes have some of them sold their own souls to the devil, to get into the chair, and, when in, have been the means of destroying of thousands of others; they assume a power over the souls of men, of binding and loosing the consciences of men, imposing new laws upon them, and freeing them from obligation to the laws of God and men, to the ruin of their souls; and it has been said by their sycophants, that if the pope should send thousands of men to hell, no one should say to him, what dost thou? The Romish priests pretend to redeem souls out of purgatory for such a sum of money, and sell pardons and indulgences, say Mass, and promise heaven itself for money; and this they get at the expense of men's souls, by their false doctrine and superstitious worship, and so make merchandise of them, as is said of the false teachers, (~~608~~ 2 Peter 2:3) moreover, as by “slaves”, or bodies, in the preceding clause, are meant such who serve with their bodies, either by way of attendance, or in unnatural lust; so by “souls” of men may be meant men of soul, of great natural wit and understanding, of great parts, abilities, and learning, with which they serve the man of sin, and his interest, such as Bellarmine, and others.

**Ver. 14.** *And the fruits that thy soul lusted after are departed from thee,* etc.] Or “the autumn of the desire of thy soul”; the desirable fruits which are then in season; the Vulgate Latin and Ethiopic versions render it “apples”, which are ripe in autumn; and may design all such fruit as Italy abounds with, which will now be destroyed; and seems to point at the time of year when Babylon's destruction will be: but, in the mystical sense, these fruits may intend universal dominion over nations and churches, the obedience of kings and princes, riches, honours, and pleasures of all sorts; things greatly affected by the Papacy, and of which a large harvest was expected, but now all will be at an end:

*and all things which were dainty and goodly are departed from thee;* all that were palatable to the taste, and pleasant to the sight, that were excellent and desirable; as the triple crown, cardinalships, archbishoprics, bishoprics, deanaries, fat benefices, and good livings:

*and thou shalt find them no more at all;* for this will be an utter destruction; at the Reformation these desirable things were taken from her in several nations, and in some places she has recovered them again, as in Germany and other places; and the outward court, or the reformed church, sinking into an outward show and form, will be wholly given to the Gentiles, the Papists, and they will have these things in their hands again

before Rome's utter destruction, but after that they will no more be regained.

**Ver. 15.** *The merchants of these things*, etc.] Before mentioned, who have traded in them for themselves and for Rome:

*which were made rich by her*, (see <sup>668B</sup>Revelation 18:3)

*shall stand afar off for fear of her torment*; as the kings of the earth before, (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10) being conscious to themselves of their being partners in her crimes, and so might justly fear they should share in her punishment; and it may be, they will outwardly deny they are now of her religion, and will externally embrace the reformed religion; though they will be inwardly weeping and wailing for the destruction of Rome, and the loss of their merchandise and goodly things.

**Ver. 16.** *And saying, alas, alas! that great city*, etc.]. Using the same words the kings of the earth do, (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10) only adding, suitable to their characters as merchants, and the things they traded in with her,

*that was clothed in fine linen, and purple, and scarlet, and decked with gold, and precious stones, and pearls*; (see Gill on "<sup>668E</sup>Revelation 18:12") (see Gill on "<sup>667D</sup>Revelation 17:4"), see also (<sup>267D</sup>Ezekiel 27:32).

**Ver. 17.** *For in one hour so great riches is come to nought*, etc.] That is, in a very short time, expressing the suddenness and speediness of Rome's destruction, the quick dispatch and expedition that will be made in it, by the instruments of it, as in (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:10). Rome was always famous for its great wealth and riches; the Jews have a saying <sup>f420</sup>, that if ten kabs of riches descend into the world, the ancient Romans take nine of them, and the other the whole world:

*and every shipmaster, and all the company in ships, and sailors, and as many as trade by sea, stood afar off*; the lamentation of the kings and merchants of the earth being ended, masters of ships, sailors, and seafaring men begin theirs: by "ships" are meant dioceses, abbeys, priories, and monasteries; and by the masters, or governors of them, bishops, abbots, priors, the heads of monasteries, and of the several orders of the Franciscans, Dominicans, etc. and by "all the company in ships", or "every shipmate", the fellows that belong to every religious house and order; and by "sailors" and "traders at sea", all such who compass sea and land to



make proselytes to the Romish religion, like the Pharisees of old, and who, as they, make them two fold more the children of hell than themselves; and, in general, these traders abroad may design the pope's legates, sent by him into various parts, to collect his revenues, and the Jesuits, who are everywhere sent abroad to sow sedition and false doctrine, and the priests that travel about to sell pardons and indulgences: these

*stood afar off*; as the kings and merchants before, for fear of sharing in the condemnation and punishment of Babylon; knowing full well that they deserved it, having been associates with her in her crimes.

**Ver. 18.** *And cried when they saw the smoke of her burning*, etc.] (See Gill on "<sup><668D></sup>Revelation 18:9")

*saying, what city is like unto this great city?* as before for magnificence and grandeur, so now for sorrow, desolation, and ruin; nor was any city like it for power and authority, for pride and luxury, for idolatry and superstition, blasphemy and impenitence; the like the sailors say of Tyre, (<sup><327D></sup>Ezekiel 27:30) from whence this and other expressions are borrowed in this lamentation.

**Ver. 19.** *And they cast dust on their heads*, etc.] As the seafaring men on account of Tyre, (<sup><327D></sup>Ezekiel 27:30) this was a gesture used in mourning when persons were in afflicted and distressed circumstances, denoting disorder, confusion, and debasement; (see <sup><610D></sup>Joshua 7:6 <sup><812D></sup>Job 2:12)

*and cried, weeping and wailing, saying, alas, alas! that great city*; as in (<sup><68D></sup>Revelation 18:10,16) so it was once, though now in flames:

*wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea*; not only the merchants of the earth, as in (<sup><68B></sup>Revelation 18:3) the cardinals, archbishops, and bishops, but the governors of religious houses; these accumulated great wealth to themselves, and got the best of lands into their possession for the use and support of their abbeys and monasteries:

*by reason of her costliness*; or costly things; pardons, indulgences, absolution, saying Mass, and praying souls out of purgatory, all which are costly, and hereby these traders have been enriched; and now the remembrance of these things, of which they will be deprived, will affect and grieve them, as well as the suddenness of Rome's ruin:

*for in one hour is she made desolate*; her judgment come, and her riches come to nought, (<sup><6680></sup>Revelation 18:10,17).

**Ver. 20.** *Rejoice over her, thou heaven*, etc.] This is said by the voice from heaven, (<sup><6684></sup>Revelation 18:4) which having called upon the saints to come out of Babylon, and to take vengeance on her, now calls upon all good men to rejoice at her ruin, while others were weeping and wailing; not at that, simply considered, but as the justice of God is displayed therein: heaven may be literally understood, which sometimes is addressed when anything of very considerable note and moment is done or spoken of, whether it be something exceeding bad, as in (<sup><2300></sup>Isaiah 1:2 <sup><2422></sup>Jeremiah 2:12,13) or something exceeding great and good, as in (<sup><0961></sup>Psalms 96:11-13) or else the inhabitants of heaven, either the angels, who as they rejoice at the good and happiness of the saints, so at the confusion and destruction of their enemies; and the Syriac version reads, “heavens and angels”; or else the souls of men departed, particularly the souls under the altar, that have been long crying for vengeance on account of the shedding of their blood, (<sup><6609></sup>Revelation 6:9) who may be made acquainted with Rome's destruction; or rather the true church of Christ upon earth, which in this book often goes by the name of heaven, in opposition to the apostate church, called the earth, because its members, doctrines, and ordinances, are from heaven, and its happiness lies there:

*and ye holy apostles and prophets*; the Alexandrian copy and Complutensian edition read, “and the saints, and the apostles, and prophets”; making three distinct sorts of persons, of which heaven, or the church, consists: by “saints” may be meant private members of churches, who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and live holy lives and conversations; and by “apostles”, not the twelve apostles, or persons in such an office as they were, but ordinary ministers of the word, who are sent forth to preach the Gospel, and will be upon the spot at the destruction of Babylon, and will be such as shall have preached and defended the pure apostolic doctrine; and by “prophets” are intended not the prophets of the Old Testament, nor such under the New who had the gift of foretelling things to come, but such who have a gift of interpreting the Scriptures and preaching the Gospel; the same with the two witnesses, who till this time will have prophesied in sackcloth, but shall now put it off, and put on the garments of praise and joy:

*for God hath avenged you on her*; or “judged your judgment on her”; that is, has executed righteous judgment on her, for all the evils done by her to the saints in ages past, the predecessors of the persons here mentioned, as well as to themselves: vengeance belongs to the Lord, and he will avenge his elect sooner or later.

**Ver. 21.** *And a mighty angel*, etc.] Not Christ, nor one of the ministering spirits, but some man or set of men, perhaps the same with him in (~~4681~~ Revelation 18:1)

*took up a stone like a great millstone, and cast it into the sea*; just as Jeremiah took a stone and bound it to his book after he had read it, and cast it into the river Euphrates, as a sign and token of the destruction of old Babylon, (~~2606~~ Jeremiah 51:63,64 ~~2165~~ Exodus 15:5 ~~4691~~ Nehemiah 9:11)

*saying, thus with violence shall that great city be thrown down, and shall be found no more at all*; which is expressive of the utter destruction of Rome, and of the violence, force, and power with which it will be destroyed, and of the suddenness and swiftness of its destruction, and of the irrecoverableness of its state and condition.

**Ver. 22.** *And the voice of harpers, and musicians, and of pipers and trumpeters*, etc.] Which were for mirth, delight, and pleasure:

*shall be heard no more at all in thee*: the words seem to be taken from (~~2248~~ Isaiah 24:8 ~~2663~~ Ezekiel 26:13) and may not only regard the loss of every thing that was delightful and pleasant to the ear in private houses, at festivals, and nuptials, and the like, but the ceasing of church music; there will be no more bells, nor organs, or any other instruments of music; no more chanters, and sub-chanters, choristers, singing men and boys:

*and no craftsman, of whatsoever craft he be shall be, found any more in thee*; which are very useful and necessary in cities and societies; it is threatened to Judah, that the cunning artificer should be taken from her, (~~2188~~ Isaiah 3:3) and it is reckoned as a considerable part of the distress of the captivity that the carpenters and smiths were away from Jerusalem, (~~2401~~ Jeremiah 24:1) and this judgment may fall on Rome for her worshipping idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, the works of men's hands, artificers and craftsmen, and who are employed in making other trinkets and wares for antichrist:

*and the sound of a millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee*; to grind corn with, (see <sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10) there will be a famine at the time that Rome is besieged, (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:8) and after it is destroyed, there will be no corn to grind, nor inhabitants to eat it, and so no use of the millstone; this is said in opposition to her luxurious and delicious living, (<sup><6808></sup>Revelation 18:3,7,9) and this may also refer to feasts and rich entertainments, for which spices were ground and prepared by an hand mill <sup>f421</sup> in the house; and so may signify here that there would be no more of such entertainments and rich living; with which sense agrees what follows. This clause is wanting in the Syriac and Ethiopic versions.

**Ver. 23.** *And the light of a candle shall shine no more at all in thee*, etc.] Either for common use, or at feasts, or at marriages, which being kept at night, required candies, lamps, or torches; this shows that Babylon, or Rome, shall be deprived of everything, even of the least thing that is comfortable in life; (see <sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10) this will be a just punishment upon her for her abuse of this blessing of life; so where wax candles in great numbers have been burning in the daytime, there will not be so much as a single candle to give light in the night; and where candles have been lighted up for the dead, there will not be one for the use of the living:

*and the voice of the bridegroom and of the bride shall be heard no more at all in thee*: there will be no marrying, nor giving in marriage; no procreation of children, or propagation of posterity, in this place; which denotes the utter extirpation of the inhabitants of it; the phrases are taken from (<sup><2473></sup>Jeremiah 7:34 16:19) (<sup><2450></sup>Jeremiah 25:10,11) and this will be in righteous retaliation for the prohibition of marriage; which God has instituted, and is honourable, (<sup><5042></sup>1 Timothy 4:2) the reasons of Babylon's destruction follow:

*for thy merchants were the great men of the earth*: in allusion to the merchants of Tyre, said to be princes, (<sup><2328></sup>Isaiah 23:8) for by trading and dealing in the wares and merchandise of Rome, persons of mean extract, and of very low circumstances of life, have grown exceeding rich, and have equalled the princes of the earth; as for instance, Cardinal Wolsey here in England, a butcher's son at Ipswich; and on the other hand, the princes and great men of the earth have become Rome's merchants, and have thought it an high honour to get a cardinal's hat, as the Cardinals Albertus duke of Austria, Bourbon, Pool, and others, mentioned by Brightman:

*for by thy sorceries were all nations deceived*; meaning her false doctrines, traditions, idolatry, superstition, and will worship, with which, as another Jezebel, she has bewitched, allured, and deceived the nations of the empire, and the kings thereof, (<sup>668B</sup>Revelation 18:3).

**Ver. 24.** *And in her was found the blood of prophets and of saints*, etc.] Such as before mentioned, in (<sup>668D</sup>Revelation 18:20) this is another reason of her destruction, besides her luxury and idolatry, namely, her shedding the blood of the saints, with which she is said to be drunk, and therefore blood is now given her to drink, (<sup>667B</sup>Revelation 17:6 16:6) for she will now be found guilty of slaying the witnesses, who are meant by the prophets and saints, that have been from the beginning of the apostasy:

*and of all that were slain upon the earth*: not only of those that have been slain in the city of Rome, but of all those that have been slain throughout the empire; they being slain by her order, or with her consent, and she conniving at it, encouraging it, and therefore will be justly chargeable with it all; (see <sup>423B</sup>Matthew 23:31,32,35) the Ethiopic version adds, “for the name of Christ”.

# CHAPTER 19

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 19

This chapter contains the triumph of the saints over Babylon, and their thanksgiving to God because of his judgments on her; the marriage of Christ and his church, and a battle between him and his and her enemies, with the success of it. The congratulations are first of a promiscuous multitude in the church, ascribing salvation, praise, honour, glory, and power to God, because of the righteousness of his judgments, and because of the perpetuity of them, (~~6691~~ Revelation 19:1-3) and then of the four and twenty elders and four living creatures, who worship God, assent to what had been before said, and join in praising the Lord, (~~6694~~ Revelation 19:4) and then another voice out of the throne is heard, calling upon all the servants of the Lord, and those that fear him, whether small or great, to praise our God, (~~6695~~ Revelation 19:5) after which is heard the voice of a great multitude, stirring up one another to praise, because of the reign of the Lord God Almighty, and to rejoice and be glad because the time of the Lamb's marriage with his bride was come; who is described by her dress, the righteousness of the saints, comparable to fine linen, clean and white, (~~6696~~ Revelation 19:6-8) upon which an angel bids John write those persons happy who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb, and affirms these to be the true sayings of God; wherefore John, in a transport of joy, was just going to worship the angel, had he not been forbidden by him; from which he dissuades him, by observing that he was his fellow servant, that God only is the object of worship, and that the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy, (~~6699~~ Revelation 19:9,10) next follows a vision of a battle between Christ and his enemies; and first he the General is described, by the horse he sat upon, a white one; by the characters he bears, faithful and true; by what he did, judging and making war in righteousness; by his eyes, which were as a flame of fire; by his having many crowns on his head; by having a name, or names unknown, and particularly one, which is the Word of God; by his habit, a vesture dipped in blood; by the armies he was at the head of, riding on white horses, and clothed in fine linen; by a sharp sword coming out of his mouth, with which he should utterly destroy the nations; and by having a name on his vesture and thigh, King of kings, and

Lord of lords, (<sup>6691</sup>Revelation 19:11-16) upon which an angel is seen standing in the sun, and calling to all the fowls of the heaven to come to the supper of the great God, and to eat the flesh of kings, captains, mighty men, horses and horsemen, of all ranks, and degrees, (<sup>6697</sup>Revelation 19:17,18) and next an account is given of the armies of the beast, and of the kings of the earth, that came to make war with the above warrior, (<sup>6699</sup>Revelation 19:19) the issue and success of which follow; the beast and false prophet are taken, and cast alive into a lake of fire and brimstone; and the rest are killed by the sword of the above General, and the fowls have a feast of their flesh, (<sup>6699</sup>Revelation 19:20,21).

**Ver. 1.** *And after these things*, etc.] After the angel had declared the fall of Babylon, a voice from heaven had called the people of God out of her, and had ordered them to take vengeance on her; after the mournful lamentation of the kings, merchants, and seafaring men; after another voice had called upon the saints to rejoice at her overthrow, and a mighty angel had described the manner of it, and had expressed her ruin in the strongest terms, with the reasons of it, John heard the songs of the righteous, as follow:

*I heard a great voice of much people in heaven*: not literally taken, for these are not the innumerable company of angels, who are never called people; nor the spirits of just men made perfect, or the souls of departed saints, but men on earth; wherefore heaven designs the church, as in (<sup>6680</sup>Revelation 18:20) and frequently in this book; the people are the same with the 144000 seen with the Lamb on Mount Zion, (<sup>6641</sup>Revelation 14:1) and with those on the sea of glass, who had got the victory over the beast, (<sup>6692</sup>Revelation 15:2) and are no other than God's covenant people, who are given to Christ, and made willing to be his in the day of his power; and though they are but a seed, a remnant, a small company, when compared with the world and carnal professors; yet are a large body of themselves, especially they will be at this time, when the nation of the Jews shall be born at once, and the fulness of the Gentiles will be brought in: and their voice on this occasion, the downfall of Rome, is said to be "great" partly on account of their number, who will join together in acclamations of praise, and partly on account of their great affection and vehemency of spirit, which will be raised hereby:

*saying Alleluia*; an Hebrew word, which signifies "praise ye the Lord". The Jews say <sup>f422</sup>, that the book of Psalms consists of ten sorts of songs, but



Hallelujah is the greatest of them, because it comprehends the name (Jehovah) and praise in one word: and it is observable that this word, which is often used in the Psalms, is first used when the Psalmist desires the utter consumption and destruction of sinners and wicked men on earth, and is here taken up by the saints at the destruction of the man of sin and son of perdition; (see <sup><6445></sup>Psalm 104:35) and its being an Hebrew word shows that at this time the Jews will be converted, and that Jews and Gentiles will become one church state, and will worship and praise the Lord together; for the word is a call upon the saints to join together in solemn praise and thanksgiving; who is to be praised for the perfections of his nature, for the works of his hands, both of nature and grace; and for his righteous judgments on his and his church's enemies; and this is to be done in concert:

*salvation, and glory, and honour, and power, unto the Lord our God:* salvation, temporal, spiritual, and eternal, is of God; “salvation” from antichristian power and tyranny, and from all enemies, and the everlasting salvation of the soul; and the “glory” of it belongs to all the three Persons; they are glorious in themselves, and deserve all glory to be ascribed to them by man, and especially by the saints: “honour” is also their due; God the Father is to be honoured because he is the Father, and the Son is to be honoured as the Father is, and the Holy Spirit is not to be grieved, but to be highly esteemed and valued, and equally with the other two Persons: and “power” belongs to them all, and is seen in the works of creation, redemption, and sanctification.

**Ver. 2.** *For true and righteous are his judgments,* etc.] As in (see Gill on <sup><6658></sup>Revelation 15:3”), (see Gill on <sup><6670></sup>Revelation 16:7”): this is to be understood of God's judgments in general, and is a reason of the attribution of praise and glory to him; which may be said to be true, because, being threatened, are now fulfilled; and to be “righteous”, because according to the demerit of sin; and particularly God's judgments on antichrist are intended:

*for he hath judged the great whore;* Jezebel, Babylon, the Romish antichrist, before spoken of, (<sup><6670></sup>Revelation 17:1) not only by passing a sentence of condemnation on her, but by executing it, putting it into the hearts of the kings to hate and burn her, and utterly destroy her; and which is judging right, since it follows:

*which did corrupt the earth with her fornication*; drew the kings and inhabitants of the Roman empire into wicked and idolatrous practices, and so corrupted and destroyed them in soul, body, and estate; (see Gill on <sup><6118></sup>Revelation 11:18”) for this vision is contemporary with the seventh trumpet:

*and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand*; shed by her, (<sup><6820></sup>Revelation 18:20,24 16:6) and this being done in righteous judgment, is matter of joy and praise to the saints.

**Ver. 3.** *And again they said, Alleluia*, etc.] Or a “second time” they said it; they began and ended their solemn worship and service with it; so some psalms begin and end with this word, translated in the Old Testament by the words “Praise ye the LORD”, as in (<sup><6401></sup>Psalms 106:1,48 113:1,9) etc. and the repeating of the word shows how hearty, earnest, and constant they were in the work of praise on this account:

*and her smoke rose up for ever and ever*; they repeated their hallelujah, or gave one spiritual “huzza” more at the burning of Rome, and this followed: or the words may be rendered, “for her smoke rose”, etc. and so are a reason for the second “hallelujah”: it looks as if Rome, like another Sodom and Gomorrah, would sink into a sulphurous burning lake, and continue so: respect is had to the everlasting punishment of antichrist and his followers in hell, and to the everlasting burnings that will follow Rome's temporal destruction, which was an example and symbol of the vengeance of eternal fire; (see <sup><6411></sup>Revelation 14:11) so the Jews <sup>f423</sup> say of the burning of Rome, that its fire shall not be quenched for ever, and that “its smoke shall rise up for”.

**Ver. 4.** *And the four and twenty elders and the four beasts*, etc.] Mentioned in (<sup><6904></sup>Revelation 4:4,6) and who represent the churches of Christ and ministers of the Gospel in the several periods of time, these join in the chorus, and praise the Lord on the account of the destruction of Rome, and ruin of antichrist; so they are often heard of in this book, when any remarkable thing is done, or when there is any breaking forth of the kingdom and glory of Christ; (see <sup><6908></sup>Revelation 5:8-10,14 7:11 11:16,17 14:3 15:7) these

*fell down*; on their faces before God, as in (<sup><6910></sup>Revelation 4:10 11:16) in great reverence of him, and of his righteous judgments:

*and worshipped God that sat on the throne*; described in (<sup>660</sup>Revelation 4:2,3) this refers to the public worship of God in the churches, by the ministers and members of them:

*saying, Amen; Alleluia*; they said “Amen”, and signified their assent to what the much people in heaven had said, (<sup>660</sup>Revelation 19:1-3) and joined in the same “hallelujah”, or expressions of praise to God, for this great appearance of his in the downfall of Babylon. Both these words are used together in (<sup>1968</sup>Psalm 106:48), (see <sup>664</sup>Revelation 5:14).

**Ver. 5.** *And a voice came out of the throne*, etc.] Not from God the Father, that sat upon it, for the phrase,

*praise our God*, could not be said by him with propriety and pertinence; but rather from Christ, the Lamb, in the midst of the throne, who as Mediator could say of him to his people, my God and your God, and my Father and your Father, (<sup>607</sup>John 20:17) though it seems best to understand it of the voice of one of the angels about the throne, since one of these is afterwards spoken of, whom John would have worshipped, but was forbid, (<sup>660</sup>Revelation 19:9,10) and which may design either one of the ministering spirits, or a preacher of the Gospel, and a set of such, calling upon the saints to the discharge of their duty, or to return to it on this occasion:

*saying, praise our God, all ye his servants*; meaning not the ministers of the Gospel only, who serve in the Gospel of Christ, by preaching and defending it, and in the administration of Gospel ordinances to the comfort of the saints, but all the people of God; for though they are sons, and no more servants to sin and Satan, and the world, yet they are servants of God and of righteousness, and serve him willingly and cheerfully in a way of duty, and without slavish fear, and with a godly one, and from principles of love and gratitude, and without mercenary views and selfish ends; and these are called upon, as a part of their service, to say hallelujah, or to sing the praises of God for his judgments on antichrist; (see <sup>1340</sup>Psalm 134:1 135:1,2).

*and ye that fear him, both small and great*; who fear the Lord, not with a servile, but filial fear, with the new covenant grace of fear, which springs from, and is increased by, the goodness and grace of God; whether greater or lesser believers, fathers, young men, or children; whether Jews or

Gentiles, or of whatsoever nation, kindred, or people; (see <sup>f453</sup>Psalm 115:13 <sup>f618</sup>Revelation 11:18).

**Ver. 6.** *And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude*, etc.] Even of all the servants of the Lord, and them that fear him, small and great; a vast multitude of converted Jews and Gentiles, in the several parts of the world, who in answer to the voice out of the throne, which came with great power and energy, lift up their voices in praise to God, both for their own conversion, and for the downfall of Babylon:

*and as the voice of many waters*: falling down in a descent, or in rough and rocky places, which make a great noise, and is heard afar off; and such must be the united voice of so great a multitude of converts as will be gathered together everywhere at this time: the same metaphor is used of the voice of Christ in (<sup>f615</sup>Revelation 1:15)

*and as the voice of mighty thunderings*; violent claps of it, which are sometimes so loud that they rend the very heavens, and strike the inhabitants of the earth with the utmost consternation: these are the same voices which will be heard in the church when the seventh angel sounds his trumpet, (<sup>f615</sup>Revelation 11:15)

*saying, Alleluia*; or praise ye the Lord; they will call upon one another to celebrate the praises of God, on account of the above things, in the same manner, and using the same word the people in heaven, and the four and twenty elders and four living creatures, do; and this is the fourth time the word is used in this context, and confirms the observation that has been made, that this vision refers to the conversion of the Jews, which will quickly follow the destruction of Rome: and the Jews themselves have a notion, that when Rome is destroyed the Messiah will come; and so he will in his spiritual reign. They say <sup>f424</sup>,

“our redemption will be immediately upon the destruction of Rome.”

And again <sup>f425</sup>,

“the root of our redemption depends upon the destruction of Rome.”

The reason for their saying “hallelujah” follows,

*for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*; by whom is meant the Lord Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all, and God over all, blessed for ever, and is the Almighty; and though he was set up as King over the holy hill of Zion, and has reigned over the church in every age, and came as King into this world, though his kingdom was not of it, and at his resurrection was declared Lord and Christ, and his kingdom was then more manifest, and he has ever since displayed his kingly power in defending his church, and defeating the enemies of it; yet now will he reign more visibly and gloriously, his kingdom will be enlarged from one end of the earth to the other, and he will be King over all the earth, which will occasion great joy to Jews and Gentiles; (see <sup><3970></sup>Psalm 47:1,2 97:1) and (see Gill on “<sup><6117></sup>Revelation 11:17”).

**Ver. 7.** *Let us be glad, and rejoice, and give honour to him*, etc.] The saints particularly; the converted Jews will call upon one another to express their gladness at the glorious display of Christ's kingly power and authority, and at the destruction of his enemies, and the happy and comfortable state of his church and people; and to rejoice in him as the Lord their righteousness and strength, and to give him the honour and glory of salvation, and to return him thanks for all the benefits they shall have received from him, particularly on account of what follows:

*for the marriage of the Lamb is come*; that is, of Christ, the Son of God, with the Jewish church more especially; there was a secret betrothing of all the elect to Christ before the world began; and there is an open espousal of every individual of them at conversion; but the public and general solemnization of the nuptials will not be until the new Jerusalem church state takes place in the personal reign of Christ, hereafter mentioned, (<sup><620></sup>Revelation 21:1,2,9) but here, and as previous to that, there will be a very general and open marriage of Christ with the people of the Jews, who have long rejected and forsaken him; for if the conversion of a single person may be called a marriage with Christ, much more the conversion of such members; and which is often prophesied of under this metaphor of a marriage, as in (<sup><2314></sup>Isaiah 62:4,5 <sup><3019></sup>Hosea 2:19). And now the time will be come for the accomplishment of it, the evidence of which follows:

*and his wife hath made herself ready*, or “dressed herself”; by decking herself with jewels, and putting on her wedding garment provided for her, and given to her by her husband, the Lamb, as appears from the next verse: this preparation will lie partly in the number of converts that will be

brought into the Jewish church, which she will receive and clothe herself with, as with the ornament of a bride, (<sup>239B</sup>Isaiah 49:18) and partly by the exercise of the several graces of the Spirit upon Christ, comparable to the jewels of a bride, with which she will be adorned for her husband; and also by putting on the robe of his righteousness, hereafter mentioned, which the old Jewish synagogue rejected, and therefore was cast off, (<sup>50B</sup>Romans 10:3, <sup>42D</sup>Matthew 22:12,13). The Arabic version reads, “the marriage of the Lamb is now come with his spouse, prepared for him”; and the Ethiopic version, “the marriage of his Lamb is come, and the wife is prepared”; and that her preparation is not by her own merits and works of righteousness, but by the grace of her husband, is clear from the following verse. Mr. Daubuz, by “the marriage of the Lamb”, understands the first resurrection, and the state of the church at that time; and by “the fine linen”, the dress of the church, next mentioned, the incorruptible body of the saints compared to a garment, (<sup>45B</sup>1 Corinthians 15:53 <sup>44D</sup>2 Corinthians 5:2-4) and by those who are afterwards said to be “called to the marriage”, the converted nations in a mortal state: but all the saints will share in the first resurrection; besides, as yet the beast and false prophet are not destroyed, which must be before the first resurrection, as the following vision shows.

**Ver. 8.** *And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen,* etc.] Or “Byssine”: the “Byssus”, of which fine linen is made, is said to grow on a tree, in height like to a poplar, and its leaves like a willow, and to be brought out of Judea into Egypt, which the Egyptians used in most of their holy things <sup>f426</sup>. A dress neat and modest, and not like the attire of the whore of Rome, (<sup>67D</sup>Revelation 17:4) and this is said to be

*clean and white*, and is interpreted in the next clause:

*for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints*, or “righteousnesses”; not good works, or their own righteousness; for though these are evidences of faith, by which the saints are justified, and are what God has prepared for them, that they should walk in them; yet these are not comparable to fine linen, clean and white, but are like filthy rags, and cannot justify in the sight of God; but the righteousness of Christ is meant, and justification by that; for that is the only justifying righteousness of the saints: and though it is but one, yet it may be called “righteousnesses”, or “justifications”, in the plural number; partly because of the several seasons in which the act of justification passes, first in God's mind from eternity, next on Christ as the

surety, when he rose from the dead, and on all the elect in him, and then in the consciences of the saints when they believe, and the sentence of it will be notified and declared to men and angels at the last judgment; and partly because of the many persons that are justified by it, as also because of the excellency of it; so the Jews use the word in the plural number: the Targumist on (~~3084~~ Zechariah 3:4) paraphrases the text, “I will clothe thee” **Æwkz**, “with righteousnesses”<sup>f427</sup>; upon which words Jarchi has this note,

“change of beautiful garments is all one as if it had been said **twy kz** “righteousnesses”: and because sin is like to filthy garments, righteousness is like to garments beautiful and white.”

Christ's righteousness may be compared to fine linen, clean and white, because of its spotless purity; those that are arrayed with it being unblamable and irrefragable, and without spot and blemish, and without fault before the throne; with this the Jewish church will be clothed; all the Lord's people will be righteous, they will have on the best robe, and wedding garment, which was despised by the Jews in Christ's time, who refused to come to the marriage feast; and their being arrayed with it will be owing to the grace of Christ, who grants it; and so Christ's righteousness is called the gift of righteousness, the free gift, and gift by grace, and abundance of grace; and faith, which receives it, and puts it on, is the gift of God, (~~655~~ Romans 5:15-17 ~~408~~ Ephesians 2:8). Not only the garment is a gift of grace, but the putting of it on is a grant from Christ, and what he himself does, (~~2510~~ Isaiah 61:10 ~~3084~~ Zechariah 3:4).

**Ver. 9.** *And he saith unto me, write,* etc.] What follows, because of the importance of it, and to show the certainty of it, and that it may be regarded and remembered: the person speaking is either the voice from the throne, (~~695~~ Revelation 19:5) or the angel that attended John all along, and showed him this revelation, (~~600~~ Revelation 1:1) or the angel that proposed to show him the judgment of the great whore, (~~670~~ Revelation 17:1).

*Blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb;* by which is meant the Gospel ministry and ordinances, and communion in them, to which the Jews will be called to partake of in the latter day; these at the first of the Gospel dispensation are called a “dinner”, to which, the Jews were invited, but refused to come, and now a “supper”, because made in the evening of that dispensation; to which being called with an effectual calling, they will come and partake of it; on which account they are



pronounced blessed, being the bride, the Lamb's wife, having on his righteousness, partaking of his benefits, and being called unto, and made meet for eternal glory and happiness; or else these may design converted Gentiles, who will be invited to join with them, and will.

*And he saith unto me, these are the true sayings of God;* the Syriac version reads, “these my true words are of God”; being true, it is plain they are of God, and being of God, it is certain they are true; for he is the God of truth, and cannot lie, and therefore may be depended upon.

**Ver. 10.** *And I fell at his feet to worship him,* etc.] Being transported with the news he brought him of the marriage, or conversion of his countrymen the Jews, and struck with reverence and awe of the glory and majesty in which the angel appeared to him; and forgetting himself, that worship was only due to God, he behaved in this manner; which is not to be excused nor justified, as appears from the angel's words:

*and he said unto me, see thou do it not;* the words are in the original very short and concise, and are spoken in an abrupt manner, and in great haste; as fearing he would be guilty of idolatry, before he could speak all his mind, and use the arguments that were necessary to dissuade from it:

*I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus;* if this was one of the ministering spirits, he was a servant of the same Lord as John; and if he was a minister of the Gospel, he was still more literally a fellow servant of his, and of the apostles, and preachers of the Gospel; which is meant by the testimony of Jesus, that bearing testimony to the person, office, grace, obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ, and the glory following; and therefore being but a servant, and a servant in common with John and his brethren, was by no means to be worshipped; not the servant, but master; not the creature, but the Creator:

*worship God* and him only, even God the Father, Son, and Spirit; not the Father to the exclusion of the Son, the firstborn, whom all the angels are called upon to worship; nor of the Spirit, who is equally joined with the Father and Son in baptism, a part of religious worship, and in other parts of it also; but this excludes all creatures, angels, and men, things animate or inanimate, and images of them; the worshipping of which will now be no more, or at least will be quickly at an end.

*For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy* that is, the testimony of Jesus, or the Gospel which John and his brethren had, is the very spirit, life,

and soul of the prophecy of this book; for as all the prophets bore witness to Christ, so does the Spirit of God in this; or the testimony which they had, and bore to Christ, was equal to the spirit of prophecy with which this angel was endowed; so that he and they were upon an equal foot; and he was no more a proper object of divine and religious adoration than they were.

**Ver. 11.** *And I saw heaven opened*, etc.] This vision refers not to the same time the first seal does, (<sup><ref>Revelation 6:2</ref></sup> Revelation 6:2) for though a white horse, with a rider on it, is seen here, as there; that respects the first times of the Gospel, this the latter part of the dispensation of it; nor to the war in heaven between Michael and the dragon, and their angels, (<sup><ref>Revelation 12:7</ref></sup> Revelation 12:7) that issued in the downfall of Paganism in the Roman empire, this will issue in the downfall of the Papacy in it; nor to the personal coming of Christ to the last judgment, of which an account is given in the following chapter; but to the battle at Armageddon, to which the sixth vial is a preparation, and which is finished under the seventh, (<sup><ref>Revelation 16:13-17</ref></sup> Revelation 16:13-17) and what is briefly hinted at there is at large related here; in which Christ, the General, and his armies, on the one hand, and the kings of the earth, with the beast and false prophet, and their armies, on the other hand, appear to give battle to each other: and the issue of the battle is particularly represented, in order to have a view of which, “John saw heaven opened”: not literally, as at Christ's baptism, and at the stoning of Stephen, nor in a spiritual sense, by the blood of Christ, but visionally, as in (<sup><ref>Revelation 4:1</ref></sup> Revelation 4:1) and since heaven, often in this book, signifies the church on earth, a more glorious and comfortable state of the church may be designed; when her gates shall be opened continually, and not shut day nor night, to receive the forces of the Gentiles, and their kings, (<sup><ref>Isaiah 60:15</ref></sup> Isaiah 60:15) such a state as is referred to in (<sup><ref>Revelation 11:19 15:5</ref></sup> Revelation 11:19 15:5) to which visions this is contemporary; and it may denote a very glorious appearing of Christ, not in person, which will be after this, but in his kingdom and power, in defeating his enemies, and reigning spiritually with his saints: and it may also design the clear revelation and discerning John had of the following things:

*and behold a white horse* which, as in (<sup><ref>Revelation 6:2</ref></sup> Revelation 6:2) may be a symbol of the Gospel, and Gospel ministers, as there in the former, here in the latter part of the Gospel dispensation; signified by a horse, to denote the swift progress of the Gospel in the latter day, the majesty, power, and authority with which it will come, bearing down all opposition made

against it; and by a white horse, to express the purity of the Gospel, and of its preachers and professors, and the peace it publishes, and gives, and the joy it brings, and the triumphs that will attend it.

*And he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True:* that Christ is here meant, is evident from the description of his eyes, (<sup><6912></sup>Revelation 19:12) being the same as in (<sup><6914></sup>Revelation 1:14) and from his name, (<sup><6913></sup>Revelation 19:13) which is the peculiar name of the Son of God, (<sup><6900></sup>John 1:1,14) and he sits upon, and is bore by, and rides forth in the Gospel, and the ministry of it, with glory and majesty, and prosperously, (<sup><6903></sup>Psalms 45:3,4) and the characters of faithful and true well agree with him; (see Gill on "<sup><6907></sup>Revelation 3:7"). (See Gill on "<sup><6914></sup>Revelation 3:14"). He is "faithful and true" to God, who appointed him a Leader and Commander of the people, and to them he is the Commander of: and these characters well suit him now, when he will accomplish all the glorious things spoken of the church, relating to her spiritual and happy state in the latter day, and serve greatly to recommend him as a General.

*And in righteousness he doth judge and make war;* which is to be understood not of the last judgment, though that will be executed in righteousness, and therefore is called the righteous judgment, yet in that day there will be no war, no opposition, the wicked will at once submit; but of Christ's judging of his people, and avenging their blood on their enemies, and the remainder of them among Papists, Pagans, and Mahometans; who will be gathered together at Armageddon in battle array against them, when there will be an utter discomfiture of them in righteous judgment; for as in times past the beast made war with the saints and witnesses, and overcame them, Christ will enable his people to make war with him and his accomplices, and overcome them, as the sequel of this vision shows, Christ being at the head of them, though not in person, yet in power.

**Ver. 12.** *His eyes were as a flame of fire,* etc.] Which denotes the perspicuity and penetration of them, the omniscience of Christ to look into and discover the secret machinations, schemes, and devices of his enemies against his people, and his exercise of it in favour of them, his eyes, like a flame of fire, running to and fro on their behalf; and also this may signify the fierceness of his anger against the enemies of his people, the eyes of his glory being provoked by their cruelty and wickedness; and likewise the suddenness of their destruction, and the inevitableness of it.

*And on his head were many crowns*; for he has not only a crown, as the Creator and Governor of the universe, in right of nature, but he has one which his Father has put upon his head, when he set him as King over his holy hill of Zion, (<sup><4920B></sup>Psalm 21:3) and there is another which his mother, the church, crowned him with in the day of his espousals, (<sup><2781E></sup>Song of Solomon 3:11) and besides these, every believer puts a crown on his head, gives him the glory of their salvation, and all of them cast their crowns at his feet: to which may be added, that the crowns of all the kings of the earth are his; they reign by him, and are accountable to him. This part of the description may be expressive of that all power in heaven and earth, given to Christ at his resurrection, and exercised by him ever since; and particularly of the extensiveness of his kingdom at the time this vision refers to, when the kingdoms of this world shall be his, (<sup><66115></sup>Revelation 11:15) for this vision, and the seventh trumpet, are contemporary; and it may be a symbol of the many victories obtained by him, and of the last and closing one that should now be obtained by him.

*And he had a name written that no man knew but he himself*; which seems to be his name, the Son of God, as the unknown name of the overcomer, in (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 2:17) is a child of God; and the sense is, that his divine nature, in which he is the Son of God, is incomprehensible, and that the begetting or generation of him, as such, is ineffable, (<sup><3104></sup>Proverbs 30:4) and that without a divine revelation the name itself could not be known; or it could not be known that God had a Son, and that Christ is he, and bears that name, (<sup><4117></sup>Matthew 11:27 16:16,17) or else his name Immanuel. The incarnate God may be intended, which is a secret and wonderful name, and contains in it, without controversy, a great mystery, which cannot be comprehended by finite minds; or his name, **al p**, “wonderful, secret”, (<sup><2306></sup>Isaiah 9:6 <sup><07318></sup>Judges 13:18). This name is said to be “written”; that is, in the Scriptures of truth, in which it is revealed that Christ is the Son of God, and Immanuel. In (<sup><6616></sup>Revelation 19:16) the name of King of kings, etc. is said to be written on his vesture, and on his thigh; and the Ethiopic version makes this to be written on his crown or diadem, reading the words thus; “and upon his head a crown, and there was written in his diadem a name, and no man knew it, but he himself only”; as the high priest had “holiness to the Lord” written on his mitre. The Syriac version inserts a clause between the two last, “having names written”, and then follows, “and a name written”, etc. and so the Complutensian edition.

**Ver. 13.** *And he was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood,* etc.] Either in his own, by which he became the Saviour of his church and people; or else in the blood of his saints, he now comes to avenge; or rather in the blood of his enemies, with which he appears as stained, before the battle is fought, the victory being sure, and their slaughter unavoidable: the metaphor is taken from persons treading in a winepress, whose garments are stained with blood of grapes; (see <sup><6915></sup>Revelation 19:15 <sup><0491></sup>Genesis 49:11 <sup><2610></sup>Isaiah 63:1-3). Here may be also an allusion to the Roman general's vesture, which was sometimes purple or scarlet, in which he fought, as did Lucullus <sup>f428</sup>.

*And his name is called the Word of God;* the name of Christ, often used by John in his Gospel, epistles, and in this book, (<sup><8100></sup>John 1:1,14) (<sup><6100></sup>1 John 1:1 5:7 <sup><6002></sup>Revelation 1:2,9). Of the signification, reason, and import of this name, (see Gill on "<sup><8100></sup>John 1:1"). The reason why he is called by it here may be partly to express his greatness, glory, and majesty, this being a name which principally belongs to him, is a person, as the Creator of all things, and as previous to his incarnation; and partly because all the promises of God in his word, and which are all yea, and amen in Christ, will be now shortly fulfilled.

**Ver. 14.** *And the armies which were in heaven,* etc.] Not the angels, though they are God's host, and are the armies of the heavens; they are in heaven, and dwell there, and follow Christ, attend upon him, and minister to him, and have been sometimes represented by horses and horsemen, (<sup><1211></sup>2 Kings 2:11 6:17 <sup><3008></sup>Zechariah 1:8) and they are pure and holy creatures, and will come with Christ to judgment: but this vision refers not to the day of judgment; and besides, the saints are meant, as appears by their habit, for the fine linen, white and clean, is the righteousness of the saints, (<sup><6908></sup>Revelation 19:8) and the righteousness of angels and saints is not the same. Moreover, these are the same company described in (<sup><6974></sup>Revelation 17:14). The saints are in a state of warfare, have many enemies to fight with, sin, Satan, and the world; they are enlisted as volunteers under Christ, the Captain of salvation; they are provided with the whole armour of God, and are very numerous, and always more than conquerors through Christ: these are described by the place where they were, "in heaven"; not being glorified saints in heaven; with these indeed Christ will come to judgment, even with all his saints with him; but members of the church militant, said to be in heaven, because that is often called the kingdom of heaven; and because their names are written in

heaven, and they are of heavenly extract; they are born from above, and are partakers of the heavenly calling; they belong to heaven, they are citizens of it, and are pressing on to it. And these

*followed him*; Christ, their Leader and Commander in the exercise of grace, and in the discharge of duty; having gone on in his ways through a train of sufferings, and cleaved unto him, and now attend him; not to assist in fighting, but to add to the glorious and triumphant appearance of their General; and therefore are said to be

*upon white horses*; they had served Christ in his Gospel, which some of them had preached, and all professed, and had maintained the purity of it in doctrine and practice, and now triumphed in Christ, and along with him, riding upon horses of the same colour with his, as being his princes and nobles, and whom he had made kings as well as priests; the former may be signified by their horses; (see <sup><ref>Judges 5:10</ref></sup> Judges 5:10) and the latter by their following habit,

*clothed in fine linen, white and clean*; not the horses, but the armies on them; which designs not their inward purity, which was very glorious; nor their outward conversation garments, washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb; but the robe of Christ's righteousness, which is pure and spotless: these have no armour on, for they are not to strike a blow, only their General, who has the bloody garment on, is to tread the winepress, and destroy antichrist with the breath of his mouth, or with his sword proceeding out of it, as follows.

**Ver. 15.** *And out of his mouth goeth a sharp sword*, etc.] The Complutensian edition, and all the Oriental versions, with the Vulture Latin, read, "a sharp twoedged sword". The word of God, or the judiciary sentence of Christ according to it, and which he will fully execute, to the utter destruction of all his enemies; (see Gill on "<sup><ref>Revelation 1:16</ref></sup> Revelation 1:16") that with it he should smite the nations; the Gentiles, the Papists, the antichristian states, those that have adhered to Babylon, and have drunk of the wine of her fornication. This is predicted in (<sup><ref>Numbers 24:17-19</ref></sup> Numbers 24:17-19) and on account of this the nations will be angry under the sounding of the seventh trumpet, with which this vision is contemporary, (<sup><ref>Revelation 11:18</ref></sup> Revelation 11:18).

*And he shall rule them with a rod of iron*; use them with the utmost severity; the phrase is taken out of (<sup><ref>Psalm 2:9</ref></sup> Psalm 2:9) a prophecy of Christ,

and mentioned twice before in this book, (see Gill on “<sup>(617)</sup>Revelation 2:27”), (see Gill on “<sup>(618)</sup>Revelation 12:5”):

*and he treadeth the winepress of the fierceness and wrath of Almighty God*; the fierce wrath of God against sinners is compared to a winepress; and the wicked antichristian party are likened to clusters of grapes; who being ripe for destruction, are cast into it, and pressed, squeezed, and trodden down by the mighty power of Christ, the Word of God, whose vesture is therefore before said to be dipped in blood; the same metaphor is used in (<sup>(649)</sup>Revelation 14:19,20) the allusion seems to be to (<sup>(238)</sup>Isaiah 63:3,6).

**Ver. 16.** *And he hath on his vesture and on his thigh a name written*, etc.] This name, afterwards expressed, is said to be written on his vesture, in allusion to the custom of persons of note and eminence having their names interwoven in their garments, and which was sometimes done in letters of gold, as Zeuxis had<sup>f429</sup>; and it is expressive of the conspicuousness of Christ's kingdom, which now will come with observation; his judgments, the administrations of his kingly office, will be manifest, and he will reign before his ancients gloriously: and its being said to be written on his thigh may mean either that it was upon that part of his garment which covered his thigh; or else that it was also on his sword, which he sometimes girt upon his thigh. Mr. Daubuz has given an instance out of Victor Vitensis, of Clementianus, a monk, who had written on his thigh,

““a manichee” disciple of Jesus Christ.”

And this being done in Africa, he supposes it to be a Phoenician custom continued. It may here denote the perpetuity of Christ's name, power, and dominion, which will continue to the latest posterity, (<sup>(197)</sup>Psalm 72:17) which spring from the thigh; and it may denote the subjection of his people to him, signified by the putting the hand under the thigh, (<sup>(124)</sup>Genesis 24:2). And this name is

*King of kings and Lord of lords*; which will well suit him now when he shall be openly King over all the earth; (see Gill on “<sup>(674)</sup>Revelation 17:14”).

**Ver. 17.** *And I saw an angel standing in the sun*, etc.] By whom is meant, not the angel of the fourth vial, who poured it on the sun, taken in another sense than here, and therefore could not stand in it; nor the archangel with the last trumpet, for as yet the dead rise not, nor does the judgment come on; nor one of the ministering spirits; nor Christ himself, for he is the great



God, to whose supper this angel invites, but a minister of the Gospel; or rather a set of Gospel ministers, such as in (~~664B~~ Revelation 14:1-6) who may be said to stand in the sun, in like manner as the woman, the church, was seen clothed with it, (~~661B~~ Revelation 12:1) and may denote the conspicuousness of Gospel preachers; for, as the church now will be established upon the top of the mountains, so her teachers shall not be removed into corners any more, but her eyes shall behold her teachers; and also the clear sight they shall have of the doctrines and mysteries of the Gospel, who shall now see eye to eye; and particularly the further breakings forth of the glory of the latter day, and the ensuing victory of Christ over all his enemies; and also shows the great strength of their sight, who, far from being like moles and bats, will be able both to look upon the sun, and to stand in it: and it may likewise signify the glory and majesty of Christ's kingdom; the comfortable influence of him, the sun of righteousness, who will now arise upon his people with healing in his wings; and the steadfastness of Christ's ministers to him, and his pure Gospel, and the glorious truths of it.

*And he cried with a loud voice*; that he might be heard far and near, having something of moment and importance to publish:

*saying to all the fowls that fly in the midst of heaven*; meaning not the barbarous nations, the Goths, and Vandals, and Saracens, which overrun and destroyed the western and eastern empires; these times are too late for them, they rose up under the six first trumpets; nor devils and unclean spirits, which will prey upon and torment antichrist, and his followers, in hell; nor military and avaricious men among Protestants, but Christian princes, and their people, are designed; they are such as are in heaven, the church, and of note there, who will share the spoils of the antichristian people, and possess their kingdoms, substance, and estates: these are invited by the angel, saying,

*come and gather yourselves together unto the supper of the great God.* The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and Syriac versions, read, "to the great supper of God"; and so the Complutensian edition; not the Lord's supper, where not the flesh of men, but the flesh of Christ is eat, by faith; nor the marriage supper of the Lamb, which will be of another kind than this; nor is any spiritual repast intended, such as living by faith on Christ, and supping with him, being entertained with his promises, presence, and the discoveries of his love; but the slaughter of Christ's enemies, and his

victory over them, which is his sacrifice; and these are the guests he bids, (see <sup><3007></sup>Zephaniah 1:7) and whom he calls to share in the conquest and spoils, and to express their joy on this occasion: “the great God” is no other than Christ, the general of the armies in heaven, called before the Word of God, and King of kings, and Lord of lords; who will gain this victory, and will be known to be the great God by the judgment he will execute. This is a proof of our Lord's divinity; (see <sup><5013></sup>Titus 2:13).

**Ver. 18.** *That ye may eat the flesh of kings*, etc.] Of the earth, and of the whole world, who will fall in the battle at Armageddon; (see <sup><6164></sup>Revelation 16:14 19:19) and design either those antichristian kings and states, which have drunk of the wine of Rome's fornication, and will bewail the downfall of Babylon, (<sup><6688></sup>Revelation 18:3,9) or those Pagan kings which will be drawn in by the pope and Turk, to aid and assist in this war, or both, when, upon the defeat of them, the Christian princes will seize upon, possess, and enjoy their kingdoms and dominions, which is meant by eating their flesh; (see Gill on “<sup><6676></sup>Revelation 17:16”).

*And the flesh of captains*; of their generals, and officers under them:

*and the flesh of mighty men*; the common soldiers, who are so called, (<sup><2445></sup>Jeremiah 46:5) who will be rifled and plundered:

*and the flesh of horses, and of them that sit on them*; whose rich trappings and clothes will be taken away from them:

*and the flesh of all men, both free and bond, both small and great*; that is, the substance of all the inhabitants of the antichristian empire, both eastern and western, of whatsoever rank, state, and condition they be, (<sup><6136></sup>Revelation 13:16). The metaphors are taken from, and there is a manifest allusion to, (<sup><2597></sup>Ezekiel 39:17-20) and the whole denotes the entire slaughter and utter ruin of the whole antichristian army, and the certainty of Christ's victory over it before hand; and also the destruction of all that are the followers of antichrist, throughout his dominions, which will now wholly fall into the hands of the saints, and be enjoyed by them.

**Ver. 19.** *And I saw the beast*, etc.] Not the devil, for after this he is taken and bound for a thousand years, and then loosed, and laid hold on again, and cast into the lake of fire; not but that this war will be by his instigation, and under his influence, (<sup><6164></sup>Revelation 16:14) not the Roman Pagan empire, which has been destroyed long ago, under the sixth seal, and was the issue of the battle between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and

his; but the antichristian civil powers, or antichrist in his civil capacity; and which, though it may chiefly regard the western antichrist, and the remains of the Latin idolatry, yet may take in the eastern antichrist, or the Mahometan powers, which may all join together in this battle; the beast will survive for a while the downfall of his seat, Babylon or Rome.

*And the kings of the earth;* these, as they stand distinguished from the beast, or the antichristian kings, and civil states, may design as many of the Pagan kings and princes, as the pope and Turk by their emissaries can persuade to assist them in this war; (see Gill on “<sup>(664)</sup>Revelation 16:14”).

*And their armies gathered together;* at Armageddon, or in the valley of Jehoshaphat, (<sup>(666)</sup>Revelation 16:16 <sup>(212)</sup>Joel 3:2,12)

*to make war against him that sat on the horse;* the white horse, (<sup>(691)</sup>Revelation 19:11) as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions read, which must be downright folly and madness, since he is the Word of God, the great God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords:

*and against his army,* (<sup>(694)</sup>Revelation 19:14) who, though unarmed, and only clothed in fine linen, have nothing to fear, since Christ, the Captain of their salvation, is at the head of them.

**Ver. 20.** *And the beast was taken,* etc.] At the first onset, as soon as ever the battle begun, and carried away captive, as it was threatened he should, (<sup>(630)</sup>Revelation 13:10) and this by Christ, who will destroy him with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming, (<sup>(518)</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:8).

*And with him the false prophet;* that is, the second beast in (<sup>(631)</sup>Revelation 13:11-14) as appears by the characters by which he is here described, or antichrist in his ecclesiastic capacity; that is, the pope with his clergy: and indeed, when the antichristian princes and states are taken and destroyed, which are the support of the Papacy, that must in consequence sink, be crushed and ruined; the Alexandrian copy reads, “and they that are with him, the false prophet Jezebel”; the false prophetess and her children, who will now be killed with death, (<sup>(620)</sup>Revelation 2:20,23)

*that wrought miracles before him:* the beast, or the civil antichristian powers, even signs and lying wonders, which were approved of, and applauded by him, by which, believing them, he was confirmed in antichristian principles:

*with which he deceived them that had the mark of the beast, and them that worshipped his image*; the several subjects of the antichristian states; (see <sup><6634></sup>Revelation 13:14-17) but none of God's elect, who cannot be seduced by such means, (<sup><4024></sup>Matthew 24:24).

*These both were cast alive into a lake of fire burning with brimstone*; which is the second death, (<sup><6208></sup>Revelation 21:8). The severe punishment of antichrist, considered in both his capacities, civil and ecclesiastic, is expressed by being “cast into a lake of fire”, not material fire, but the wrath of God, which will be poured out like fire, and will be intolerable; and by this lake “burning with brimstone”, which, giving a nauseous stench, aggravates the punishment. Says R. Joden <sup>f430</sup>, when a man smells the smell of brimstone, why does his breath draw back at it (or catch)? because he knows he shall be judged with it in the world to come. The allusion seems to be to the place where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which is become a sulphurous lake, and is an emblem of the vengeance of eternal fire, (<sup><6107></sup>Jude 1:7) and these two are said to be “cast alive” into it, which shows that they will not only suffer a corporeal death at this battle, and in the issue of it, but will be destroyed, body and soul, in hell: the phrase denotes the awfulness, inevitableness, and severity of their punishment; there seems to be some reference to the earth's swallowing up Korah and his company alive, (<sup><0463></sup>Numbers 16:33) (see <sup><2071></sup>Daniel 7:11).

**Ver. 21.** *And the remnant were slain*, etc.] Not only the kings of the earth, and their armies, that will now be gathered together, but all the remains of Papists, Pagans, and Mahometans, in the several parts of the world, even all the enemies of Christ: these will be slain

*with the sword of him that sat upon the horse*; upon the white horse, as the Ethiopic version reads; the Arabic version reads, that sat upon the throne,

*which sword proceedeth out of his mouth*, (<sup><6915></sup>Revelation 19:15) and is the word of God, or the judiciary sentence of Christ according to it; and the meaning is, either that these shall be subdued, conquered, and converted by the word; and so are fitly called a “remnant”, a remnant according to the election of grace among the antichristian party; and which sense agrees with (<sup><6113></sup>Revelation 11:13) or else that they will be convicted and confounded, and not be able to stand against the light and evidence of the word of God, and will be sentenced by Christ to everlasting punishment; and it may be partly one, and partly the other.

*And all the fowls were filled with their flesh;* all the Christian princes and people will be satisfied with their kingdoms, riches, and wealth, and will rejoice at their destruction, and in the righteousness of God, which will be displayed in it; and now the world being clear of all Christ's enemies, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, the way will be prepared for Christ's open and glorious kingdom in it.

# CHAPTER 20

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 20

This chapter contains the binding of Satan, the saints' thousand years' reign with Christ, the loosing of Satan again, the destruction of him, and the Gog and Magog army, and the last judgment: the angel that is to bind Satan is described by his descent from heaven; by his having the key of the bottomless pit, and a great chain in his hand; and by the use he made of them, laying hold on Satan, binding him, casting him into the bottomless pit, and then shutting it up, and setting a seal on him; by all which he will be prevented from deceiving the nations for the space of a thousand years, ([Revelation 20:1-3](#)). After this thrones are seen, with persons on them, to whom judgment is given; who are said to be such as had been martyrs for Jesus, and had not worshipped the beast, or professed his religion; whose happiness is represented by living and reigning with Christ a thousand years, when others will not; the second death will have no power on them; they will be the priests of God, and Christ, and reign with him during the said term, having a part in the first resurrection, ([Revelation 20:4-6](#)). At the expiration of which term Satan will be loosed, and go out of prison, deceive the nations, and gather Gog and Magog to battle; who, being exceeding numerous, will cover the breadth of the earth, encompass the camp and city of the saints, when fire will come down from heaven and destroy them, and Satan will be cast into the lake of fire, where the beast and false prophet are, and be tormented for ever and ever, ([Revelation 20:7-10](#)). And next an account is given of the general Judgment; and the judge is described by the throne he sat on, a white cloud, and by his majesty, which is such, that the heavens and the earth flee from before him, ([Revelation 20:11](#)). And next the persons judged are described by their common state, the dead; by their age or condition, great and small, and by their position, standing before God; and then an account of the procedure, or rule of judgment; the books are opened, and the execution of judgment according to what is found in the books, ([Revelation 20:12](#)) in order to which the sea, death, and the grave, give up the dead in them, and the two last are cast into the lake, and with them those who are not in the book of life, ([Revelation 20:13,14](#)).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw an angel come down from heaven*, etc.] All Christ's enemies, and Satan's instruments being removed, the devil is left alone, and only stands in the way of Christ's kingdom; and what will be done to him, and how he will be in the issue disposed of, this vision gives an account: by the "angel" John saw, is not to be understood Constantine the great; for though he is the man child that was taken up to God, and his throne, being advanced to the empire, yet he cannot, with that propriety, be said to come down from heaven; and though he vanquished the Heathen emperors, in which the dragon presided, and cast Paganism out of the empire, by which the devil ruled in it, yet the binding of Satan is another kind of work, and seems too great for him; and besides, did not take place in his time, as will be seen hereafter: nor is an apostle, or a minister of the Gospel intended; such are indeed called angels in this book, and may be said to come down from heaven, because they have their commission from thence; and particularly the apostles had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, but not the key of the bottomless pit; and a chain and system of Gospel truths, which they made good use of for the establishing of Christ's kingdom, and weakening of Satan's, but not such a chain as is here meant; and they had the power of binding and loosing, or of declaring things lawful or unlawful, but not of binding and loosing of Satan; nor was he bound in the apostolic age: nor is one of the ministering spirits, or a deputation of angels designed; for though Christ will be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, and will make use of them, both to gather together his elect, and to cast the wicked into the lake of fire, yet not to bind Satan; but the Lord Jesus Christ himself is this angel, who is the angel of God's presence, and of the covenant; and who is in this book called an angel, (<sup>6612</sup> Revelation 7:2 10:1) to whom all the characters here well agree, and to whom the work of binding Satan most properly belongs; for who so fit to do it, or so capable of it, as the seed of the woman, that has bruised serpent's head, or as the Son of God, who was manifested to destroy the works of the devil, yea, to destroy him himself; and who dispossessed multitudes of devils from the bodies of men, and is the strong man armed that dislodges Satan from the souls of men, and is the same with Michael, who drove him from heaven, and cast him out from thence before, (<sup>6613</sup> Revelation 12:7,8). And his coming down from heaven is not to be understood of his incarnation, or of his coming from thence by the assumption of human nature; for Satan was not bound by him then, as will be seen hereafter; but of his second coming, which will be from heaven, where he now is, and will be local, visible, and personal: of no other coming of his does this book speak, as seen by John,



or as future; nor will the order of this vision, after the ruin of the beast and false prophet, admit of any other.

*Having the key of the bottomless pit:* the abyss or deep, the same out of which the beast ascended, (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 11:7 17:8). And the key of this becomes no hand so well as his who has the keys of hell and death, (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 1:18) who has all power in heaven and in earth, and has the power of hell, of opening and shutting it at his pleasure, which is signified by this phrase; (see <sup>610B</sup>Revelation 9:1). The Ethiopic version reads, “the key of the sun”, where some have thought hell to be; and yet the same version renders the word, the deep, in (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 20:3).

*And a great chain in his hand;* the key in one hand, and the chain in another; by which last is meant, not any material chain, with which spirits cannot be bound, nor indeed sometimes bodies possessed by evil spirits, (<sup>410B</sup>Mark 5:3,4) but the almighty power of Christ, which he will now display in binding Satan faster and closer than ever.

Ver. 2 *And he laid hold on the dragon*, etc.] By whom is meant not Paganism, for that was destroyed in the Roman empire under the sixth seal, and was the consequence of the war between Michael and his angels, and the dragon and his; and before this time it will be destroyed in other parts under the sixth and seventh vials, when the kings of the earth, being gathered together at Armageddon, will be slain, and the cities of the nations will fall, not only Papal, but Pagan, and Mahometan; and what will not will be converted, for before this time the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of Christ: but the devil himself is intended, so called, partly because of his great power, authority, and cruelty he has exercised in the world; and because of the venom and poison of idolatry, superstition, false doctrine, and worship, with which he has infected the inhabitants of it.

*That old serpent;* so called with respect to his cunning and subtlety, as well as his antiquity, being from the beginning of the creation, and having as early beguiled our first parents;

*which is the devil and Satan;* the accuser of God and men, and the adversary of them both. The Complutensian edition and Syriac version add, “which deceiveth the whole world”; and the Arabic version, “the deceiver of the whole world”; which seems to be taken out of (<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 12:9), (see Gill on “<sup>610B</sup>Revelation 12:9”). Him Christ “laid hold on”, and whom he held fast, as the word signifies: Christ will now take him, apprehend

him, and detain him, as his prisoner; in the wilderness, Satan only felt the dint of his sword, the written word of God, and was obliged to leave him: but now he will feel the weight of his hand, and the lighting down of his arm, with the indignation of his anger; in the agony or conflict with him in the garden, he was conquered by prayer; and on the cross Christ destroyed him through death, but now he will be seized by his power, and crushed under his hand.

*And bound him a thousand years*, with the great chain he had in his hand: the devil is in chains now, is under the power of divine Providence, and can do nothing without divine permission; but this chain is long, and he appears oftentimes to have great liberty, and ranges about the air and earth, and does much mischief; but now he will be so bound by the power of Christ over him, that he will not be able to stir hand or foot, to disturb the saints, or deceive the nations, whether with false worship, and false doctrine, or by stirring them up to persecute the saints. So of the devil, Asmodeus, it is said in the Apocrypha,

“And Raphael was sent to heal them both, that is, to scale away the whiteness of Tobit's eyes, and to give Sara the daughter of Raguel for a wife to Tobias the son of Tobit; and to bind Asmodeus the evil spirit; because she belonged to Tobias by right of inheritance. The selfsame time came Tobit home, and entered into his house, and Sara the daughter of Raguel came down from her upper chamber.” (Tobit 3:17)

that the angel Raphael, *whrsa* “bound him”. The space of a thousand years is not a certain number for an uncertain, or a large and indeterminate space of time, as in (~~490B~~ Psalm 90:4 105:8) these years are to be taken, not indefinitely, but definitely, for just this number of years exactly, as appears from their having the article prefixed to them; and are called afterwards, no less than four times, *τα χιλια ετη*, “the thousand years”, or these thousand years, (~~490B~~ Revelation 20:3-5,7) and from the things which are attributed to the beginning and ending of these years, which fix the epoch, and period of them; as the binding of Satan, when they begin, and the loosing of him when they end, as well as the reign of the saints with Christ during the whole time; to which may be added, the resurrection of the saints at the commencement of them, and the resurrection of the wicked at the close: but the great question is, whether they are begun or not? if they are begun, when they began; and if not, when they will. Some think that

they began either at the birth of Christ, or at his resurrection, or at the destruction of Jerusalem. I put these together, because they were all in one century, within the compass of seventy years, or thereabout; so that if the thousand years began at either of them, they must end in the same century, in 1100. Now though, upon Christ's coming Satan fell like lightning from heaven, and multitudes of men, possessed with devils, were dispossessed by Christ, and he that had the power of death, the devil, was destroyed by him; and upon the preaching of the Gospel by the apostles in the Gentile world, the prince of the world was cast out, his oracles were struck dumb, multitudes were converted, and churches were set up everywhere, yet still Satan was not bound: he was not bound before the death of Christ; witness the many bodies of men possessed by him; his tempting Christ himself in the wilderness; his attacks upon him in the garden, and on the cross; his putting it into the heart of Judas to betray him; and filling the chief priests and scribes with malice and envy against him, to seek his death, which they brought about: nor was he bound, so as not to deceive the Jews, either before or after the death of Christ, nor is he to this day; they were in Christ's time under the influence of their father the devil, whose lust they would do, and did, in putting Christ to death; and after his death, they were instigated by Satan to persecute his apostles in Judea, and elsewhere; and though after the destruction of Jerusalem they had no more power to act in this way, yet they had no less ill will and malice against the Christians, and are to this day filled with enmity against them, and are led captive by Satan, and given up to believe a lie, that the Messiah is not come, and to reject the true Messiah, and to expect a false one: and as for the Heathen world, notwithstanding the progress of the Gospel in it, yet for the first three hundred years Paganism was the established religion of the Roman empire; and Christianity was everywhere spoken against, despised, and persecuted, and sometimes triumphed over, as if it was extinct; and Satan could never be said to be bound, and in prison himself, when he cast such multitudes into prison, and caused them to have tribulation ten days, (<sup>(4120)</sup> Revelation 2:10) in which so many martyrs suffered; nor did Satan appear to be bound, with respect to the church; the mystery of iniquity began to work in the apostle's times, and there were then many antichrists in the world, deceivers, false teachers and heretics; there was a synagogue of Satan, (<sup>(4119)</sup> Revelation 2:9) and such a set of vile persons under the name of Christians, as scarce ever was in the world; to which may be added, the great decline of love, and other graces, and of the purity of doctrine and worship in the best churches, and the many contentions among themselves,

in which Satan had a great hand, and therefore could not be bound: moreover, some hundreds of years before the thousand years ended, beginning from either of the above dates, the man of sin, the son of perdition, the pope, or western antichrist, was revealed, whose coming is after the working of Satan, (<sup>5109</sup>2 Thessalonians 2:9) and therefore surely he could not be bound then; besides, Mahomet, the eastern antichrist, sprung up, who opened the bottomless pit, and let out the smoke of it, by the Alcoran he delivered, and the false worship he set up: nor was there anything in the eleventh century, which answered to the loosing of Satan, to the Gog and Magog army, their war with the saints, and the issue of it; nor were the nations then more deceived than they had been in some centuries past; at least they were deceived in centuries past, both by the pope and Mahomet, which they would not have been, had Satan been bound then: to which may be subjoined, that if Satan was loosed, then he cannot be said to be loosed a little season, as in (<sup>6115</sup>Revelation 20:3) in comparison of the thousand years, as that must be understood; since it is now between six and seven hundred years since, which is more than half a thousand years. Others begin these years at Constantine's coming to the imperial throne; but though there was at that time a great spread of the Gospel, an enlargement of Christ's kingdom, and a weakening of Satan's, yet Satan was far from being bound; (see <sup>6127</sup>Revelation 12:7,8 13:15) witness the flood of errors and heresies which he quickly brought in, as the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies, the one confounding the natures, the other dividing the person of Christ; the Pelagian heresy, which obscured the grace of God, and advanced the free will of man; the Macedonian heresy, which denied the divinity of the Spirit: and especially the Arian heresy, which was opposed to the deity of Christ, and which introduced great contentions and confusion the churches, and issued in a violent persecution of them, being embraced by the sons of Constantine: not to take notice of Julian, an Heathen emperor, ascending the throne, who by many devilish arts endeavoured to extirpate Christianity; nor what has been observed before, the rise of both Mahomet in the east, and the Romish antichrist in the west, which were both within this period; in process of time the western empire was overrun by the Goths and Vandals, and the eastern empire by the Saracens and Turks; to which may be added, the violent persecutions of the Waldenses and Albigenes, before the year 1300, about which time the thousand years must cease, according to this computation, for opposing the pope of Rome, and who were slain where Satan had his seat, (<sup>6123</sup>Revelation 2:13) and therefore not bound; nor was

there anything happened in that century which might answer to the loosing of him. Others date these thousand years from the Reformation, and so not much more than two hundred of them are yet passed; but that Satan was not bound then, and is not now, is manifest. All the Popish nations have not been reformed, but still remain under the deception; and some, that have been, have revolted again; and the devil has continued to deceive the nations with that false worship, and to stir them up to persecute the reformed. Witness the burning of them here in Queen Mary's days, the massacres in France and Ireland, the present inquisition in Spain and Portugal, and the persecution of the Hugonots in France, and other Protestants elsewhere: and this is further evident from the decline in the reformed churches, both as to doctrine, discipline, and conversation; from the spread of errors and heresies of all kinds ever since, and especially in our age; and from the general profaneness and infidelity of the times, which, when considered, no man in his senses can ever think that Satan is bound; nor indeed will he be bound, or these thousand years begin, till after the conversion of the Jews, and the bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles, and the destruction of all the antichristian powers, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan, as appears from the order of this vision, and its connection with the preceding chapter.

**Ver. 3.** *And cast him into the bottomless pit*, etc.] Or deep, into which the devils desired they might not be sent, and which they dreaded as a torment, it may be, because a place of confinement, (<sup><408></sup>Luke 8:31 <sup><408></sup>Matthew 8:29) for this is called a prison, (<sup><607></sup>Revelation 20:7) and is distinguished from the lake of fire, into which the devil is afterwards cast, (<sup><600></sup>Revelation 20:10).

*And shut him up*; that so he might not rove about in the air, nor go to and fro in the earth, nor walk about like a roaring lion, seeking to affright, disturb, or devour:

*and set a seal upon him*; or upon the door of the pit, for further security, as was upon the stone at the mouth of the lion's den, (<sup><206></sup>Daniel 6:17) and of Christ's sepulchre, (<sup><476></sup>Matthew 27:66). The Jews <sup>f431</sup> make mention of a stone they call "Shetijah", with which the Lord of the world "sealed the mouth of the great deep", or bottomless pit, at the beginning; but here not that, but Satan in it, is sealed. The Alexandrian copy reads, "and sealed him firmly", so that it was impossible for him to break out: the end of this apprehension, binding, imprisonment, and security of Satan is,

*that he should deceive the nations no more*; that is, by drawing them into idolatry, false worship, and false doctrine; and by exciting them to make war against the saints, or to persecute them, as appears from (<sup>(618)</sup>Revelation 20:8) as he had done before; and it is notorious enough that he has deceived them both these ways; he deceived the Pagan nations not only before, but since the coming of Christ, to worship the Heathen deities; and the Papists, who are called Gentiles, or nations, (<sup>(619)</sup>Revelation 11:2) to fall down to idols of gold, silver, stone, and wood; and the nation of the Jews to entertain a false and deluded notion of the Messiah; and all of them, in their turns, to persecute the people of God, as the Jews at the death of Stephen, and afterwards; the Pagan emperors for the first three hundred years after Christ; the Papists from the rise of the beast, who had power given him to make war with the saints, and overcome them; but now he will be under such restraint, and in such close confinement, that he will not be able to move the wicked nations to anything of this kind, as he will when he is loosed at the end of the thousand years; nor will he be able so much as to tempt any of the saints, during this term of time, nor give them the least molestation or uneasiness.

*Till the thousand years shall be fulfilled*; or ended, the whole space of them run out:

*and after that he must be loosed a little season*; a small space of time, in comparison of the thousand years; how long it will be exactly, cannot be said; and this “must” be, not because he cannot be held any longer, or through any weakness in Christ; but because of the decree of God, who has so appointed it, for the glorifying of himself, in the salvation of his people, and in the final destruction of the devil, and the Gog and Magog army.

**Ver. 4.** *And I saw thrones, and they sat upon them*, etc.] Besides the throne of God the Father, and the throne of glory, on which the Son of God sits, and the twelve thrones for the twelve apostles of the Lamb; there will be thrones set, or pitched, for all the saints, (<sup>(200)</sup>Daniel 7:9) who will sit on them, in the character of kings, and as conquerors, and shall sit quiet, and undisturbed, and be in perfect ease, and peace, for they that sit on them are the same persons hereafter described in this verse; for after the binding of Satan, an account is given of the happiness and glory of the saints during that time:

*and judgment was given unto them*; that is, power, dominion, regal authority, possession of a kingdom, answerable to their character as kings,

and to their position, sitting on thrones, (<sup>21072</sup>Daniel 7:22,27) unless it should be rather understood of justice being done them, which does not so manifestly take place in the present state of things, and of which they sometimes complain; but now righteous judgment will be given for them, and against their enemies; their persons will be openly declared righteous; their characters will be cleared of all false imputations fastened on them; and their works and sufferings for Christ will be taken notice of in a way of grace, and rewarded in a very glorious manner. And so it may respect their being judged themselves, but not their judging of others, the wicked, which is the sole work of Christ; nor will the wicked now be upon the spot to be judged; nor is that notion to be supported by (see Gill on “<sup>4028</sup>Matthew 19:28”), (see Gill on “<sup>4012</sup>1 Corinthians 6:2”), (see Gill on “<sup>4013</sup>1 Corinthians 6:3”). The Jews fancy that their chief men shall judge the world in the time to come; for so they say <sup>f432</sup>,

“in future time, (or in the world to come,) the holy blessed God will sit, and kings will place thrones for the great men of Israel, and they shall sit and judge the nations of the world with the holy blessed God:”

but the persons here meant are not Jews, but sufferers for the sake of Jesus, as follows:

*and I saw the souls of them that were beheaded for the witness of Jesus, and for the word of God:* these, with the persons described in the next clause, are they who will sit on thrones, during the thousand years of Satan's being bound, and will have judgment given them; even such who have bore witness to the truth of Jesus being the Son of God, the true Messiah, and the only Saviour of sinners, and to him as the essential Word of God, or to the written word of God, the whole Gospel, all the truths and doctrines of it; and who have been beheaded for bearing such a testimony, as John the Baptist was, the first of the witnesses of Jesus: and since this kind of punishment was a Roman one, it seems particularly to point at such persons who suffered under the Roman Pagan emperors, and to design the same souls said to be under the altar, and to cry for vengeance, (<sup>4010</sup>Revelation 6:9). This clause, in connection with the former, is differently rendered; the Syriac version renders it thus, “and judgment was given to them, and to the souls that were beheaded”, etc. the Arabic version, “and to them was given the judgment the souls killed”, etc. the Ethiopic version, “and then I saw a seat, and the son of man sat upon it,



and he rendered to them judgment for the souls of them that were slain for the law of the Lord Jesus”.

*And which had not worshipped the beast, neither his image, neither had received his mark upon their foreheads, or in their hands,* (see <sup><630></sup>Revelation 13:1,4,14-16). This describes such who shall have made no profession of the Popish religion, nor have supported it in any way; who shall not have joined in the idolatry of the Romish antichrist, but shall have protested against it, and departed from it, and shall have adhered to Christ, and to the true worship of God; (see <sup><640></sup>Revelation 14:1 15:2). And so this, with the preceding character, includes all the saints that lived under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, to the destruction of antichrist, and the setting up of Christ's kingdom; not that these martyrs and confessors, or even all the saints of their times, are the only persons that shall share in the glory and happiness of the thousand years' reign of Christ, and binding of Satan; for all the saints will come with Christ, and all the dead in Christ will rise first, or be partakers of the first resurrection; and all that are redeemed by his blood, of whatsoever nation, or in whatsoever age of the world they have lived, even from the beginning of it, shall be kings and priests, and reign with him on earth, (<sup><345></sup>Zechariah 14:5 <sup><313></sup>1 Thessalonians 3:13 4:14,16 <sup><610></sup>Revelation 5:9,10) though John only takes notice of these, because the design of this book, and of the visions shown to him, was only to give a prophetic history of the church, from his time, to the end of the world; and these particularly are observed to encourage the saints under sufferings for Christ:

*and they lived;* meaning not spiritually, for so they did before, and while they bore their testimony to Christ, and against antichrist, and previous to their death; nor in their successors, for it would not be just and reasonable that they should be beheaded for their witness of Christ and his word, and others should live and reign with Christ in their room and stead; nor is this to be understood of their living in their souls, for so they live in their separate state; the soul never dies; God is not the God of the dead, but of the living: but the sense is, that they lived again, as in (<sup><615></sup>Revelation 20:5) they lived corporeally; their souls lived in their bodies, their bodies being raised again, and reunited to their souls, their whole persons lived; or the souls of them that were beheaded lived; that is, their bodies lived again, the soul being sometimes put for the body, (<sup><910></sup>Psalms 16:10) and this is called the first resurrection in the next verse:

*and reigned with Christ a thousand years*; as all that suffer with him will, and as all that will live godly must, and do, (<sup><S12></sup>2 Timothy 2:12) (<sup><S12></sup>2 Timothy 3:12). Christ being descended from heaven, and having bound Satan, and the dead saints being raised, and the living ones changed, he will reign among them personally, visibly, and gloriously, and in the fullest manner; all the antichristian powers will be destroyed; Satan will be in close confinement; death, with respect to Christ and his people, will be no more; the heavens and the earth will be made new, and all things will be subject to him; and all his saints will be with him, and they shall reign with him; they shall be glorified together; they shall sit on the throne with him, have a crown of righteousness given them, and possess the kingdom appointed for them; they will reign over all their enemies; Satan will be bruised under their feet, being bound; the wicked will be shut up in hell, and neither will be able to give them any disturbance; and sin and death will be no more: this reign will not be in a sensual and carnal way, or lie in possessing worldly riches and honours, in eating and drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; the saints will not be in a mortal, but in an immortal state; the children of this resurrection will be like the angels; and this reign will be on earth, (<sup><S10></sup>Revelation 5:10) the present earth will be burnt up, and a new one formed, in which these righteous persons will dwell, (<sup><S13></sup>2 Peter 3:13) of which (see Gill on "<sup><S10></sup>Revelation 21:1") and it will last a thousand years; not distinct from, but the same with the thousand years in which Satan will be bound; for if they were distinct from them, and should commence when they are ended, the reign of Christ with his saints would be when Satan is loosed, which is utterly inconsistent with it. The Syriac version very rightly renders it, these thousand years, referring to those of Satan's binding. Nor are these thousand years to be understood prophetically, for as many years as there are days in a thousand years; for as this would defer the judgment of the wicked, and the ultimate glory of the saints, to a prodigious length of time, so it should be observed, that prophetic time will now be no longer, according to the angel's oath in (<sup><S15></sup>Revelation 10:6) but these are to be understood literally and definitely, as before, of just such an exact number and term of years; (see <sup><S13></sup>2 Peter 3:8) this is a perfect number, and is expressive of the perfection of this state, and is a term of years that neither Adam, nor any of his sons, arrived unto; but Christ the second Adam shall see his seed, and shall prolong his days longer than any of them, (<sup><S10></sup>Isaiah 53:10). It is an observation of the Jewish Rabbins <sup>f433</sup>, that the day in (<sup><S17></sup>Genesis 2:17) is the day of the holy blessed God (i.e. a thousand years), and therefore the first Adam did not

perfect, or fill up his day, for there wanted seventy years of it: and it is a notion that prevails with them, that the days of the Messiah will be a thousand years<sup>f434</sup>; and so they will be at his second coming, but not at his first, which they vainly expect, it being past: and also they say<sup>f435</sup>, that in these thousand years God will renew his world, and that then the righteous will be raised, and no more return to dust; which agrees with John's new heaven and new earth during this state, and with the first resurrection: and so Jerom, who was conversant with the Rabbins, says<sup>f436</sup> that the Jews expect a thousand years' reign.

**Ver. 5.** *But the rest of the dead*, etc.] Meaning not the dead saints, for they will be all raised together, but the wicked dead; and not them as morally or spiritually, but as corporeally dead: these

*lived not again until the thousand years were finished*; so that there will be such an exact term of years between the resurrection of the saints and the resurrection of the wicked; nor will there be any wicked living upon earth, or in bodies, during that time; for the wicked dead will not be raised with the saints at Christ's coming, and the wicked living will be destroyed in the conflagration of the world, and neither of them shall live again until the end of these years. This clause is left out in the Syriac version.

*This is the first resurrection*; which is not to be connected with the living again of the rest of the dead at the end of the thousand years, for that will be the second and last resurrection; but with the witnesses of Jesus, and the true worshippers of God living again, in order to reign with Christ a thousand years; for this resurrection is not meant of a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of grace; though the work of grace and conversion is sometimes so represented, it cannot be designed here; for such a resurrection the above witnesses and worshippers were partakers of before their sufferings, and which was antecedently necessary to their witness and worship; besides, this resurrection was future in John's time, and was what was to be done at once, and was peculiar to the commencement of the thousand years; whereas the spiritual resurrection was before his time, and has been ever since the beginning, and is successive in all ages, and not affixed to anyone period of time, though there may be more instances of it in one age than in another; nor is this ever called the first resurrection, nor can any reason be given why it should; for though one man may be converted before another, his conversion cannot be called the first resurrection, since there are many instances of this nature before, and many

more after; besides, at this time, there will be none of God's people to be raised in this sense; they will be all quickened and converted before; the nation of the Jews will be born again, and the fulness of the Gentiles brought in; to which may be added, that if the first resurrection is to be understood in a spiritual sense, then the second resurrection of the wicked dead, at the end of the thousand years, must be understood in like manner: nor is a reviving of the cause of Christ and his interest here intended, particularly through the calling of the Jews, and the numerous conversion of the Gentiles; for though the former of these especially is signified by the quickening of the dry bones in Ezekiel's vision, and is expressed by bringing the Jews out of their graves, and is called life from the dead, (~~6115~~Romans 11:15) yet that cannot with any propriety be called the first resurrection; for there was a great reviving of true religion in the time of John the Baptist, Christ and his apostles, especially after the effusion of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost, both among Jews and Gentiles; and there was a revival of the Christian religion in the times of Constantine, and again at the reformation from Popery; and as for the conversion of the Jews and the Gentiles in the latter day, that will be the last reviving of the cause and interest of Christ, which will usher in his spiritual reign, and therefore should rather be called the last, than the first resurrection; besides, this affair will be over before this time; this is signified by the marriage of the Lamb in the preceding chapter; and the kingdoms of the world will become Christ's under the seventh trumpet, and both will be in the spiritual reign: moreover, this does by no means agree with the character of the persons who shall share in this resurrection, they are such who shall have lived and suffered, at least many of them, under Rome Pagan and Papal, (~~6116~~Revelation 20:4) and therefore can never be understood of Jews and Gentiles in the latter day, when neither one nor other shall be any more. To which may be subjoined, that if this was the sense, then this cause must revive also among the wicked at the end of the thousand years, whereas when they are raised, they will attempt the very reverse. It remains then, that by this first resurrection must be meant a corporeal one; for as some of those that will live again were corporeally beheaded, and all of them corporeally died, they will be corporeally raised again; and in such sense will the rest of the dead be raised at the end of these years; with respect to which this is properly called the first resurrection; it is the first in time, it will be at the beginning of the thousand years, and the second will be at the close; the dead in Christ will rise first in order of time, (see Gill on "~~6117~~1 Thessalonians 4:16"); they will have the

dominion in this sense over the wicked in the morning of the resurrection: Christ's resurrection is indeed first, but that is the cause and pledge of this; and there were particular resurrections both before and after his, but they were to a mortal state; and there were some saints that rose from the dead immediately after his resurrection; but these were but few, and were designed as an earnest of this; besides, though it was a resurrection, it was not the resurrection; and it may be further observed, that the resurrection of the righteous will be the first at the coming of Christ, (<sup><46152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:22) there will be none then before theirs; theirs will be the first; the resurrection of the wicked, to which this is opposed as the first, will not be till a thousand years after: add to all which, that this resurrection will be, **η πρωτη**, “the first”, that is, the best, as the word is used in (<sup><46152></sup>Luke 15:22) the chief, the principal; the resurrection of the wicked can hardly be called a resurrection in comparison of it, and in many places theirs is not taken notice of where this is, as in (<sup><46152></sup>1 Corinthians 15:12-57 <sup><50413></sup>1 Thessalonians 4:13-18) the righteous will be raised by virtue of union to Christ, in consequence of his having the charge both of their souls and bodies, and in conformity to his glorious body, and to eternal life, which will not be the case of the wicked,

**Ver. 6.** *Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection*, etc.]

This may be considered either as descriptive of the persons that shall partake of this privilege; as that they are only such who are blessed with spiritual blessings, with a justifying righteousness, with pardon of sin, and regenerating grace, and who are sanctified by the Spirit of God; these, and these only, will be first raised, and will be called to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, (<sup><46154></sup>Matthew 25:34) or else as expressive of their happiness and holiness when raised; they shall be perfectly blessed in soul and body, and perfectly holy in both: they shall be “blessed”, for

*on such the second death hath no power*; which is the lake of fire, (<sup><46154></sup>Revelation 20:14 21:8) the sense is, they shall escape everlasting burnings, the fire of hell, the torment and misery of the wicked; they shall be delivered from wrath to come; and as their bodies will die no more, their souls will not be subject to any sense of wrath, or to any sort of punishment: and they will be “holy”; they will have no sin in them:

*but they will be priests of God and of Christ*; of God the Father, and of his Son Jesus Christ, being made so to the former by the latter, (<sup><46156></sup>Revelation

1:6) or of God, even of Christ, that is, of God, who is Christ, since it follows:

*and shall reign with him*; they will be wholly devoted to and employed in the service of God and of Christ, and will be continually offering up the sacrifices of praise, or singing the song of the Lamb, adoring the grace and goodness of God and Christ unto them, shown them both in providence and in grace:

*and shall reign with him a thousand years*; this is mentioned again, partly to assert the certainty of it, and partly to point at the blessedness of the risen saints.

**Ver. 7.** *And when the thousand years are expired*, etc.] Which are not yet expired; not in the year 1000, or 1033 or 4, reckoning from the birth or death of Christ, when Paganism, which had been destroyed in the Gentile world, was introduced into the church, which bore the Christian name, through the man of sin; for this had been bringing in by degrees more or less from the times of Constantine; whence it appears, that Satan in this respect was loose before, and therefore this was not the time of his loosing; nor in 1073, reckoning from the destruction of Jerusalem, and the carrying and spread of the Gospel among the Gentiles, in which year Hildebrand came to the popedom, who may be truly called the brand of hell; Damianus, a brother cardinal, who lived at the same time with him when he was archdeacon of Rome, calls him the holy devil; he was an impostor, sorcerer, and necromancer, and by wicked arts got into the Papal chair; this pope raised the Papal power over princes to a very great height, and made the see of Rome absolutely independent, and all bishops dependent on it; he forbid bishops receiving their investiture from the emperor, or any lay person, under pain of excommunication: this is the pope that made the emperor, with his empress and child, wait three days barefoot at his gates, in the depth of winter, before they could be admitted to him; that doctrine of devils, forbidding priests to marry, was established by him; and in his days that monstrous and absurd notion of transubstantiation began to prevail, though he himself used his breaden god but very roughly; for taking it to be really God, he required an answer from it against the emperor; but it not speaking, he threw it into the fire, and burnt it. Now it will be allowed, that the devil was loose at this time, but then so he was before: there had been popes before this who were conjurers, necromancers, and had familiarity and confederacy with the devil; and near

five hundred years before this time, the pope was declared universal bishop by Phocas; and the forbidding priests marriage was started in the council of Nice, and was approved of by Pope Siricius, long before this time, though it was now more firmly established; add to this, that if the expiration of the 1000 years and the loosing of Satan were at this time, he must have been loosed near 700 years, which can never be called a little season, as in (~~61B~~ Revelation 20:3) especially in comparison of the 1000 years, the time of his binding; when it is two thirds of that time: nor did these years expire in or about 1300, reckoning from Constantine, about which time Pope Boniface the Eighth lived, of whom it is said, that he came in like a fox, railed like a lion, and died like a dog; upon his accession to the popedom, he instituted a jubilee, and on the first day he appeared in his pontifical habit, and gave the benediction to the people, and on the next day he clothed himself with an imperial habit, and put on a rich diadem, and sat on a throne, with a naked sword bore before him, when he uttered these words, “Ecce hic duo gladii”, “Behold here are two swords”, referring to (~~427B~~ Luke 22:38) which the Papists would have understood of the temporal and spiritual power which Peter and his successors are possessed of; at the same time Ottoman was crowned emperor of the Mahometan nations, who founded the Turkish empire, and spread the Mahometan religion in Asia and Greece; and by both these, great disturbances and wars were occasioned, both in the east and west: but still this does not make it appear that now was the time of Satan's loosing; since before this time the Papal power was at its utmost height, and the Mahometan religion had been hundreds of years in the world, and had greatly prevailed; and therefore Satan must be loosed before; and indeed it is in vain to seek after the expiration of these years, and the loosing of Satan, when as yet the years are not begun, nor has Satan been bound, as has been shown on (~~61D~~ Revelation 20:2) but however, when they will be ended,

*Satan shall be loosed out of his prison*; during the thousand years he will be in a state of confinement, being bound, shut, and sealed up in the bottomless pit, which is therefore here called a prison, as is the place of damned spirits, in (~~419B~~ 1 Peter 3:19) but when these will be at an end; his chain will be taken off, at least will be lengthened; the seal upon him will be broken off, the bottomless pit will be opened, and he let loose; which will be done not by himself, but by him that bound him, or by divine permission.



**Ver. 8.** *And shall go out*, etc.] Of his prison, the bottomless pit, and shall walk to and fro in the earth, and go about like a deceitful serpent, and roaring lion, as before:

*to deceive the nations*: as he had done before the thousand years began, and from which he was restrained during that time; he had before deceived the Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan nations, and now he will go forth to deceive those at this time

*which are in the four quarters of the earth*; all the world over: the names of which nations are,

*Gog and Magog*: not the same which are mentioned in (<sup>3801</sup>Ezekiel 38:1-39:16) though there is an allusion to them, and from thence the names are taken, and some of the figures borrowed, and design the enemies of God's people, who will be in the world at this time; so the Jews <sup>f437</sup> speak of a Gog and Magog, that will come up against Jerusalem in the days of the Messiah, whom they still expect, by whom they shall be destroyed:

*to gather them together to battle*; not one against another, as some think, as the pope against the Turk, and the Turk against the pope, nor are they designed at all; nor "to kill them", as the Ethiopic version renders it; but against the saints and people of God, in the beloved city and camp; herein will lie his deception of them:

*the number of whom is as the sand of the sea*; that is, innumerable, in allusion to Gog and Magog in (<sup>3809</sup>Ezekiel 38:9,15,16) but the great question is, who are meant by these? — Not the Papists, the nations made drunk with the wine of Rome's fornication, the Gentiles, by whom the holy city is trodden under foot, and who will be angry when the time of avenging the saints is come, (<sup>6102</sup>Revelation 11:2,18 18:2) for these will be all destroyed, even all the remains of them, at the battle of Armageddon; nor is antichrist himself intended, who will be destroyed in the spiritual reign of Christ, with the breath of his mouth; and at the above decisive battle the beast and the false prophet will be taken alive, and cast into the lake of fire: nor are the Turks designed, the people of Magog being Scythians originally, as Josephus says <sup>f438</sup>, from whence the Turks sprung; or Tartarins, for Paulus Venetus <sup>f439</sup> says the countries of Gog and Magog are in Tartary, called Jug and Munjug; hence some think these are the same with the four angels bound at the river Euphrates, and loosed, whose armies are represented as exceeding numerous, (<sup>6104</sup>Revelation 9:14,16,17)



but though the Turkish dominions are very large, yet they do not extend to the four quarters of the world; and when the Turks were let loose, and came even into Europe, it was not against the true Christians, the camp of the saints, the beloved city, as here, but against the antichristian party; the Papists have suffered most by the incursions of the Turks, though it has not brought them to repentance; besides, the loosing of the four angels, or the Turkish nations, and their chiefs, is long before these thousand years begin; that is past already, under the sixth trumpet, whereas the seventh trumpet will be blown, and all the seven vials poured out, and the world cleared of all Christ's enemies, and after that a thousand years must run out, before this Gog and Magog army will appear: nor are the Americans the nations, here spoken of; for they are but in one quarter of the world; nor is there any reason to believe there will be there more enemies of Christ's people than in any other part, since in the spiritual reign of Christ the earth shall be full of his knowledge, and his spiritual kingdom will be to the ends of the earth: and as for that notion that those inhabiting the other hemisphere will be saved from the general conflagration, there is no reason to believe it, since the earth, and whatsoever is therein, shall be burnt up, (<sup>31310</sup>2 Peter 3:10). Some think that the wicked living in the distant parts of the world, in the corners of the earth, are meant, who, upon Christ's coming, will flee thither, and remain in continual dread and terror to the end of the thousand years, when Satan will gather them together, and spirit them up against the saints; but this cannot be, because they will all be destroyed at the universal conflagration of the world; nor will there be any in the new earth but righteous persons: but these will be all the wicked dead, the rest of the dead, who lived not again until the thousand years are ended, when will be the second resurrection, the resurrection of all the wicked that have been from the beginning of the world; and these, with the posse of devils under Satan, will make up the Gog and Magog army: all the characters agree with them; these may be called nations, or Gentiles, being aliens from the true Israel of God, the dogs that will be without the holy city; these may be said to be in "the four quarters" of the world, since where they die and are buried, there they will rise and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army; and as they will die enemies to Christ and his people, they will rise such; as they will go down to hell with their "weapons of war", as is said of Meshech and Tubal, the people of Gog, (<sup>31227</sup>Ezekiel 32:27) they will rise with the same; the grave, the dust of the earth, will make no change in their vile bodies, nor the flames of hell any alteration in the disposition of their minds; yea, as is said in the above place, they will "lay their swords under

their heads”, and so be in a readiness, when they rise, to make use of them against the saints, and to avenge themselves; for their envy, malice, and revenge, will be heightened and increased by their confinement and punishment in hell: nor need this be wondered at, since the devils, notwithstanding they have been so long expelled the realms of light, and have been in chains of darkness, and in expectation of everlasting torment, retain the same enmity as ever; and though the deception will be very great, to attack saints in an immortal state, who are like the angels that die not, nor will these die any more, and especially since Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords, who rules the nations with a rod of iron, will be at the head of them; yet it need not seem strange, when they will rise as weak and feeble, and as little able to resist temptation, and as much exposed to seduction, as they were before; Satan will have as much power over them as ever; and what with their own numbers, and the posse of devils at the head of them, and especially considering the desperateness of their state, and that this is their last struggle and effort for liberty, they will animate themselves and one another to this strange undertaking. These now may be called Gog and Magog, as the one signifies “covered”, the other open, or “uncovered”: these being all the enemies of Christ and his people, both secret and open: and this sense well accounts for their number, being as the sand of the sea; and which the Arabic version seems to confirm, “and Jagog and Magog shall rise with him”. The Jews have a notion that this deception of Satan will be at the day of judgment, which agrees with this account; for immediately upon this will follow the judgment of the wicked: they say <sup>f440</sup>,

“in the day that judgment shall be found in the world, and the holy blessed God shall sit upon the throne of Judgment, Satan **attw al y[ l yj sa**, “shall deceive above and below” (angels and men), and he shall be found to destroy the world, and to take away souls.”

**Ver. 9.** *And they went up on the breadth of the earth*, etc.] Either the whole earth, in the several parts of which they will be raised; or the land of Israel, where Christ and his people will be; and so the wicked being raised, will come up from the several parts of the world, and spread themselves over the holy land; just as Gog and Magog are said to cover the land of Israel, as a cloud, (<sup>2886</sup> Ezekiel 38:16) and it may be observed, that the very

phrase of *Ætra bj r*, “the breadth of thy land”, is used of Immanuel's land, or the land of Israel, in (<sup>2388</sup>Isaiah 8:8)

*and compassed the camp of the saints about*; these are the blessed and Holy Ones, who have part in the first resurrection, even all the saints; not only the martyrs under the Heathen persecutions, and the confessors of Christ under the Papacy, but all the saints from the beginning of the world; these will be all encamped together, with the tabernacle of God in the midst of them, (<sup>6213</sup>Revelation 21:3) and Christ their King at the head of them, (<sup>3213</sup>Micah 2:13) the allusion is to the encampment of the children of Israel in the wilderness, about the tabernacle, which was in the midst of them, (<sup>4113</sup>Numbers 2:2) etc. afterwards the city of Jerusalem itself was called a camp, and answered in all respects to the camp in the wilderness <sup>f441</sup>, to which the reference is in (<sup>8313</sup>Hebrews 13:11-13) and which serves to illustrate the passage here, since it follows:

*and the beloved city*: not Constantinople, as some have thought, but the holy city, the new Jerusalem, (<sup>6212</sup>Revelation 21:2) the general assembly and church of the firstborn, beloved by God and Christ, and by the holy angels, and by one another; and these very probably will be with Christ upon the same spot of ground where the Old Jerusalem stood, a city so highly favoured, and so much distinguished by God; so that where Christ suffered so much reproach and shame, and such an accursed death, he will now be glorified, and live in triumph with his saints:

*and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them*; not material fire; with this the earth, and the bodies of the wicked then upon it, will be burnt at the beginning of the thousand years; but now their bodies will be raised immortal, and not capable of being consumed with such fire; but the fiery indignation of God, or his wrath, which will be poured out like fire, is here meant, which will destroy both body and soul; this is no other than the lake of fire, or second death, into which they will be cast; and which will not be until the judgment is over, though it is here related to show what will be the event and issue of their attack upon the saints: the allusion is to the fire sent upon Gog and Magog, and to the burning of their weapons, in (<sup>3322</sup>Ezekiel 38:22 39:6,9,10) and so the Jews <sup>f442</sup> say of their Gog and Magog, that

“they shall be killed with the burning of the soul, with a flame of fire, which shall come from under the throne of glory.”

**Ver. 10.** *And the devil that deceived them*, etc.] Both before death, in the present life, by tempting and drawing them into immorality and profaneness, or idolatry, superstition, and will worship, or persecution of the saints; and after their resurrection, by instigating them to make this foolish attempt upon the saints of the most High:

*was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone*; the same with the everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels; this will be his full torment, in which he is not as yet; and this will not be until the judgment is finished hereafter described; though it is here mentioned to issue the account of Satan at once, and to show what will be his final state and condition:

*where the beast and false prophet are*; (<sup>660</sup>Revelation 19:20) who for so many years have been companions in wickedness together; the beast being the first beast that received his power, seat, and authority from the dragon, or devil; the false prophet being the second beast, or antichrist in his ecclesiastical capacity, as the beast is antichrist in his civil power, whose coming is after the working of Satan, with signs and lying wonders:

*and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever*; that is, not only the devil, but the beast and false prophet, for the word is in the plural number: and this will be the case of all wicked men, of all whose minds are enmity to God and Christ, and to his people; and is a proof of the eternity of hell torments.

**Ver. 11.** *And I saw a great white throne*, etc.] This vision refers not to the Gospel dispensation, from the exaltation of Christ to his second coming; when he sat down on his throne at the right hand of God, and was declared Lord and Christ; when there was a shaking of the heavens and the earth, a removing of the Mosaic economy, and the ordinances of the ceremonial law in Judea, and of Paganism in the Gentile world; when the Gospel was preached to all nations, and the dead in sins were quickened, and arose and stood before the throne of grace; when the books of the Scriptures were opened and explained, and the book of life was also opened; and by the conversion of some, and not others, it was known who were written in it and who were not, and men were judged to be alive or dead in a spiritual sense, according to the influence the opening of these books had upon them; and the powers of the world, comparable to a sea, and of death and hell, were not able to hold in the dead in sin, when they were called to life, with respect to whom death and hell were destroyed; nor was the Gospel the savour of death to any but to such who were not written in the book of

life. This, in other words, is the sum of Cocceius's sense of this vision; but this affair will be over, and all God's elect gathered in by the preaching of the Gospel, before this vision takes place: nor does it respect the restoration of the Jews, who now are as dead, like Ezekiel's dry bones, but will at this time be quickened, and stand upon their feet an exceeding great army, and will be gathered from the several parts where they are as dead; and when it will be known by their conduct and behaviour who are God's elect among them, and who are not; which is Brightman's interpretation of the vision: but this, as we have seen, will come to pass according to the vision in the preceding chapter, before the thousand years begin; whereas this vision will not begin to be accomplished until they are ended: it is best therefore to understand it of the general judgment at the last day, which is the common sense of ancient and modern interpreters; though it seems only to regard the judgment of the wicked, for no other are made mention of in it: the "throne" here seen is a throne of judgment; it is called a "great" one, because a great Person sat upon it, the Word of God, the King of kings and Lord of lords, even he who is the great God, and Judge of the whole earth; and because of the great work that will be transacted upon it, the judgment of all the wicked; this will be the greatest assize that ever was held; it is called the judgment of the great day, and the great and dreadful day of the Lord, (Jude 6 <sup><3016></sup> Malachi 4:5) this throne is also said to be a "white" one; just as the same Person is said to sit upon a white cloud, and ride upon a white horse, (<sup><6144></sup> Revelation 14:14 <sup><6691></sup> Revelation 19:11) it may be in allusion either to a white and serene cloud, or to a throne of ivory, such an one as Solomon made, (<sup><4497></sup> 2 Chronicles 9:17) and this is either expressive of the majesty and splendour of it, it being a throne of glory, or a glorious throne, (<sup><4251></sup> Matthew 25:31) or else it may denote the purity and justice of him that sits on it, according to which he will proceed in judgment, and finish it; his character is the righteous judge, and the judgment he will execute will be righteous judgment:

*and him that sat on it;* the throne was not empty, one sat upon it, who is no other than the Son of God; to whom all judgment is committed, and who is ordained to be Judge of quick and dead; and is every way fit for it, being of great knowledge, wisdom, and sagacity, and of great integrity and faithfulness, as man and Mediator, and being, as God, both omniscient and omnipotent, and so capable both of passing a right sentence, and of executing it; to which may be added, his great majesty and glory, necessary to strike an awe, and command an attention to him:

*from whose face the earth and the heavens fled away, and there was found no place for them;* which is to be understood not figuratively, as in (~~6114~~ Revelation 6:14 ~~6161~~ Revelation 16:20) where in the one place is described the destruction of Paganism, and in the other the destruction of the Papacy, and all antichristian powers; but literally, and not of the present earth and heaven, as they now are, for these will be burnt up with fire at the beginning of the thousand years, but of the new heaven and new earth, at the end of them; and the phrases of fleeing away, and place being found no more for them, show the entire annihilation and utter abolition of them; after this there will be no place in being but the heaven of angels and saints, and the lake of fire, in which are the devils and damned spirits: but though this is mentioned here, it will not be till after the judgment is over; for how otherwise will the dead have a place to stand in before the throne, or hell, that is the grave, and also the sea, give up their dead, (~~6112~~ Revelation 20:12,13) but it is observed here, though afterwards done, to set off the majesty of the Judge upon the throne, at whose sight, and by whose power, this will be effected.

**Ver. 12.** *And I saw the dead,* etc.] An account being given of the Judge, next the persons to be judged are described, and in this clause, by the state and condition in which they had been; for it cannot be thought they were dead when they stood before the throne, but were raised from the dead; for this character is not descriptive of them as dead in trespasses and sins, though they are such as die in their sins, and rise in them, who are meant, but as having been corporeally dead; these are the rest of the dead, the wicked, who lived not again until the thousand years were ended, (~~6115~~ Revelation 20:5) as for the righteous, they will be judged upon their resurrection from the dead in the beginning of the day of the Lord; and will be declared righteous and blessed, and be called upon and introduced to inherit the kingdom prepared for them, which they shall have possessed a thousand years when these wicked dead will be raised: who are said to be small and great; which may refer either to their age, being children and adult persons; or to their condition, being kings and peasants, high and low, rich and poor; or to their characters, as greater or lesser sinners; and this description respects them as they are in this world, and is designed to show that no consideration whatever, of age, condition, or character, will exempt them from the general judgment. This is a way of speaking used among the Jews <sup>f443</sup>, who say,

“in the world of souls,  $\mu\eta\nu\eta\ \alpha\upsilon\tau\ \omega\ \mu\eta\lambda\ \omega\delta\gamma\eta$ , “the great and the small”, stand before God.”

The disputations of the schoolmen, about the age and stature in which mankind will rise and be judged, are vain and foolish: these John saw stand before God; that is, Christ, who is God and Judge of all; before his judgment seat and throne, in order to be judged; for they will stand not as ministering to him, nor as having confidence before him; in this sense they shall not stand in the judgment, (<sup><19005></sup>Psalm 1:5) but as guilty persons, to receive their sentence of condemnation. The Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin, and all the Oriental versions read, “before the throne”; the sense is the same; for if they stood before the throne, they must stand before God, that sat upon it: and the books were opened; the book of God’s omniscience, which contains all the actions of the wicked, in which all their sins are taken notice of, and will now be brought to light; and the book of his remembrance, in which they are all written as with a pen of iron, and with the point of a diamond; and the book of the creatures, which they have abused, and which will witness against them; and the book of providence, the riches of whose goodness have been despised by them; and the book of the Scriptures, both of law and Gospel, as well as the book of nature, of the light of nature, (see <sup><802></sup>Romans 2:12,16) to which may be added, the book of conscience; the consciences of men will be awakened, and will accuse them, and bear witness against them, and be as good as a thousand witnesses:

*and another book was opened, which is the book of life:* the same that is mentioned in (<sup><605></sup>Revelation 3:5 13:8 17:8) the book of eternal election, (see Gill on “<sup><605></sup>Revelation 3:5”), (see Gill on “<sup><613></sup>Revelation 13:8”), (see Gill on “<sup><617></sup>Revelation 17:8”). No other use seems to be made of this book in the judgment of the wicked, than only to observe whose names were not written in it, as appears from (<sup><615></sup>Revelation 20:15) reference seems to be had to (<sup><2070></sup>Daniel 7:10). It is a notion that has obtained among the Jews <sup>f444</sup>, that

“at the beginning of the year (or every new year’s day)  $\eta\gamma\ \tau\pi\eta\ \mu\eta\rho\psi\ \gamma$ , “three books are opened”, one of the wicked perfect, another of the righteous perfect, and a third of those between both; the righteous perfect are written and sealed immediately for life; the wicked perfect are written and sealed immediately for death; the middlemost are in suspense, and continue from the beginning of the



year to the day of atonement; if they are worthy, they are written for life, if not worthy, they are written for death.”

and in the same treatise <sup>f445</sup>, they represent God at the same time of the year as a

“King, sitting on a throne of judgment, and the books of the living, and the books of the dead, *^yj wtp*, “open”, before him:”

this with them was a prelude and a figure of the future judgment:

*and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works*; that is, they were sentenced to everlasting condemnation and death, according to the just demerit of their wicked works; for no other are done by wicked men, nor can any other be in the books, since they are without God and Christ, and destitute of the Spirit, have no principle of grace to act from, nor any good end in view in any action of theirs. So the Jews say <sup>f446</sup>,

“all the works which a man does in this world are “written in a book”, and they come into thought before the holy King, and they are manifest before him.”

**Ver. 13.** *And the sea gave up the dead which were in it*, etc.] Which is not to be interpreted metaphorically of the world, and the men of it, who are like the troubled sea; but literally of the sea, and of all such who have been drowned in the waters of it, as were Pharaoh and his host; or have died upon the mighty waters, and have been cast into them, and devoured by the fishes; and particular regard may be had to the men of the old world, drowned by the flood; these shall be raised from thence; the sea shall deliver them up: now this, and what is expressed in the next clause, will not be done after the judgment is set, the books are opened, and the sentence passed, but before all this, and in order to it, as the last clause of this verse shows:

*and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them*; “death”, which is here represented as a person, and elsewhere as a king, reigning and having power over men, signifies death in general, and every kind of death of which men have died, whether natural or violent, over whom it will now have no longer dominion, but will be obliged to deliver up all its subjects; and “hell” signifies the grave, which will now be opened, and deliver up all its prisoners, all that have been buried in the earth; (see



<8315>Job 26:5,6) the Ethiopic version adds, “and the earth delivered up them that were dead in it”: but this seems unnecessary after the former:

*and they were judged every man according to their works*; some to greater, some to lesser punishment, as their sinful works deserved.

**Ver. 14.** *And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire*, etc.] Death cannot be taken properly, nor hell be the place of torment, for devils and damned spirits; since that is that lake of fire, for then the sense would be, hell is cast into hell; but either by these the devil is meant, who has the power of death, and is the prince of hell, were it not that the casting of him into this lake is mentioned before in (<6200>Revelation 20:10) or it denotes the destruction and abolition of death and the grave, that from henceforth they should no more have power over men, nor have any under their dominion, and in their hands; and so what has been promised will now be fully performed, (<2834>Hosea 13:14 <6153>1 Corinthians 15:26) (see <6204>Revelation 21:4) or rather the wicked dead, which they shall have delivered up, and will be judged and sentenced to eternal death, (<6213>Revelation 20:13)

*this is the second death*; or the destruction of the soul and body in hell, which will consist in an eternal separation of both from God, and in a continual sense of his wrath and displeasure. The Alexandrian copy and the Complutensian edition read, “this second death is the lake of fire”; and so the Arabic version, “and this is the second death, even the lake of fire”; and not much different is the Ethiopic version, “the second death, which is the fire of hell”.

**Ver. 15.** *And whosoever was not found written in the book of life*, etc.] Upon the opening of it, (<6212>Revelation 20:12) as all that worship the beast, and wonder after him, (<6218>Revelation 13:8 17:8) and all wicked men, everyone of them:

*was cast into the lake of fire*; where are the devil, beast, and false prophet, (<6220>Revelation 19:20 20:10). It is a saying of R. Isaac <sup>f447</sup>,

“woe to the wicked, who are not written **aqtpb**, “in the book”, for they shall perish in hell for ever and ever:”

and in the Targum on (<2839>Ezekiel 13:9) it is said of the false prophets,

“that *aml [ yj btkb*, “in the writing of eternal life” (or in the book of eternal life), which is written for the righteous of the house of Israel, they shall not be written.”

There seems to be some allusion in the phrase used here, and in the preceding verse, and elsewhere in this book, to the lake Asphaltites, a sulphurous lake, where Sodom and Gomorrah stood, which the Jews call the salt sea, or the bituminous lake; and whatsoever was useless, or rejected, or abominable, or accursed, they used to say, to show their rejection and detestation of it, let it be cast into the sea of salt, or the bituminous lake; thus, for instance,

“any vessels that had on them the image of the sun, or of the moon, or of a dragon, *j l mh μyl μkyl wy*, “let them cast them into the salt sea”, or bituminous lake<sup>f448</sup>.”

# CHAPTER 21

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 21

This chapter contains an account of the happy state of the church, consisting of all the elect, both Jews and Gentiles, which will take place upon the first resurrection, and will continue during the thousand years' reign mentioned in the preceding chapter. The seat of the church in these happy times will be the new heaven and the new earth, (~~6200~~ Revelation 21:1) the church that will dwell there is described by its names, the holy city, and new Jerusalem; by its descent, from heaven; and by its state and ornament, being prepared and adorned as a bride for her husband, (~~6202~~ Revelation 21:2) and her happiness is expressed by the presence of God with her, and communion with him enjoyed by her, and by a freedom from all evils endured in the present state of things, (~~6203~~ Revelation 21:3,4) after which John hears the voice of him that sat on the throne, declaring himself to be the author of the new heaven and earth; ordering him to write, that what had been said was true and faithful; affirming that things were now done and finished; calling himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end: promising grace to the thirsty soul, the inheritance of all things to the overcomer, and also divine sonship; and threatening the second death to sinners, whose characters are given, (~~6205~~ Revelation 21:5-8) next John has a vision of the bride before spoken of; the preface to it is in (~~6209~~ Revelation 21:9,10) in which is signified that one of the seven angels that had the seven vials talked to him in a very free and familiar manner, and proposed to show him the Lamb's wife; and in order to it carried him to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him the city before mentioned, said to be great, holy, and heavenly; and which is described by the glory of God upon it, and the light that was in it, comparable to a crystal jasper stone, (~~6211~~ Revelation 21:11) by its wall, which is great and high; and by its gates and foundations; its gates are in number twelve, twelve angels at them, and on them written the twelve names of the children of Israel, and these situated three at each point, east, west, north, and south; and its foundations are also twelve, having the names of the twelve apostles on them, (~~6212~~ Revelation 21:12-14) by the measure of it, which the angel took with his golden reed; of the city, which was twelve thousand furlongs, it

being four square, and its length, breadth, and height equal; and of the wall, which was a hundred forty and four cubits, (~~6215~~ Revelation 21:15-17) and next the city is described by the matter of which it was built; the wall of jasper the city of pure gold, like to clear glass; the foundations of precious stone, each foundation being of one stone; the gates of pearls, each gate being of one pearl; the street of the city of pure gold, like transparent glass, (~~6218~~ Revelation 21:18-21) and then by the temple in it, which is no other than the Lord God and the Lamb; and by the light, which is the same, it having no need of sun or moon, (~~6222~~ Revelation 21:22,23) and next by its inhabitants, the nations of the saved ones, who walk in its light, and the kings of the earth, that bring their honour and glory to it; by its safety and security, and by the purity of it, none but undefiled persons, and such who are written in the Lamb's book of life, being admitted into it, (~~6224~~ Revelation 21:24-27).

**Ver. 1.** *And I saw a new heaven and a new earth*, etc.] This vision relates to a glorious state of the church, not in the times of the apostles, or first dispensation of the Gospel; when the old Jewish church state, with its ordinances, rites, and ceremonies, passed away, and a new church state, a new dispensation, new ordinances, and a new people, took place; and when saints came not to Mount Sinai, but to Mount Sion, the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem; and when God tabernacled and dwelt with men in particular churches and congregations; and the curse of the law and the sting of death were taken away by Christ, and there was no condemnation to them that were in him; which is the sense of some: but death did not then cease, it has reigned over men in common ever since, in a natural way, and immediately upon that dispensation arose persecution unto death, both by Jews and Gentiles; and for the first three hundred years, instead death being no more, and sorrow and sighing fleeing away, there was scarce anything else: nor can it be said that there was no temple, or places of public worship, or that the church had no need of the sun and moon of the Gospel and Gospel ordinances then, since these have continued ever since, and will to the end of the world; nor did the kings of the earth bring their honour and glory into that church state in any sense, but set themselves against it, and endeavoured to destroy it; nor were the churches even of that age so pure as here described, (~~6227~~ Revelation 21:27) many persons both of bad principles and bad practices crept into them; there were tares among the wheat, goats among the sheep, and foolish virgins with the wise: nor does this vision refer to the times of Constantine,

when the old Pagan idolatry was removed out of the empire, and the Christian religion was revived, and came to be in a flourishing condition, and a new face of things appeared, and Christianity was embraced and honoured by the emperor, and the great men of the earth; there was not that purity as in this state; the Christian doctrine and worship were soon corrupted, being mixed with Judaism and Paganism; a flood of errors was brought in by Arius, Eutychius, Nestorius, Macedonius, and Pelagius, and others; yea, doctrines of devils, and which at length issued in a general apostasy, and in the revelation of the man of sin; nor was there that peace and comfort, and freedom from evils, as from death, pain, and sorrow; witness the Arian persecution, the incursions of the Goths and Vandals into the empire, and the inhuman butcheries and numerous massacres and murders of the Popish party since. Nor has this vision anything to do with the conversion and restoration of the Jews, when they will become a new people, quit their old principles and modes of worship, and there will be no more among them the sea of corrupt doctrine, respecting the Messiah, the works of the law, etc. for this will be over before this vision takes place, as appears from the 19th chapter: nor does it belong to the spiritual reign of Christ, which will be in the present earth, whereas this glorious state of the church will be in the new heavens and new earth; that will be at the sounding of the seventh trumpet, and in the Philadelphian church state, this will not be till prophetic time and antichristian times will be no more, when the mystery of God will be finished, and after the Laodicean state is at an end; in that there will be public worship, the ministry of the word, and administration of ordinances, but not in this; and though there will be then great spirituality and holiness, yet not in perfection, nor will the churches be clear of hypocrites and nominal professors, and will at last sink into a Laodicean state. Nor is this vision to be interpreted of the church triumphant in heaven, or of the ultimate glory of the saints there; since the new Jerusalem here described descends from heaven, that is, to earth, where the saints will reign with Christ; and since the church is represented as a bride, prepared and adorned for her husband, but not as yet at the entrance of this state, delivered up to him; and since the tabernacle of God is said to be with men, that is, on earth; and this dwelling of God with them is as in a tabernacle, which is movable, and seems to be distinct from the fixed state of the saints in the ultimate glory; to which may be added, that in this state, Christ, as King of saints, will be peculiarly and distinctly glorified, whereas in the ultimate one, when the kingdom is delivered to the Father, God will be all in all: this therefore is to be understood of the

glorious state of the church during the thousand years of Satan's binding, and the saints' living and reigning with Christ; the holy city, and new Jerusalem, is the same with the beloved city in (~~ἄλλοις~~ Revelation 20:9) what is there briefly hinted, is here largely described and insisted on; this will be the time and state when the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, will first meet together, and be brought to Christ, and be presented by him to himself a glorious church, without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, and Christ will reign gloriously among them: the seat of this church state will be the "new heaven" and "new earth" which John saw, and which are the same that Peter speaks of, in which dwelleth righteousness, or in which righteous persons only dwell, (~~ἄλλοις~~ 2 Peter 3:13) for as the first heaven and earth both here and there are to be understood literally, so in like manner the new heaven and new earth; which will be new, not with respect to the substance, but their qualities; they will be renewed, or purged from everything that is disagreeable, and is the effect of the sin of man; the first heaven and earth were made chiefly for men, but, on account of the sin of man, the earth was cursed, and brought forth thorns and thistles, and both the earth and air, or the heaven, were attended with noxious vapours, etc. and the whole creation was made subject to vanity and corruption; from all which they will be cleared at the general conflagration, and a new earth and heaven will appear, fit for the habitation of the second Adam, and his posterity, for the space of a thousand years. So the Jews speak of new heavens, as *מְיֻצָדֵי מַעְרָב*, "renewed" ones, which are the secrets of sublime wisdom<sup>f449</sup>: and they say<sup>f450</sup>, that the holy blessed God will renew his world a thousand years, and that in the seventh millennium there will be new heavens and a new earth<sup>f451</sup>:

*for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away*; not those in (~~ἄλλοις~~ Revelation 20:11) but the heaven and the earth which were first made, which passed away, as Peter also says, adding, with a great noise; meaning not as to their substance, but as to their form, fashion, and qualities:

*and there was no more sea*; which may be understood either as to the being of it; it was "exhausted", as the Ethiopic version renders it, being dried up by the conflagration; (see ~~ἄλλοις~~ Amos 7:4) and if Mr. Burnet's hypothesis can be supported, that the paradisiacal earth, or the earth fore the flood, was without a sea, that being made, with the mountains and hills, by the falling of the surface of the earth into the waters under it, there is a surprising agreement between that earth and this new one; but the Alexandrian copy reads, "and I saw the sea no more"; it might be in being, though John saw

it not and since, at the end of the thousand years, the sea will give up the dead which are in it, it must be in being, unless it can be interpreted of the place where the sea was: wherefore it seems best to understand it with respect to its use and qualities; and that as the heaven and earth will pass away, not as to their substance, but quality, so in like manner the sea will be no more used for navigation, nor may it be a tumultuous and raging one, or have its flux and reflux, or its waters be salt, as now; the schoolmen say it will no more be a fluid, but will be consolidated into the globe as the sphere; and, in a mystical sense, there will be no more wicked men; tumultuous and turbulent men are like the troubled sea, that cannot rest, (<sup>257D</sup>Isaiah 57:20) for in the new heavens and earth only righteous persons will dwell, (<sup>60B3</sup>2 Peter 3:13).

**Ver. 2.** *And I John saw the holy city*, etc.] The same with the beloved city in (<sup>601D</sup>Revelation 20:9) the church of God: sometimes the church militant is called a city, of which the saints are now fellow citizens, governed by wholesome laws, and enjoying many privileges; but here the general assembly and church of the firstborn, or all the elect of God, are intended, the whole body and society of them, being as a city, compact together; called holy, not only because set apart to holiness by God the Father, and their sins expiated by the blood of Christ, or because he is made sanctification to them, or because internally sanctified by the Spirit of God, which now is but in part; but because they will be perfectly holy in themselves, without the being of sin in them, or any spot of it on them: and John, for the more strong ascertaining the truth of this vision, expresses his name, who saw it, to whom God sent his angel, and signified to him by these Apocalyptic visions what should be hereafter; though the name is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions:

*new Jerusalem*; the church of God, both in the Old and New Testament, is often called Jerusalem, to which its name, which signifies the vision of peace, agrees; it was the city of the great King, whither the tribes went up to worship; it was a free city, and a fortified one: the Gospel church state in its imperfection is called the heavenly Jerusalem, and the Jerusalem above, which is free, and the mother of all; and here the church in its perfect state is called the new Jerusalem, where will be complete peace and prosperity; and which is called new, because it has its seat in the new heaven and new earth: the inhabitants of which will appear in their new and shining robes of immortality and glory; and to distinguish it from the old Jerusalem, and

even from the former state of the church; for this will be **hatyl t** “the third time” that Jerusalem will be built, as say the Jews, namely, in the time of the King Messiah <sup>f452</sup>:

*coming down from God out of heaven*; which designs not the spiritual and heavenly original of the saints, being born from above, on which account the church is called the heavenly Jerusalem; but a local descent of all the saints with Christ from the third heaven into the air, where they will be met by living saints; and their bodies being raised and united to their souls, they will reign with Christ in the new earth: and this is

“the building which the Jews say God will prepare for the Jerusalem which is above, **atj nl** , “to descend into” <sup>f453</sup>.”

*prepared as a bride adorned for her husband*; Christ is the husband, or bridegroom, and the church is his spouse, and bride; and in these characters they will both appear at this time, when the marriage between them will be consummated: and the church may be said to be prepared as such, when all the elect of God are gathered in, the number of the saints is perfected; when the good work of grace is finished in them all, and they are all arrayed in the righteousness of Christ: and to be “adorned”, when not only they are clothed with the robe of righteousness, and garments of salvation, and are beautified with the graces of the Spirit, but also with the bright robes of immortality and glory. The phrase is Jewish, and is to be read exactly as here in the book of Zohar <sup>f454</sup>.

**Ver. 3.** *And I heard a great voice out of heaven*, etc.] Either of an angel, or rather of Christ, or God himself; since the Alexandrian copy and Vulgate Latin version read, “out of the throne”,

*saying, behold the tabernacle of God is with men*; in allusion to the tabernacle being with the Israelites, and the “Shechinah”, or divine Majesty, being in the midst of them, and as an accomplishment of the promise in (<sup>3672</sup>Ezekiel 37:27) in the fullest sense of it; and designs something distinct from the spiritual presence of Christ in his church, as his tabernacle and temple, and in the hearts of his people; and from the heavenly glory, or ultimate state of happiness, in which they will be “with him”, and that not as in a tabernacle, but as in a city, which has foundations: the phrase seems to denote the personal presence of Christ with his saints in human nature, like, though different from, that in the time of his humiliation; then he dwelt or tabernacled with men on earth, but it



was in the form of a servant; but now he will appear in a glorious body, and indeed in all his personal glory, and reign among them as their King:

*and he will dwell with them*; in person and not by his Spirit, or by faith, as before, nor as a wayfaring man only for a night; but he will dwell with them for the space of a thousand years, and after that for ever: Christ and his church will now be come together as husband and wife:

*and they shall be his people*; that is, they shall appear to be his covenant people, that will be out of all doubt; this is made manifest in some measure in the effectual calling; but it does not yet appear neither to the saints themselves, nor to others, what they are, and shall be, but now it will be evident and unquestionable.

*And God himself shall be with them*; the “Immanuel”, God with us; not by his Spirit, as he was after his ascension to heaven, and since is; but in person, he himself will descend from heaven, when his church, the new Jerusalem does; the Lord their God will come in person with all the saints, and will be King over all the earth.

*[And be] their God*, as Thomas styles him, my Lord, and my God, (<sup><41B></sup>John 20:28). The covenant of grace, with all its blessings and promises, are in him, and now will it have its full accomplishment, and the saints be in a state inexpressibly happy; (see <sup><45B></sup>Psalms 144:15).

**Ver. 4.** *And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes*, etc.] Occasioned by sin, Satan, the hidings of God's face, and afflictive dispensations of Providence; for these will be no more:

*and there shall be no more death*; natural or violent; there will be no more putting of the saints to death, or persecution of them unto death, as in former times; nor will they die a natural death any more; these children of the resurrection, and inhabitants of the new heaven and earth, will be like the angels, who die not; there will be no more deadness as to spiritual things among the saints; and as for the second death, that will have no power over them. So the Jews say <sup>f455</sup>, *abl dyt[I htym `ya*, “there is no death in the world to come”; good is laid up for the righteous in the world to come, and with them is no death <sup>f456</sup>; and after the resurrection the body is perfect, and shall never after taste the taste of death <sup>f457</sup>.

*Neither sorrow, nor crying*; on account of sin, or because of oppression and persecution, or through the loss of near relations and friends; sorrow

and sighing will flee away, all occasions thereof being gone: neither shall there be any more pain; either of body or mind; there will be nothing to afflict the mind, and make that uneasy, but all the reverse; nor will there be any sickness or diseases of body, for the body will be raised glorious, powerful, incorruptible, and spiritual.

*For the former things are passed away;* not only the first heaven and earth, the world, its fashion, and its lusts; but the former grievous times under Rome Pagan and Papal, and everything which in this present life gives uneasiness and distress.

**Ver. 5.** *And he that sat upon the throne said,* etc.] By whom is meant, either God the Father, who is often represented in this book as sitting on the throne, and as distinguished from Christ the Lamb; (see <sup><602></sup>Revelation 4:2) (<sup><613></sup>Revelation 5:13 6:16 7:10) and who may seem the more to be intended, since he is by adopting grace the God and Father of his people, and they are his sons and daughters; or rather Christ, who not only is set down on the same throne with his Father, but has a throne of his own, called the throne of the Lamb, and was seen upon one by John in the preceding vision, (<sup><611></sup>Revelation 20:11) which though in order of time will be after this, yet in the order of the visions was seen before; and especially since the person on the throne speaking, calls himself the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, as Christ does in (<sup><608></sup>Revelation 1:8) and seeing he it is that gives to thirsty souls of the water of life, (<sup><615></sup>John 7:37,38) and makes promises to the overcomer so largely and frequently in (<sup><617></sup>Revelation 2:7,11,17,26 3:5,12,21). He addresses John, and delivers the following things to him,

*behold, I make all things new;* which is to be understood not of the renovation of persons at conversion, when a new heart and spirit are given, and men are made wholly new creatures; for this is the work of the Spirit, and which is done daily, and is not peculiar to any particular period of time; nor of the renewing of the church state at the beginning of the Gospel, when the Jewish church state and ordinances waxed old, and vanished away, and a new covenant took place, a new and living way was opened, and new ordinances appointed, since all this was before John had this vision; nor was there any need of it to represent it to him; but of the making of the new heaven, and the new earth, which Christ ascribes to himself and of his forming his church anew, making it a new Jerusalem, bestowing new glories upon his people, both in soul and body, and so

presenting them to himself a glorious church; and of the new administration of his kingdom in a very singular and glorious manner; so that it respects a new people, a new habitation, and a new manner of ruling over them; all which is his own doing, and is marvellous; and because it is a matter of great importance, and is wonderful and certain, therefore a “behold” is prefixed to it; (see <sup>2389</sup>Isaiah 43:19). The Jews say <sup>f458</sup>, that the holy blessed God will make ten things new in the future state, or world to come; the first is, he will enlighten the world; ((see <sup>6211</sup>Revelation 21:11,23)) the second is, he will bring living water out of Jerusalem; ((see <sup>6216</sup>Revelation 21:6)) the third is, he will make trees to bring forth their fruit every month; ((see <sup>6212</sup>Revelation 22:2)) and the fourth is, all the waste places shall be built, even Sodom and Gomorrhah; the fifth is, Jerusalem shall be built with sapphire stone; ((see <sup>6219</sup>Revelation 21:19)) the sixth is, the cow and the bear shall feed; the seventh is, a covenant shall be made between Israel, and the beasts, fowls, and creeping things; the eighth is, there shall be no more weeping and howling in the world; the ninth is, there shall be no more death in the world; the tenth is, there shall no more be sighing, and groaning, and sorrow in the world; (see <sup>6204</sup>Revelation 21:4).

*And he said unto me, write*; what John had seen, and Christ had said, and was about to say; and particularly what concerned the renewing of all things, the whole being a matter of moment, and worth noting and taking down in writing, that it might be on record for saints to read, and receive comfort and advantage from; and to denote the certainty of it, as well as to show that it was a clear point, and to be known, whereas, when it was otherwise, he was bid not to write; (see <sup>6011</sup>Revelation 1:11,19 14:13 19:9 10:4).

*for these words are true and faithful*; both what he had said, and was about to say; they were “true”, because they came from God, who cannot lie, and “faithful”, because they would be punctually and exactly fulfilled; (see <sup>6819</sup>Revelation 19:9). The Syriac version adds, they are God's, and so the Arabic version.

**Ver. 6.** *And he said unto me, it is done*, etc.] The end of all things is come; it is all over with the first heaven and earth; these are no more, and the new heaven and earth are finished: there seems to be an allusion to the old creation, he spake, and it was done, (<sup>4930</sup>Psalms 33:9). The whole election of grace is completed; every individual vessel of mercy is called by grace; all the saints are brought with Christ, and their bodies raised, and living

saints changed, and all together are as a bride prepared for her husband; and the nuptials are now solemnized; all the promises and prophecies relating to the glorious state of the church are now fulfilled; the mystery of God, spoken by his servants, is finished; the kingdom of Christ is complete, and all other kingdoms are destroyed; the day of redemption is come; the salvation of the saints is perfect; what was finished on the cross, by way of impetration, is now done as to application; all are saved with an everlasting salvation.

*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end*; which are expressive of the primacy, perfection, and eternity of Christ; of his being the sum and substance, the first cause and last end of all things, relating both to the old and new world, to things temporal and spiritual; (see Gill on “~~6008~~ Revelation 1:8”).

*I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely*; he that is athirst is one that is so not in a natural, much less in a sinful, but in a spiritual sense; who as he has thirsted after Christ, and salvation by him; after pardon of sin, and a justifying righteousness; after communion with Christ, and conformity to him, and a greater degree of knowledge of him; so after the glories of his kingdom, and the happiness of a future state: to such an one Christ promises to give such large measures of grace and glory, and in such abundance, as will continue to refresh and delight, and as may be compared to a fountain of living water, namely, for refreshment, abundance, and continuance; and all this he will give “freely”, without money, and without price; for as pardon, and righteousness, and the whole of salvation, are all of free grace, so are all the enjoyments of the kingdom state, the riches, honours, and glories of it, and eternal life itself; also plentifully, and in great abundance, and answers to the Hebrew word **פֶּנֶךְ** ; (see ~~6416~~ Numbers 11:5).

**Ver. 7.** *He that overcometh*, etc.] All spiritual enemies, sin, Satan, and the world, the antichristian beast, his image, mark, and number of his name; who is more than a conqueror through Christ; one that perseveres to the end, notwithstanding all temptations, trials, and difficulties; (see Gill on “~~6007~~ Revelation 2:7”),

*shall inherit all things*; the kingdom of Christ in the new Jerusalem state, and all things in it; heaven, eternal glory and happiness, and everlasting salvation; yea, God himself, who is the portion, and exceeding great

reward of his people, and will be all in all. The Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Arabic versions, read, “these things”: the new heaven, and new earth, the presence of God with men, freedom from all evils, and divine refreshments from the fountain of living water before mentioned:

*and I will be his God, and he shall be my Son*; Christ is not only concerned in predestination to the adoption of children, in making way by redemption for the enjoyment of this blessing, and in the actual donation of it; but he himself, who is the mighty God, is the everlasting Father, and his people are his spiritual seed and offspring, and in his kingdom he will see his seed, and prolong his days; he will long enjoy them, and present them to himself, and afterwards to his Father, saying as in (<sup>3013</sup>Hebrews 2:13) and though they are now, in the present state of things, the sons of God, yet it does not appear so manifest that they are, or at least what they shall be; but in this new and glorious state of things, it will be abundantly manifest that they are the sons of God and seed of Christ; and it will be known how glorious they are, and shall be, when they shall see Christ in his glory, and be like him; who will now be *πατηρ του μελλοντος αιωνος*, “the Father of the world to come”, as the Septuagint render the phrase in (<sup>2106</sup>Isaiah 9:6).

**Ver. 8.** *But the fearful*, etc.] Not the timorous sheep and lambs of Christ, the dear children of God, who are sometimes of a fearful heart, on account of sin, temptation, and unbelief; but such who are of cowardly spirits, and are not valiant for the truth, but who, through fear of men, either make no profession of Christ and his Gospel, or having made it, drop it, lest they should be exposed to tribulation and persecution; these are they that are afraid of the beast, and live in servile bondage to him.

*And unbelieving*; meaning not merely atheists, who do not believe there is a God, or deists only, that do not believe in Christ; but such who profess his name, and are called by it, and yet do not truly believe in him, nor embrace his Gospel and the truths of it, but believe a lie; these are condemned already, and on them the wrath of God abides, and they will be damned at last; though it may have a regard to such also who are infidels as to the second coming of Christ to judgment, and who are scoffers and mockers at it:

*and the abominable*: every sinful man is so in the sight of God; but here it denotes such who are the worst of sinners, given up to sinning; who are abominable, and to every good work reprobate; who are addicted to the

worst of crimes, as were the Sodomites and others; the Ethiopic version renders it, “who pollute themselves” with unnatural lusts. The Syriac and Arabic versions express it by two words, “sinners and polluted”, filthy sinners; the character well agrees with Babylon, the mother of harlots and abominations of the earth, and to all that adhere to her, and join with her in her abominable idolatries.

*And murderers*; of the saints, and prophets, and martyrs of Jesus, with whose blood Babylon, or the whore of Rome, has made herself drunk, and in whom it will be found.

*And whoremongers*; all unclean persons, that indulge themselves in impure lusts, in fornication, adultery, and all lewdness; as the clergy of the church of Rome, who being forbidden to marry, and being under a vow of celibacy, and making great pretensions to chastity and singular holiness, give up themselves to all lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

*And sorcerers*; conjurers, dealers with familiar spirits, necromancers, and such as use the magic art, as many of the popes did to get into the chair, and poisoners of kings and princes; whoredoms and witchcrafts go together sometimes, as they did in Jezebel, an emblem of the Romish antichrist.

*And idolaters*; that worship devils, idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, representing God, and Christ, and the virgin Mary, and saints departed, (<sup>Ⓞ</sup>Revelation 9:20).

*And all liars*; in common, and particularly such who speak lies in hypocrisy, as the followers of the man of sin, and who are given up to believe a lie, that they might be damned; all lies being of the devil, and abominable to God. All and each of these

*shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone.* The Jews<sup>f459</sup> speak of several distinct places in hell, for several sorts of sinners, as particularly for sabbath breakers, adulterers, and liars; and say of the wicked, that when he is condemned he shall take **wq l j**, “his part” in hell<sup>f460</sup>; (See Gill on “<sup>Ⓞ</sup>Revelation 19:20”)

*which is the second death*; (See Gill on “<sup>Ⓞ</sup>Revelation 2:11”).

**Ver. 9.** *And there came unto me one of the seven angels,* etc.] Either the first of them, as one of the four beasts is the first of them, (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 6:1) or it may be the last, and very likely the same as in (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 17:1)

*which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues;* that is, the wrath of God poured out by them on the antichristian party; (see <sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 15:1,7 16:1).

*And talked with me, saying, come hither;* (see <sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 17:1).

*I will show thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.* The “Lamb” is Christ, who is often so called in this book; (see <sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 5:6,7,9 14:1 13:8 21:23 7:17) (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 19:7) and is the Son of God, the heir of all things, the Maker and Governor of the universe, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; and who, as Mediator, has all accomplishments and qualifications to recommend him as a bridegroom, such as beauty, riches, and wisdom: the bride, his wife, is not any particular believer, nor any particular church; not the Gentile church, nor the Jewish church only, but all the elect of God, consisting of the raised and living saints at the coming of Christ; who will make up one body, one general assembly, and be as a bride, prepared and adorned for her husband: these were first betrothed to Christ in eternity, and were openly espoused by him, one by one, at conversion; and now being all gathered in by the effectual calling, the dead being raised, and the living changed, and all glorified, the marriage is consummated, and they are declared publicly to be the bride, the Lamb's wife; (See Gill on <sup>(660B)</sup>Matthew 22:2”). And now, though John had had a sight of her before, (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 21:2) yet that was but a glimmering one, at a distance, he being in the wilderness, (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 17:3) wherefore the angel calls him to him, and proposes to give him a clear, distinct, and particular view of her, in all her glory; and a glorious sight this indeed! to see the bride brought to the King in raiment of needlework, and the queen stand at his right hand in gold of Ophir. This is a sight of a quite different nature from that of the filthy strumpet, which the same angel proposed to give to John in (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 17:1).

**Ver. 10.** *And he carried me away in the Spirit,* etc.] John was in an ecstasy, as in (<sup>(660B)</sup>Revelation 1:10 4:2 17:3) and in the thoughts and apprehensions of his mind and spirit, it seemed to him as if he was carried away from one place to another; for this was not a corporeal sight, nor were any of the visions he had, but what was represented to his mind or



spirit; it being with him as it was with the Apostle Paul when he was caught up to the third heaven, who knew not whether he was in the body or out of the body. The Ethiopic version renders it, “the Spirit brought me”; not the evil spirit Satan, who took up our Lord corporeally, and carried him to an exceeding high mountain, and showed him all the kingdoms of this world, and their glory, (<sup><4008></sup>Matthew 4:8) but either a good angel, or the Spirit of God:

*to a great and high mountain;* to such an one was Ezekiel brought in the visions of God, when the frame of a city and temple was shown him, with their dimensions, (<sup><3402></sup>Ezekiel 40:2) as here a city is shown to John, with its wall, gates, foundations, and their measures: and he was brought to such a place, partly that he might have the more plain and full view of it; and partly to suggest unto him, that now the church of Christ was established upon the top of the mountains, and exalted above the hills, and was a city on a hill, which could not be hid, (<sup><2302></sup>Isaiah 2:2).

*And showed me that great city;* which is no other than the church, the bride, the Lamb's wife; just as the apostate church, all along in this book before, is called the great city, (<sup><6108></sup>Revelation 11:8 14:8 17:18 18:10,16,18) but now that being demolished, there is no other great city in being but the church of Christ, called a city before; (<sup><6210></sup>Revelation 21:2) here a “great one”, not only because of its prodigious large dimensions, (<sup><6216></sup>Revelation 21:16) but because of the number of its inhabitants, being such as no man can number; and because it is the residence of the great King, the tabernacle of God will be in it; though this epithet is left out in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Vulgate Latin and all the Oriental versions: “the holy Jerusalem”; called “the new Jerusalem”, (<sup><6210></sup>Revelation 21:2) here “holy”, in allusion to the city of Jerusalem, which was called the holy city, (<sup><4015></sup>Matthew 4:5) on account of the temple in it, the place of divine worship; but here this city is so called, because it is the residence of the holy God, Father, Son, and Spirit, inhabited only by holy men, made perfectly so, and encompassed by holy angels.

*Descending out of heaven from God;* (See Gill on “<sup><6210></sup>Revelation 21:2”).

**Ver. 11.** *Having the glory of God,* etc.] Not only upon their souls, which will lie in the glorious robe of Christ's righteousness, the bride's wedding garment being on them, in the perfect holiness which will be in them, and in that complete knowledge of all spiritual and heavenly things they will be possessed of, they will have a glory revealed in them; but upon their bodies



also, for this city, the church, the bride of Christ, will consist only of risen and changed saints, whose bodies will be freed from all dishonour; deformity, diseases, and imperfections, and will be made like unto Christ's glorious body, and will shine like the sun in the kingdom of God. Moreover, the presence of God may be intended by his glory, as the Shechinah, or the divine majesty of God in the tabernacle and temple was called, (<sup><1045></sup>Exodus 40:35) (<sup><1081></sup>1 Kings 8:11) for the glorious presence of God will now be in this church state, which will cast a lustre on all that are in it; for if the face of Moses, and of Stephen, shone so bright and glorious, through the presence of God with them; (see <sup><1007></sup>2 Corinthians 3:7 <sup><1015></sup>Acts 6:15) how much more gloriously will the saints shine in this state, when they shall enjoy the presence of God in a far more illustrious manner? to which may be added, that Jesus Christ, who is the brightness of his Father's glory, will now appear in that, and in his own, and in the glory of his angels; and all the saints will appear with him in glory; and to see them in all this glory is a glorious sight indeed!

*And her light was like unto a stone most precious;* by her “light” is not meant the light she will have in her, though that will be exceeding great, but the fountain of it from whence it comes; that which holds it forth to her, and supplies her with it: the word φωστηρ signifies an illuminator, and is used of the ministers of the Gospel, that hold forth the word of life and light to others, (<sup><3045></sup>Philippians 2:15,16) but here it intends Christ, who is the sun of righteousness, the church's light or enlightener, (<sup><1013></sup>Revelation 21:23) not with the light of nature, as he enlightens every man, nor with the light of grace, with which the saints are enlightened by him in the present state of things, by his Spirit, through the word and ordinances, but with the light of glory: and he is comparable to the most precious stone; he is more precious than rubies; he is so now to them that believe, in his person, offices, grace, and righteousness, and will be more so in his light and glory in the new Jerusalem state:

*even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal:* God the Father, who sits on the throne, is said to be to look upon like a “jasper”; (See Gill on <sup><1007></sup>Revelation 4:2”); and here Christ, the illuminator of his church, is said to be like one, because of the exceeding brightness of this stone, and the durableness of it, expressive of the perpetuity of Christ, as the light of his church and people; he is the everlasting light of it, (<sup><2019></sup>Isaiah 60:19,20) and he is compared to the crystallising “jasper”. There is one sort which is called “Aerizusa”, like to air <sup>f461</sup>, and another “Crystallizusa” <sup>f462</sup>, clear as

crystal. So Pliny speaks <sup>f463</sup> of a white “jasper” called “Astrios”, and which, he says, is *crystallo propinquans*, “near to crystal”, found in India, and on the shores of Pallene. To this Christ is like, because he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all, and will cause an everlasting day; and such a clear and bright state of things, as that there will be no night, nor any more darkness, nothing but everlasting joy, peace, prosperity, and happiness; there seems to be some reference to (<sup>2300</sup> Isaiah 60:1,19,20).

**Ver. 12.** *And had a wall great and high*, etc.] Not the Spirit of God, who separates, sanctifies, and preserves the saints, as Cocceius thinks, for this account respects not the church militant; nor the eternal decree of God, the unpassable gulf between heaven and hell, which everlastingly fixes the state of men; for this regards not the ultimate state of happiness: many interpreters understand it of the doctrine of the Gospel, which, as it secures the church now from heretics, and is like a wall very strong and well built, is durable and impregnable; and may be called “great”, because of the great Author of it, and the great things contained in it; and “high”, since it is not to be reached by carnal minds; so none but such who have embraced it shall enter into the new Jerusalem; for all liars, and forgers of doctrinal lies, and who embrace the antichristian lies, shall be without. Though rather the almighty power of God, which guards his church and people now, and will be their defence in this state, is meant; and which shows the state not to be that of the ultimate glory, which will need no wall, but this will; since an attempt will be made upon the saints in it, though it will be a foolish and fruitless one: and this wall of divine power is very great indeed, and is insuperable by men; God himself is a wall of fire about his people; though it may be best to interpret this of salvation itself, which is by Jesus Christ, if we compare with this text (<sup>2300</sup> Isaiah 26:1 60:18) for those, and those only, who are interested in it, will dwell in the new Jerusalem; and salvation in this state will be enjoyed in its fulness; and this is very great in its author, objects, and matter, being wrought out by the great God, for great sinners, at a great expense, and including grace and glory, and not to be got over or enjoyed by those who have no interest in it.

*And had twelve gates*; though, strictly speaking, there is but one gate, and that a strait one, which is the Lord Jesus Christ, his person, blood, righteousness, regenerating and sanctifying grace; for as he is the only door into the sheepfold, the church, in its present state, or he only that has faith in him has a right to enter there, and is the only way to heaven and eternal happiness; so he is the only gate into the new Jerusalem, or such only will

be admitted there, who are interested in him: but these gates are said to be twelve, in allusion to the twelve apostles, who pointed out to men the way of salvation by Christ; and to the twelve tribes of Israel, who represent all the elect of God, who enter in thereat; and to the twelve gates of Ezekiel's city, (<sup><2688></sup>Ezekiel 48:31-35).

*And at the gates twelve angels*; meaning either the ministering spirits, in allusion to the cherubim in (<sup><0034></sup>Genesis 3:24) who are watchers, and encamp about the saints now, and will, as it were, stand sentinels in this camp of the saints, as it is called, (<sup><0618></sup>Revelation 20:8) and besides, will be made use of in gathering the saints from the several parts of the world, and introducing them into this state; or else the apostles and ministers of the word, often called angels in this book, who will shine with peculiar lustre now, and will appear at the head of the several companies they have been useful to, and bring them as their joy and crown of rejoicing into this glorious state: this clause is wanting in the Alexandrian copy, and in the Syriac version. The Jews speak of **מַיְרָצִים**, "princes", being appointed over the gates of heaven, east, west, north, and south, with the keys in their hands, whose names they give us <sup>f464</sup>.

*And names written thereon, which are the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel*; not literal, but mystical Israel, whom God has chosen to salvation, Christ has redeemed by his blood, and the Spirit calls by his grace; denoting that all, and each of these, have a right to enter into the new Jerusalem, and will be admitted there, and none but they. In like manner the Jews <sup>f465</sup> make mention of a court of the Lord,

"which has twelve gates, according to the computation of the tribes of Israel; on one gate is written Reuben, on another is written Simeon; and so all the tribes of Israel are written on those gates; in the time they go up to appear before the Lord of the world, whoever goes up to this gate, (on which the tribe of Reuben is written,) if he is of the tribe of Reuben they open to him, (and receive him,) if not they cast him without; and so of all whom they do not receive; they open to none but to him who is of that tribe, or whose name is written on the gate."

**Ver. 13.** *On the east three gates*, etc.] On which were written the names of Joseph, Benjamin, and Dan:

*on the north three gates*; on which were written the names of Reuben, Judah, and Levi:

*on the south three gates*; on which were written the names of Simeon, Issachar, and Zabulon:

*and on the west three gates*; on which were written the names of Gad, Asher, and Naphtali; (see <sup><2688></sup>Ezekiel 48:31-34). This denotes the collection of the saints from all parts of the world, who shall come from east, west, north, and south, and sit down in the kingdom of God; and therefore here are gates at every point to enter in at; (see <sup><2385></sup>Isaiah 43:5,6 <sup><2173></sup>Luke 13:29).

**Ver. 14.** *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations*, etc.] Christ is the one and only foundation of his church and people, of the covenant of grace, and of salvation; and of faith, hope, peace, and joy, and of eternal happiness, and so of this glorious state of the church; he will be the light and temple of it, the glory and safety of it; he will be all in all in it; but because he has been ministerially laid as the foundation, by the twelve apostles, for men to build their present and future happiness upon, therefore the foundations of the wall of salvation are said to be twelve; (see <sup><4023></sup>Ephesians 2:20). Moreover, this may denote the firm and immovable state of the church at this time, it being a city which has foundations, or is well founded, (<sup><8110></sup>Hebrews 11:10) with which compare (<sup><2342></sup>Isaiah 14:32 28:16). Hence it follows,

*and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.* The Alexandrian copy, Vulgate Latin, Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “the twelve names of the twelve apostles”; the allusion seems to be to the inscribing of the names of builders on stones laid in the foundation, in memory of them; and so these wise master builders will be had in everlasting remembrance.

**Ver. 15.** *And he that talked with me*, etc.] One of the seven angels, (<sup><6219></sup>Revelation 21:9) for not a man is the measurer of this city, as in (<sup><2343></sup>Ezekiel 40:3) nor John, as of the temple, (<sup><6100></sup>Revelation 11:1) but an angel, the same that showed to John this great sight:

*had a golden reed*; not a common measuring reed, or rod, as in (<sup><2604></sup>Ezekiel 40:4 <sup><6101></sup>Revelation 11:1) but one covered with gold, denoting the present glorious state of the church, being without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing:

*to measure the city*; the new Jerusalem, its length and breadth; (see <sup><381B></sup>Zechariah 2:1,2) to show how exactly conformable this church state will be to the rule of God's word, even to perfection: and the gates thereof; to signify who had a right to enter into it, and who not:

*and the wall thereof*; its height, it being exceeding high.

**Ver. 16.** *And the city lieth four square*, etc.] To the four corners of the world, from whence its inhabitants come, and denotes the regularity, uniformity, perfection, and immovableness of it.

*And the length is as large as the breadth*; this church state will be all of a piece, perfect, entire, and wanting nothing.

*And he measured the city with the reed, twelve thousand furlongs*; or fifteen hundred miles; a monstrously large city indeed! such an one as never was upon earth; (see <sup><388B></sup>Ezekiel 48:35) and which shows, that this is not to be understood literally, but mystically; and intends the capaciousness of it, here being room enough for all the twelve tribes of Israel; that is, for all the elect of God; for as in Christ's Father's house, so in this kingdom state of his, there will be many mansions, or dwelling places, enough for all his people. This city will hold them all. The Jews <sup>f466</sup> say of Jerusalem, that in time to come it shall be so enlarged, as to reach to the gates of Damascus, yea, to the throne of glory.

*The length, and the breadth, and the height of it are equal*. A perfectly uniform state! according to the Ethiopic version, it is in length twelve thousand furlongs, and every measure equal, so that it is so many furlongs in length, breadth, and height.

**Ver. 17.** *And he measured the wall thereof, an hundred and forty and four cubits*, etc.] The root of which is twelve, for twelve times twelve is a hundred and forty four; which number is mystical and apostolical, and suited to the perfect state of this church: hence twelve gates, and twelve angels at them, and the names of the twelve tribes on them, and twelve foundations of the wall, and twelve thousand furlongs, the measure of the city.

*According to the measure of a man, that is, of the angel*; who talked with John, and measured the city, gates, and wall, and who appeared in the form of a man; and his reed might be, as some have supposed, the length of a man, six cubits, or six feet, as in (<sup><380B></sup>Ezekiel 40:5) and may denote that this

business requires the utmost wisdom and understanding of a man, and even of an angel, to look into, and find out; (see <sup><6638></sup>Revelation 13:18) and also may signify the angelic state of the saints at this time, when the children of the resurrection will be like the angels of God, for immortality and glory.

**Ver. 18.** *And the building of the wall of it was of jasper*, etc.] Which is expressive of the impregnableness, duration, brightness, and glory of salvation by Christ, the jasper being a very hard, durable, and bright stone; and salvation can never be made void, and of none effect; it will last for ever, and in this state will come forth as light, and as a lamp that burneth; it is represented by the same precious stone as God and Christ themselves are; (see <sup><6610></sup>Revelation 4:2 21:11). And the city was pure gold, like unto clear glass; it was made or built of gold; its parts, buildings, houses, and palaces, were all of gold, and that the best; and it was like to transparent glass; that is, either the city, as most copies read, or the gold; for the Alexandrian copy reads, *ομοιον*, and so the Vulgate Latin version; the gold of which it was is different from common gold; and as this city, the new Jerusalem, designs the saints, the precious sons of Zion, comparable to fine gold, the inhabitants of the new earth; this denotes the solidity, excellency, and preciousness of them, the rich and happy state they will be in, as well as their purity and freedom from all sin and corruption, and the clear knowledge of things they themselves will have, and others will have of them; their hearts and actions will be open to all; nor will this gold have any rust upon it any more, or ever be changed, and become dim.

**Ver. 19.** *And the foundations of the wall of the city*, etc.] Which were twelve; (see <sup><6614></sup>Revelation 21:14) were garnished with all manner of precious stones: (see <sup><2511></sup>Isaiah 54:11,12) not that there were all manner of precious stones in every foundation, but in them all there were, and each foundation had its stone peculiar to it, as follows; and which are not applicable to the persons of the apostles, who were not the foundations, but on them their names only were written: and besides, the order of them, as given in the Evangelists and Acts of the Apostles, is not certain, and always the same, to which these several stories may be adjusted; though they are doubtless comparable to them for their preciousness in the sight of God, and Christ, and all the saints; and for the brightness and purity of their doctrine and lives; and for their zeal in the cause of Christ; and for their solidity, and invincible courage and constancy: much less are these precious stones applicable to a set of ministers in the latter day, who are to be useful in the conversion of the Jews in the several parts of the world,

where these stones are found, as Brightman thinks, but to Jesus Christ, the one and only foundation: and without entering into the particular virtues and excellencies of these stones, in general, they set forth the worth and preciousness of Christ, who is the pearl of great price; the pleasure and delight had in viewing his excellencies and perfections; his brightness, purity, and glory, and his firmness and durableness, as a foundation. There may be some allusion to the twelve stones in the breastplate of the high priest, on which the names of the tribes of Israel were written <sup>f467</sup>.

*The first foundation was jasper*; it was laid with a jasper stone, of which (see <sup>f468</sup> Revelation 4:3). On this stone, in the breastplate, Benjamin's name was written.

*The second, sapphire*; its colour is azure, or sky blue; it is transparent, and exceeding hard. Schroder says there are very good ones found in the borders of Bohemia and Silesia; but those which are brought from Pegu are most valuable: on this stone Issachar's name was engraven.

*The third, a chalcedony*; it is of a misty grey colour, clouded with blue, yellow, or purple; the best is that which has a pale cast of blue; it is very much like the common agate; and the Hebrew word **dkdk**, “cadcod”, is rendered agate in (<sup>f469</sup> Isaiah 54:12) though it is thought to answer to the carbuncle in the breastplate, on which was written the name of Levi. And Pliny <sup>f468</sup> speaks of carbuncles, called “charcedonies”, which R. Leo Mutinensis says <sup>f469</sup> had their name in memory of the city of Carthage. There is a precious stone mentioned in the Targum of Jonathan, called **γδwkdk**, “cadcodin”, which answers to the diamond in the breastplate, on which Zabulon's name was written; and in the Jerusalem Targum it is called **andkdk**, “cadcedana”, and answers to the emerald, which had Judah's name on it, and seems to be put for “chalcodin” and “chalcedana”, which agrees with the name of this stone.

*The fourth, an emerald*; of which (see <sup>f470</sup> Revelation 4:3). The best of this sort are the eastern ones. Schroder says <sup>f470</sup> they are found in Cyprus, Britain, and other places, but not so good as the rest. On this stone Judah's name was written.

**Ver. 20.** *The fifth, sardonyx*, etc.] Which is partly of the sardian, and partly of the onyx stone, which resembles a man's nail, from whence it has its name; it is reddish, bordering on white; it may be thought to answer to the onyx in the breastplate, on which was written the name of Joseph.



*The sixth, sardius*; the same with the sardine stone, (~~601B~~ Revelation 4:3) of a blood colour, and what is commonly called a cornelian: it is found in Sardinia, from whence it has its name, and in Bohemia and Silesia, though those of Babylon are the best. This was Reuben's stone.

*The seventh, chrysolite*; a stone of a dusky green colour, with a cast of yellow; by its name it should have the colour of gold. Schroder says it is found in Bohemia, and that it is the same the moderns call the topaz. Some think it answers to “tarshish” in the breastplate, rendered “beryl”, on which was the name of Asher.

*The eighth, beryl*; a stone of a pale green colour, thought to be the diamond of the ancients: it may answer to the “ligure” in the breastplate, which the Targum on (~~2184~~ Song of Solomon 5:14) calls “birla”, and had the name of Dan on it.

*The ninth, a topaz*; a stone very hard and transparent, of a beautiful yellow, or gold colour: the topaz of Ethiopia was counted the best, (~~1889~~ Job 28:19). Some say it is so called from the island “Topazus”; on this stone Simeon's name was engraven.

*The tenth, a chrysoprasus*; a stone of a green colour, inclining to that of gold, from whence it has its name; for this is the agate in the breastplate, which was Napthali's stone.

*The eleventh, a jacinth*; or “hyacinth”: a stone of a purple, or violet colour, from whence it has its name; though what the moderns so call is of a deep reddish yellow, pretty near a flame colour. Zabulon's stone was the diamond.

*The twelfth, an amethyst*; a stone of a violet colour, bordering on purple: it has been thought a preservative from drunkenness, from whence it seems to have its name. On this stone was written the name of Gad. Agreeably to this account of John's, the Jews speak <sup>f471</sup> of the tabernacle above being built on twelve precious stones; and sometimes they say <sup>f472</sup>, that the holy blessed God will found Jerusalem with ten kind of precious stones, and which they mention, and several of which are the same with these.

**Ver. 21.** *And the twelve gates were twelve pearls*, etc.] Denoting the purity and preciousness of Christ, by whom the saints enter, and of the saints who enter in thereat, as well as of the place into which they enter.



*Every several gate was of one pearl*; the pearl of great price, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only gate, door, and way into this happy state: this shows that this account cannot be taken literally, but mystically, for no such pearl was ever known, large enough to make a gate of.

“A pearl is a hard, white, shining body, usually roundish, found in a shell fish resembling an oyster, but is three or four times the size of the common oyster; and which ordinarily yields ten or twelve pearls, and sometimes more. Those of the largest size that have been known are that of Cleopatra, valued by Pliny at centies H S, or at 80,000 pound sterling; and that brought in 1574 to Philip the Second, of the size of a pigeon's egg, worth 14,400 ducats; and that of the Emperor Rudolph, mentioned by Boetius, called “la peregrina”, or the incomparable, of the size of a muscade pear, and weighing 30 carats; and that mentioned by Tavernier, in the hands of the emperor of Persia in 1633, bought of an Arab for 32,000 tomans, which, at three pounds nine shillings the toman, amounts to 110,400 pounds sterling<sup>f473</sup>.”

But what is one of these pearls to make a gate of, for a wall which was an hundred and forty four cubits high? (<sup><6217></sup>Revelation 21:17). The Jews say<sup>f474</sup>, that the holy blessed God will bring precious stones and “pearls” of thirty cubits by thirty, etc. and place them “in the gates of Jerusalem”, as it is said, (<sup><2542></sup>Isaiah 54:12) which must be understood also not in a literal but mystical sense: and L'Empereur<sup>f475</sup> makes mention of an ancient commentary on (<sup><3850></sup>Psalms 87:1) which says, that the holy blessed God will make a gate at the east (of the temple), and in it two doors, each of one pearl. So R. Joshua ben Levi says<sup>f476</sup>, that there are in paradise two gates of agates or diamonds; some render the word rubies.

*And the street of the city was pure gold, as it were transparent glass*; denoting the preciousness and delightfulness of the saints' conversation one with another; and the purity and cleanness of it, there being no mire and filth of sin in these streets; and the sincerity and openness of it, each one walking in his uprightness; which will be seen and known of all, as clearly as anything can be beheld in a transparent glass. So the Jews say<sup>f477</sup> of paradise, that the ground is paved with precious stones, the lustre of which may be compared to the light of burning torches.

**Ver. 22.** *And I saw no temple therein*, etc.] No material temple, as was in the old Jerusalem, or such as is described in Ezekiel's vision; nor any place

of public worship, as under the Gospel dispensation; for in this state there will be no such external form of worship as now, such as preaching the word and administering ordinances. The Jews expect a third temple, but in vain.

*For the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb, are the temple of it;* God will be immediately present with his people, whose face they shall see, and whom they will serve in the most pure and spiritual manner; and Christ in his human nature, in the temple of his body, that tabernacle which God pitched, and not man, which is filled with the train of the divine perfections, and in which the fulness of the Godhead dwells bodily, will be the only medium of the divine Presence, and of the communications of glory to men, and of the saints' praise to God, which will be the service they will be employed in; and the Lamb being joined with the Lord God Almighty, shows his deity and his equality with his Father.

**Ver. 23.** *And the city had no need of the sun, neither of the moon to shine in it,* etc.] Which may be understood either literally of these two luminaries, which all earthly cities need; and which, though they may be in being in the new heavens, yet will not have the use with respect to this city they now have. The Jews say <sup>f478</sup>, the orb of the sun is in this world; and the gloss adds, but not in the future state, for the lights shall be renewed: and they further say <sup>f479</sup>, as here, that

“in the world to come, “Israel *hmj h rwal `ykyrx `ya*, will have no need of the light of the sun, nor of the light of the moon”, neither by day nor by night,”

as they say <sup>f480</sup>, the Israelites had not in the wilderness. So they represent the Lord speaking to Moses, and saying <sup>f481</sup>,

“thy days shall cease, but thy light shall not cease; for thou shall have no need for ever of the light of the sun, nor of the light of the moon, and of the stars.”

Or else it may be understood mystically, but not of Christ, the sun of righteousness, whom the saints will always need and enjoy; but of the governors and discipline of the church in its present state; and of the written word, which is a light unto them now, and the ministration of it, and the ordinances of the Gospel, by which light and knowledge are conveyed; but in this state all will be immediately taught of God; nor shall

everyone teach his neighbour, but all shall know the Lord perfectly; and also of political governors, who will be no more; (see <sup><4652></sup>1 Corinthians 15:24).

*For the glory of God did lighten it;* the Shekinah, or glorious presence of God, which filled the temple of Solomon, and shone round about the shepherds at the incarnation of Christ; with the presence of God, who is light itself, which will be enjoyed in a much more glorious manner, will the church now be enlightened; and this will be an everlasting light unto her: and the Lamb is the light thereof; in whose light they will see the face of God, and see God face to face; they will see Christ as he is, and behold his glory; and look upon the angels, those glorious forms of light, and all the glorified saints, and know and converse with each other; and they will look into, and clearly discern all the mysteries and doctrines of grace, and all the various scenes of Providence, which will all be opened and laid before them. And this light will be always without any change and variation; which is no small part of the commendation of this city, which is the inheritance of the saints in light. So the holy blessed God is said by the Jews <sup>f482</sup> to be **יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ**, “the light of Jerusalem”; he is the light of the new Jerusalem; (see <sup><2309></sup>Isaiah 60:19,20) and the light of, the world to come is, by <sup>f483</sup> them, called “the great light”.

**Ver. 24.** *And the nations of them which are saved,* etc.] In distinction from them that will be deceived by Satan, (<sup><6018></sup>Revelation 20:8). These are not all the nations of the world, which will be gathered before Christ, the Judge, for all will not be saved, there is a world that will be condemned; nor the Gentiles only, which shall come into the church state of the Jews when called, for that state is not here designed; and besides, all Israel shall be saved then; nor the living saints at Christ's coming, who shall have escaped, and are saved from the general conflagration; for these, with the raised ones, will be caught up together to Christ, and descend and dwell together on earth, and make one church state; but all the elect of God, both Jews and Gentiles, whom God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit has called out of all the nations of the earth: these are only saved ones; such are already saved, not only are determined to be saved, and for whom salvation is wrought out by Christ, and to whom it is applied at conversion, and who are representatively set down in heavenly places in Christ, and are already saved by hope and faith, and with respect to the certainty of salvation; all which may be said of saints in the present state; but these will be such, who will be actually and personally saved, will be in the full

possession of salvation, enjoying all the blessings of it: they will be partakers of the first resurrection, and the glories of it: the tabernacle of God will be with them, they will be free from all sorrows and death, and will inherit all things: the Syriac version reads, “the nations that are saved”; who are redeemed and saved by Christ: this may teach us how to understand those phrases, which seem to favour general redemption, as all men, the world, the whole world; (see <sup>235D</sup>Isaiah 45:20 66:19). These words, “of them which are saved”, are left out in the Vulgate Latin, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions, but are in all the copies. These nations are the inhabitants of this city, and they

*shall walk in the light of it*, which is Christ; they shall enjoy it; they shall have the light of life, and be partakers of the inheritance with the saints in light, and that continually: they shall not only come to it, but continue in it, and walk at it, and by the light of it: the walk of these will be different from the walk of saints now, who walk by faith, and not by sight; but these shall walk by sight, enjoying the beatific vision of God, and the Lamb. The Jews say <sup>f484</sup>, that Jerusalem, in time to come, will be made a lamp to the nations of the world, *hrwal ꝑykl hm ꝑhw*, “and they shall walk in its light”, or by the light of it, which is the sense of (<sup>230B</sup>Isaiah 60:3) “the Gentiles shall come to thy light”; (see <sup>230E</sup>Isaiah 9:1,3)

*and the kings of the earth do bring their glory and honour into it*; by whom may be meant either mystically all the saints, who will be kings as well as priests unto God, and will reign as such with Christ in this state, will cast their crowns at his feet, and give him all the honour and glory; or literally, the kings of the earth, who shall have relinquished antichrist, hated the whore, and burnt her with fire, and who will have been nursing fathers in the spiritual reign; or rather all good kings that ever have been in the earth: not that they will be kings of the earth at this time, for now all rule, authority, and power, will be put down; nor will any worldly riches, honour, and glory, be brought by them into this state, nor will they be needed in it; but it is to be understood of who have been kings on earth, though not of their having brought earthly riches and grandeur into the interest and churches of Christ; as David gave much towards the building of the temple, which was begun and finished by King Solomon his son, and as Constantine greatly enriched and aggrandized the church when he became emperor; but the sense seems to be this, that such who have been Christian kings on earth will prefer the happiness of this state to all their riches and greatness here; and that could all the glory of the kings of the

earth be put together, it would not equal, but be greatly inferior to the glory of the new Jerusalem; Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of the inhabitants of this place; (see <sup>4116</sup>Revelation 20:6) besides, these shall do all homage, and submit to Christ the King of kings in the midst of the church, which may be meant by “glory” and “honour”.

**Ver. 25.** *And the gates of it shall not be shut at all by day*, etc.] Which does not design the free communication between the living saints on the new earth, and the raised ones in the new heaven, as some have thought, for these shall be together, and make up one body; but rather the universal collection, and free admission of all the saints from all parts into this city; though it seems best to interpret it of the safety of the inhabitants, (see <sup>2448</sup>Jeremiah 49:31) who will have no enemy to fear, and therefore need never shut their gates; the beast and false prophet will have been taken, and cast into the lake of fire long ago; ungodly men will be destroyed in the general conflagration, and Satan will be bound in the bottomless pit during the thousand years:

*for there shall be no night there*; this is a reason given why it is before said the gates shall not be shut by day, since it is unusual to shut gates in the day, unless in time of war, because there will be no night in this city, and so no need of ever shutting the gates; the night time being the season for thieves and robbers, and for enemies to make their incursions, and to surprise: but here will be no night; either literally, times and seasons, as measured by the revolutions of the sun and moon, will be no more, they will not have the use they have; at least this city will stand in no need of them. The Jews say <sup>f485</sup>, that the world to come will be *ליומי וללילה*, “all day”: or mystically and figuratively, there will be no night of spiritual darkness and desertion, of drowsiness, sleepiness, and inactivity, of error and heresy, or of calamity and distress of any kind; all which are sometimes signified by night in Scripture; (see <sup>2201</sup>Song of Solomon 3:1 <sup>4285</sup>Matthew 25:5,6) (<sup>2309</sup>Isaiah 26:9).

**Ver. 26.** *And they shall bring the glory and honour of the nations into it.*] The glory of the nations are the people of God, who, though they are reckoned the filth of the world, are the excellent in the earth; these will be brought into this city, and be presented to the King of it, in a glorious manner, and that by the kings of the earth; either such who have been ecclesiastical rulers over them, who will introduce them as their joy and crown of rejoicing; or who have been political governors of them, their

fathers and protectors; or the sense is as before, that whatever is great and glorious in the nations of the world, will be counted as nothing in comparison of the glory and magnificence of this state, and not to be mentioned with it: the Arabic version renders it, “the nations shall bring glory and honour to it”; in the sense before given.

**Ver. 27.** *And there shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth,* etc.] As evil thoughts, words, and actions do; and therefore he that enters into this city must be free from all these: or “that is defiled”, as the Vulgate Latin and Syriac versions read; or “that is unclean”, as the Arabic and Ethiopic versions; alluding to the tabernacle and temple, into which no unclean person might come; (see <sup><2501></sup>Isaiah 52:1). No profane sinner, whose mind and conscience are defiled, and whose conversation is defiling, may enter here; nor any self-righteous person, whose righteousness is as filthy rags, and he himself is as an unclean thing, shall be admitted here; only such who are washed in the blood of Christ, and have on his righteousness, and so are without spot or wrinkle; which shows the pure and perfect state of this church and therefore cannot design any state of the church previous to the coming of Christ and the first resurrection:

*neither whatsoever worketh abomination;* commits sin, which is abominable in the sight of God, lives and dies in a course of wickedness; or particularly is guilty of idolatry, either makes idols, or serves them, or both, which are an abomination to the Lord; (see <sup><1110></sup>1 Kings 11:7)

*or maketh a lie;* any lie in general; who is a common liar, loves and invents a lie, and speaks one; delivers that which is false with an intention to deceive; or in particular, who embraces and propagates antichristian lies, doctrinal ones, lies spoken in hypocrisy; such shall be damned; (see <sup><5400></sup>1 Timothy 4:1 <sup><5321></sup>2 Thessalonians 2:11,12) but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life; who are predestinated to eternal life; and though they are naturally, and in themselves defiled and sinful creatures, yet they are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, and so are made meet and fit to enter this city; (See Gill on “<sup><6638></sup>Revelation 13:8”). It is by the Jews observed <sup>f486</sup>, that

“the Jerusalem of the world to come is not as the Jerusalem of this world; the Jerusalem of this world, whoever would go up to it (or enter into it) might; but that of the world to come, [hl ^ynmwzmh](#)

al a ʿyl w[ ʿya, “none may go up to it (or enter into it) but those who are prepared”, or appointed for it.”

# CHAPTER 22

## INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION 22

This chapter contains a further account of the above city, a confirmation of the visions of this book, and the conclusion of it. The city is further described by the river that ran by it, or through it, called a river of water of life, said to be pure and clear as crystal, and to have its rise from the throne of God and the Lamb; and by the tree of life in the midst of it, situated on each side the river, bearing twelve sorts of fruit, yielded every month, the leaves of which heal the nations, (<sup>621</sup>Revelation 22:1,2) and the happiness of the inhabitants of it is set forth, by there being no curse in it; by the throne of God and the Lamb being in it; by the service of the saints in it; by the pleasure they enjoy, and the honour put upon them; by the light of the place, and the duration of the saints' reign, (<sup>621B</sup>Revelation 22:3-5) next follow testimonies concerning the authority of the book, and the truth of things in it; and first, the testimony of the angel that talked with John, declaring that the things in it were true and faithful; and that he was sent from the Lord God of the prophets to show to the saints things that would quickly come to pass; and that Christ himself would quickly come; and that they were happy who kept and observed the sayings and prophecies of it, (<sup>621b</sup>Revelation 22:6,7) then the testimony of John who saw and heard them, and was about to worship the angel that declared them, but was forbid by him, and dissuaded from it, by observing to him who he was, a fellow servant of his and of his brethren, and that God only was to be worshipped, (<sup>621B</sup>Revelation 22:8,9) who is ordered, as it seems by Christ, not to seal up the prophecies delivered to him, since the time of their fulfilment was at hand, when men would remain just as they were, whether ungodly and filthy, or righteous and holy, (<sup>6210</sup>Revelation 22:10,11) and who declares that he should quickly come to reward every man according to his works; and that he was the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last; and that they were happy that did his commandments, since it would appear they had a right to the tree of life, and to entrance through the gates into the city before described, when wicked men, whose characters are given, would be without, (<sup>6212</sup>Revelation 22:12-15) and still more clearly and fully Christ asserts himself to be the



author of this revelation, and the sender of the angel, to testify it to the church, who is David's root and offspring, and the morning star, whose coming is to be wished for by the Spirit and bride, and every truly gracious soul, (<sup>(6216)</sup>Revelation 22:16,17) and to show the perfection and authority of this book, as well as of the whole Scripture, and to deter persons from adding to it, or taking from it, he threatens to inflict on such persons the plagues herein written, and to take the names of such out of the book of life, out of the holy city, and from the things written in this book, (<sup>(6218)</sup>Revelation 22:18,19) and then he delivers out a fresh asseveration of his speedy coming, to which John adds his hearty "Amen", and earnest request that he would come quickly; and the book is concluded with a benediction usual in the epistles, especially in those of the Apostle Paul, (<sup>(6221)</sup>Revelation 22:20,21).

**Ver. 1.** *And he showed me a pure river of water of life*, etc.] Not baptism, which used to be administered in rivers and pools of water; and which engaged to purity of life; and, the power and authority of administering which was from God and Christ; but in this Jerusalem state there will be no use nor need of ordinances; for (<sup>(6219)</sup>Revelation 22:1-6) belongs to the preceding chapter, and is a continuation of the same account, this being not a new vision, but a part of the former, which the same angel, as in (<sup>(6219)</sup>Revelation 21:9) proceeds to show to John: nor is the Holy Ghost intended by this river, whose gifts and graces are sometimes, for their plenty, purity, and quickening virtue, compared to rivers of living water; and who is a pure and holy Spirit, and proceeds from the Father and the Son: nor the doctrine of the Gospel, which comes from the blessed God, and is the Gospel of Christ; and, when purely and faithfully preached, is clear as crystal; and is the means of conveying spiritual life to men, and of supporting it in them: nor the ultimate joys of heaven, which may be called a river of pleasure, for the fulness and variety of delight; pure, and clear as crystal, for the holiness and perfect knowledge of that state; and be said to proceed from the throne of God and the Lamb, being the free gift of God through Christ; but this state is not designed here: rather, therefore, by this river is meant the everlasting love of God, which may be compared to a river for its largeness and abundance, its height and depth, its length and breadth; and for the large displays of it in this state, when its waters will increase, and be a broad river to swim in, and be unpassable; and for the streams of it in election, redemption, calling, justification, pardon, adoption, and eternal life, which make glad the city of God; and for the

pleasure it yields, and the fruitfulness it gives to those who drink of it: it may be called a river “of water of life”, because in the present state of things it quickens such who are dead in trespasses and sins; revives the saints when dead and lifeless, supports their spirits, and is a cordial that preserves from fainting; it keeps and secures from dying the second death and is the spring and source of eternal life; and that itself will last and flow for ever, it is ever running water, it is everlasting love: and it may be said to be pure and

*clear as crystal*, it being free from all hypocrisy and dissimulation, being real, hearty, and sincere, both in the Father and in Christ, of which the fullest proofs and demonstrations are given; and being clear of all motives and conditions in the creature, by which it might be influenced; and it engaging to purity and holiness of life and conversation; for the doctrine, which brings the account of it, and the inward principle of grace, which is the fruit of it, and every discovery of it, have a tendency hereunto:

*proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb*; not taking its rise from man's obedience, nor from his love to God, nor from his faith in Christ; for the love of God is prior to all these, and is the spring and cause of them, and therefore cannot be moved and influenced by them; but it has its origin from the sovereignty of God and of Christ, signified by the throne of both, who will be gracious to whom they will be gracious; nor can any reason be given why they love any of the sons of men, but their own sovereign will and pleasure; this is the sole motive, spring, and cause of their love; and God and the Lamb being mentioned together, shows both the equal dignity of their persons, being on the same throne, and the equality of their love to the inhabitants of the new Jerusalem: and thus, as a river adds to the pleasure, use, convenience, and wholesomeness of a city, this glorious city is commended by such a river running by it, or in the midst of it: there may be an allusion to the river which ran out of the garden of Eden, for this will be a paradisiacal state, (~~GEN 2:9~~ Genesis 2:9) or rather to the waters in (~~EZEK 47:1-5~~ Ezekiel 47:1-5) which came from under the threshold of the Sanctuary; though this river proceeds not from the temple, there being no temple in this state, but from the throne of God and the Lamb, which is instead of it.

**Ver. 2.** *In the midst of the street of it*, etc.] That is, of the city described in the preceding chapter, which shows that this vision belongs to that, and is a

continuation of it, and which street was all of pure gold, (<sup>6612</sup> Revelation 21:21)

*and on either side of the river was there the tree of life*; not that it stood either in the midst of the street of the city, which being a pavement of gold, a tree could not well stand there; nor on both sides of the river, which is impossible, unless the tree of life is put for many trees of the same kind, as in Ezekiel's vision, to which the allusion is; and so some were on one side of the river, and some on the other, as there; (see <sup>6507</sup> Ezekiel 47:7,12) or unless it can be thought that such a solution of the difficulty is sufficient, that the root of it was on one side, and the branches grew over to the other; though the words may be better rendered, and the difficulty will be removed, and the sense be clear, “between the street of it”, the city, “and the river, on this side, and on that side”; that is, the street on one side, and the river on the other, was the tree of life; compare with this (<sup>4898</sup> John 19:18). So the Jews say <sup>f487</sup>, that the tree of life is in the midst of paradise, and its body covers all the garden; and that there is in it five hundred thousand different tastes; and that there is no likeness and smell like it. By the tree of life is meant not the Gospel, nor godliness, nor eternal life, nor any other of the divine Persons, but Christ, who is the author of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal; (See Gill on “<sup>6607</sup> Revelation 2:7”) and its situation between the street of the city, where the saints commune and converse together, and the river of God's everlasting love, which in this state will appear in its fulness and glory, shows that Christ will be seen and enjoyed by all in the most delightful and comfortable manner that can be wished for:

*which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month*; not one sort of fruit one month, and another sort another month, and so on, but twelve sorts every month; which is expressive of the fruits and spiritual blessings of grace from Christ, enjoyed by saints in the present state, and of that variety of happiness and pleasures to be had in this glorious state, and of the continuance of them; they being always ever fresh and new, and will be always sufficient for the twelve tribes of the true Israel of God, and for all that have embraced the doctrine of the twelve apostles of the Lamb; whose drink in this state will be the everlasting love of God, and whose food will be the fruit of the tree of life; both which they shall enjoy in great abundance:

*and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations*; not for the curing of diseases, or repairing of health; which in the present state of things is done by the application of the blood of Christ for the pardon of sin, which is a healing of diseases, and by the discoveries of the love of God; through the ministration of the Gospel, and the doctrines of it, which might be thought to be signified by leaves; for there will be no disease either of body or mind in this state; besides, the nations that will walk in the light of this city will be saved perfectly and completely, (<sup>f6204</sup>Revelation 21:4,24) but these leaves will be for the preserving and continuing the health of the people of God in this state, as the tree of life in Eden's garden was for the preservation of the health and life of Adam, had he continued in a state of innocence; and it denotes that everything in Christ will contribute to the comfort, health, and happiness of the saints. The Jews interpret the passage in (<sup>f3672</sup>Ezekiel 47:12) to which this refers, of future time, or the world to come <sup>f488</sup>; and speak of various trees and herbs of great fragrancy and medicinal virtues, which grow quite round on the sides of a laver that stands in paradise <sup>f489</sup>.

**Ver. 3.** *And there shall be no more curse*, etc.] As there was in Eden, from whence a river came, and where was a tree of life; for there the serpent cursed for his concern in man's transgression, and the earth on account of it; but in this new earth, and paradisiacal state, and on the inhabitants of it, will be no curse; here will be no sin, the cause of the curse, nor pain and sorrow, nor death, corporeal, spiritual, and eternal, or the wrath of God, the several effects of sin, and parts of the curse; the curse of the law cannot here take place; for, besides the righteousness of Christ, which all in the new Jerusalem will be clothed with, and so be blessed and secure from the curse, they will be perfectly pure and holy in nature, and constant and complete in their obedience and service; they will always do the will of God on earth, as it is done in heaven; no accursed person, or anyone devoted to ruin and destruction, will be here; not the old serpent, the devil, he will be shut up in the bottomless pit; nor the blasphemous beast and false prophet, they will be taken and cast alive into the lake of fire before this time comes; no cursing, or accursed men will dwell here; not such who curse themselves, or the saints, or such who will be bid to depart as cursed, these will be destroyed in the general conflagration; nor will there be any anathema denounced against any person, for here will be no introducers of another Gospel, nor any that do not love the Lord Jesus Christ; nor will any be an anathema, or accursed from Christ, excommunicated from the

church of Christ, for that will have no members deserving of that; none but what are pure and undefiled; (see <sup><3841></sup>Zechariah 14:11)

*but the throne of God and of the Lamb shall be in it;* God himself will be there, his tabernacle will be among men; the name of this city will be “Jehovah Shammah”, the Lord is here; the pure and spotless Lamb of God, the Son of the Blessed, will be here, whose presence will make it an happy state; these will both have their throne, or seat, here; they will sit on one throne, being the one God over all, blessed for ever; this city will be the city of the great King, where his royal glory and majesty will be most illustriously displayed, and which will greatly make for the felicity of this state, and secure it from the curse:

*and his servants shall serve him:* either the angels, who are ministering spirits, and the servants of God and of the Lamb; or the ministers of the Gospel, the servants of the most high God; or rather all the true followers of Christ, who shall be where he is, and “serve him”: both God and the Lamb, who are one in nature, though two distinct persons; wherefore serving them both is not serving two masters: and the service the saints will be employed in, in this state, will not be preaching the word, or attending on the ministry of it, or subjecting to ordinances, which will now be at an end, but celebrating the praises of God, adoring the perfections of his nature, ascribing the glory of every providence, and of all salvation to him, and magnifying the riches of his grace; and this they will perform in the most spiritual, fervent, and perfect manner, and that continually; (see <sup><4175></sup>Revelation 7:15).

**Ver. 4.** *And they shall see his face,* etc.] The face of God, so as he is not to be seen now; they shall see him as he is; not only the angels, who always behold the face of God, but all the saints, risen and changed, being pure in heart, and perfectly holy; they shall see him face to face, they shall have intimate and familiar communion with him; they shall enjoy his favour, and have the freest and largest discoveries of his love; and they shall see the face of the Lamb; they shall behold Christ and his glory both with the eyes of their understanding, and with the eyes of their bodies; and this is a very desirable sight, and will be very glorious and delightful; it will be fully satisfying, and will make the saints like unto him; it will be free from all darkness and any interruption, and will always continue.

*And his name shall be in their foreheads;* they shall be known to be his servants, as if his name was written and bore on their foreheads; it will be a

clear case that they are the children and people of God; now they are, but it is not known, at least not so known as it will be in this state; and they will also in the fullest and freest manner own God to be their God, and the Lamb to be their Redeemer; they will be under no fear of man, nor be under any temptation to be ashamed of Christ, or of his service; (see <sup><641></sup>Revelation 14:1). Some think there is an allusion to the inscription on the mitre of the high priest's forehead, "holiness to the Lord", the saints being now openly, visibly, and perfectly holy.

**Ver. 5.** *And there shall be no night there*, etc.] This is repeated from (<sup><625></sup>Revelation 21:25) to express the certainty of it, and to observe, that the happiness of this state will greatly lie in the light thereof; it will be one everlasting day, **ἡμερα αιωνος**, "day of eternity", or eternal day, as in (<sup><618></sup>2 Peter 3:18)

*and they need no candle, nor the light of the sun*; neither artificial nor natural light; neither the dimmer light of the ceremonial law, under the legal dispensation, which was like a candle lighted up in Judea; nor the more clear light of the Gospel and its ordinances, under the present dispensation, which now will be at an end:

*for the Lord God giveth them light*; immediately from himself, without the use of means and ordinances; and in his light the saints will see all things clearly; who will be always communicating it to them, and will be their everlasting light; (see Gill on "<sup><623></sup>Revelation 21:23").

*and they shall reign for ever and ever*; they are made kings now, and in this state they shall reign with Christ for the space of a thousand years; and when they are ended, they shall not cease to reign; nor will Christ, when he delivers up the kingdom to the Father, for his and their kingdom is an everlasting one, (<sup><606></sup>Revelation 1:6 5:10 20:4 <sup><207></sup>Daniel 7:27) and here ends the account of this glorious state of things; what follows is the conclusion of the whole book.

**Ver. 6.** *And he said unto me*, etc.] That is, the angel that talked with him, and showed him the above things:

*these sayings are faithful and true*; not only what are delivered in particular concerning the new Jerusalem state, in which are many things new, and unheard of before, and which may seem strange, and even incredible, but all that are written in this book, (<sup><617></sup>Revelation 22:7,18,19) all which are "faithful"; to be believed by all that read them, and in the

fulfilment of which the faithfulness of God is engaged and displayed: and they are true; for they come from the God of truth, that cannot lie, and are to be credited, and will have a certain accomplishment: this is said to secure the divine authority of this book against the gainsayers of it, whom the Holy Ghost foresaw would arise in the world; and which is here, and in the following part of this chapter, supported by the testimonies of Christ, of his angel, and of John his servant.

*And the Lord God of the holy prophets sent his angel to show unto his servants the things which must shortly be done;* the “Lord” God is the Lord Jesus Christ, as appears by comparing this with (~~6600~~ Revelation 1:1) and this is a very glaring proof of the deity of Christ, since he is not only called the Lord God, but the Lord God of the holy prophets; of the prophets of the Old Testament, who foretold things to come, and spake of the Messiah, his person, office, sufferings, death, and the glory that should follow; and of the prophets of the New Testament, who had a gift of explaining the prophecies of the Old, as well as some of them predicted future events; and both sorts were holy men, set part by God for this office, and had principles of holiness wrought in them, and were moved by the Holy Ghost; these Christ inspired, and qualified with gifts suitable to their work; and he is, as the Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, the Vulgate Latin version, and the Oriental versions read, “the Lord God of the spirits of the prophets”; (see ~~6142~~ 1 Corinthians 14:32) who had power over their spirits, could come at them, and did impress them with a sense and knowledge of divine and future things, which none but God can do: the same sent an angel of his, one of his ministering spirits he has under his command, perhaps the same that here speaks, for so reads the Syriac version, “sent me his angel”: to show to John, and by him to all the saints, and to all the servants and followers of the Lamb, things that were in a very little time to begin to come to pass, till all were fulfilled; and even those at the greatest distance were, and are to be fulfilled within a little time, with respect to God, with whom a thousand years are as one day, and in comparison of eternity, and even of the time which had elapsed from the beginning of the world; and these things were shown in the various visions of the seals, trumpets, vials, and others; (see ~~6600~~ Revelation 1:1).

**Ver. 7.** *Behold, I come quickly,* etc.] These are the words not of the angel, but of Christ, as is manifest from (~~6622~~ Revelation 22:12,16,20) and which are to be understood not of Christ’s coming in his power to destroy Jerusalem, for this was past when John had these visions, and wrote this



book; but of the second and personal coming of Christ to judgment, as is clear from (<sup>6212</sup>Revelation 22:12) which though it will not be sooner than the time appointed, yet will be as soon as that time is come, and sooner than is generally expected by men. The Ethiopic version adds, “as a thief”, as in (<sup>665</sup>Revelation 16:15) and because the second coming of Christ is an affair of the utmost moment, and will be attended with events of the greatest consequence and importance, in which the visions of this book issue, a “behold” is prefixed to it, as a note of attention and admiration:

*blessed is he that keepeth the sayings of the prophecy of this book*; this book is a prophecy of things to come, and therefore cannot refer to the times of Jerusalem's destruction, which some interpreters make it chiefly to concern, for then it would be a narrative of things past; the sayings of it are the things contained in it; to keep these sayings is to read them with observation, to take notice of the accomplishment of them, so far as it has taken place, to keep them in mind and memory, to meditate upon them, and through the grace of God to steer the life and conversation according to the instructions, directions, and cautions here given; and such are blessed in life, and will be in death; they will die in the Lord, share in the first resurrection, and enter through the gates into the city.

**Ver. 8.** *And I John saw these things, and heard them*, etc.] He was both an eye and an ear witness; some things he saw, and others he heard; and to render his testimony the more authentic, he puts his name to it; and he being an apostle of Christ, and a man of great sincerity and probity, is to be believed.

*And when I had heard and seen*; the things related in this book, being amazed at them, and filled with joy on account of many of them, and firmly believing the whole as coming from God:

*I fell down to worship before the feet of the angel which showed me these things*. This is the second time John did so, though warned of it, and rebuked for it, which shows the proneness even of good men to fall into sin again and again; and what a propensity there is in mankind to idolatry; and very likely this might be suffered, that a second reproof might be given, and repeated instructions be on record, to prevent the worshipping of angels, introduced in the first ages of Christianity.

**Ver. 9.** *Then saith he unto me*, etc.] The angel at whose feet John fell down to worship:



*see thou do it not*; this he said in great haste, and with much vehemence, to hinder him from doing it, as his short way of speaking shows:

*for I am thy fellow servant*: of God, and of Christ, and am no more the object of worship than thyself; and both of us are, and ought to be, the worshippers of God, whose servants we are:

*and of thy brethren the prophets*; the apostles and ministers of the word; for prophesying and preaching are the same thing; these were the brethren of John in a spiritual sense, and by reason of their function:

*and of them which keep the sayings of this book*; (see <sup>6621</sup>Revelation 22:7) and this is said to encourage the observation of them, and is the character of private Christians, and shows the great condescension of the angel to put himself, not only upon a level with John, and the ministers of the word, but with common believers:

*worship God*; and him only, and that in a spiritual manner, with reverence and godly fear, in faith, and according to his revealed will; (See Gill on <sup>6690</sup>Revelation 19:10”).

**Ver. 10.** *And he saith unto me*, etc.] Not the angel, but Christ, as is manifest from (<sup>6622</sup>Revelation 22:12,13,16,20). This clause is left out in the Ethiopic version.

*Seal not the sayings of the prophecy of this book*; as the orders are, when things are intended not to be published, but concealed, at least as yet, because of the distance of the accomplishment of them, which was not the case here; (see <sup>6604</sup>Revelation 10:4 <sup>2785</sup>Daniel 8:26 12:4,9). Christ would have the things John saw and heard, written, and made public, sent in an open book, unsealed, to the churches, that they might be seen and read of all; that so the afflictions and persecutions of the people of God, both under Rome Pagan, and Rome Papal, might be known, and the saints not be offended at them when they came, but be prepared for them, to endure them patiently; and that they might be apprised of the errors and heresies that were to spring up, and of the appearance and wickedness of the man of sin, and his followers, and beware of them; and that they might have some assurance of the destruction of antichrist, and of the glorious state of the church, both in the spiritual and personal reign of Christ, and so be comforted in the midst of their tribulations, and rejoice in the faith and hope of these things. We may learn from hence, that the Scriptures in general are not to be locked up, and concealed from the common people,

but lie open, and are to be read by all; and in particular, that this book is not so dark and obscure as it is thought to be:

*for the time is at hand*; when the things in this book shall begin to be fulfilled; (see <sup><600></sup>Revelation 1:1,3).

**Ver. 11.** *He that is unjust, let him be unjust still*, etc.] These words are not to be considered as ironical expressions, such as in (<sup><210></sup>Ecclesiastes 11:9) (<sup><280></sup>Isaiah 50:11) much less as an allowance to do injustice and commit filthy actions; nor even as deterring persons from these things, by tacitly suggesting, that should they continue unjust and filthy, they would be severely punished; nor as an anticipation of an objection that might be made against the publication of this book, and the sayings of it, taken from the ill use that some men might make of it, who might be provoked to injure and persecute the saints more and more, or indulge a filthy conversation; but as a prophecy of what would be at the close of time, at the second coming of Christ. The imperative is put for the future, as is usual in the Hebrew language, in which it is said, let such and such things be, when the sense is, that they shall be; (see <sup><400></sup>Ezekiel 3:27) (<sup><300></sup>Zechariah 11:9) and so the meaning of this expression is, he that is now found without a righteousness, and full of all unrighteousness, and acts unrighteously, will continue so; there will be no change made in him, no regeneration, renovation, repentance, or reformation; he will remain the same wicked man he ever was; or he that hurts, or does injury to his fellow creatures, will still do mischief; at least he will have the same inclination, though not the opportunity and power, but will attempt it, of which there will be an instance in the wicked dead, when raised; (see <sup><610></sup>Revelation 20:8).

*And he which is filthy, let him be filthy still*: or he shall be filthy still: all mankind are originally, naturally, and universally filthy, or defiled with sin. Some are cleansed from it by the blood of Christ, others are not; and these will continue polluted, nor will the fire of hell fetch out the filthiness of their hearts and nature: or the words may be rendered, “he that defileth, let him defile still”; though he will not be able to defile the temple of God, or corrupt the good communications of the saints, yet he will continue to defile himself; the same evil thoughts, etc. will proceed out of him as ever, which defile the man.

*And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still*; a truly righteous man is one that is righteous, not by his own righteousness, but by the

righteousness of Christ imputed to him; he is one, who by faith looks to Christ for righteousness, and receives it from him, and, in consequence of it, lives soberly, righteously, and godly, and such will continue righteous; not that they will be made more righteous, though they may have a clearer view of their justification, for the sentence of it will be afresh pronounced upon them; but the meaning is, they will ever remain in a justified state, and never enter into condemnation, their righteousness being an everlasting one. The Alexandrian copy, the Complutensian edition, Syriac and Arabic versions, read, “and the righteous man, let him do righteousness still”; as he will do, for such will ever be before the throne of God, and serve him in his temple day and night, (<sup><675></sup>Revelation 7:15 22:3). And he that is holy, let him be holy still. They are holy who are sanctified by the Spirit of God, and none but such will be admitted into the pure state of things upon Christ's second coming; and such will then be perfectly holy, and without sin, and shall continue so: hence we may learn, that justification and sanctification are two distinct things, and that both are durable. With these sayings may be compared some expressions of the Jewish doctors <sup>f490</sup>, as the sense of (<sup><8148></sup>Leviticus 11:43,44)

“if a man defiles himself a little, they defile him much; the gloss on it is, they let, or suffer him to be more defiled; if below, they defile him above; if in this world, they defile him in the world to come; if a man sanctifies himself a little, they sanctify him much; if below, they sanctify him above; if in this world, they sanctify him in the world to come.”

**Ver. 12.** *And, behold, I come quickly*, etc.]. This is repeated, to confirm the truth of Christ's second coming, and the speediness of it, and to point at the time when the above shall be, and to add what follows.

*And my reward is with me*: which words are taken out of (<sup><2300></sup>Isaiah 40:10) (<sup><2321></sup>Isaiah 62:11) and which being compared together, furnish out a clear proof of Christ being the true Jehovah, the eternal God. There is a reward of debt, or a due reward, a reward of punishment, which is the just recompense of reward, which, shall be righteously given to wicked men for their sin, (<sup><3812></sup>Hebrews 2:2 <sup><2181></sup>Isaiah 3:11) and there is a reward of grace, which is also called the recompense of reward, the reward of the inheritance, which is no other than the gift of eternal life, which God of his free grace bestows upon his people, (<sup><5812></sup>Hebrews 11:26 <sup><5183></sup>Colossians 3:24) and both these are with Christ; they are in his hands, he has authority

from God, as Mediator, to inflict vengeance on the wicked, and to give eternal life to his people; both which he will do, for this is with him:

*to give every man according as his work shall be*; if his work is evil, and he is an unjust and filthy man, and the course of his conversation has been vicious, the reward of debt, or just punishment, will be rendered to him; but if his work is the fruit of grace, and he has had his conversation in the world by the grace of God, and he is a righteous person, justified by the righteousness of Christ, and a holy, good man, sanctified by the Spirit of God, the reward of grace, the crown of righteousness, will be given to him.

**Ver. 13.** *I am Alpha and Omega*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup>(6608)</sup>Revelation 1:8”). These characters are all put together here, which are before used in (<sup>(6608)</sup>Revelation 1:8,11 21:6) and are very pertinently mentioned in this place, when all promises and prophecies, relating to the glorious kingdom of Christ, were just finishing, and that itself was ready to appear, in which Christ alone should be exalted, the mystery of God would be completed, and time itself be no more. The Ethiopic version adds, “the beginning and end of days”, or time. A testimony this, of the deity, eternity, infinity, and perfection of Christ.

**Ver. 14.** *Blessed are they that do his commandments*, etc.] Either the commandments of God, (<sup>(6627)</sup>Revelation 12:17 14:12) the precepts of the moral law, which are the whole duty of man; which are done either legally in order to obtain life, and then they must be perfectly done, which no man can do; hence none live, and are justified by the deeds of it, and consequently are not blessed, but cursed; or evangelically, when they are done in the strength of Christ, from love to God, in the exercise of faith upon him, with a view to his glory, and without dependence on them, acknowledging the imperfection of them, and looking unto Jesus for righteousness and life, in whom such find both, and so are blessed persons: or else the commandments of Jesus are intended, who is speaking in the context, (<sup>(6622)</sup>Revelation 22:12,13,16) and is speaking of himself, and his, as the angel does in (<sup>(66216)</sup>Revelation 22:6) Christ's commandments are his new commandment of love, and the ordinances of baptism, and the Lord's supper; which are to be observed in the same evangelical manner as the commandments of God, and to be kept exactly as they are delivered, without any alteration, addition, or diminution; and they are to be attended to immediately, and without delay; and such as regard them in a right way and manner are blessed; they have much pleasure and delight in the

observance of them; these commandments are not grievous, especially when they have the presence of Christ, the discoveries of his love, and are under the gracious influences of his Spirit: or it may be rather the commandments in this book are designed, for it may be rendered, “that do its commandments”; keep the sayings of this book, as in (<sup>66217</sup>Revelation 22:7) such as relate to the worship of God, and forbid the worship of the beast, which caution against idolatry, and exhort to come out of Babylon, and direct to follow the Lamb, and charge not to add or take from anything written in this prophecy; and such persons as keep the words of it are pronounced blessed, (<sup>66018</sup>Revelation 1:3). The Alexandrian copy reads, “that wash their garments”; and so the Ethiopic version, and also the Vulgate Latin, which adds, “in the blood of the Lamb”, agreeably to (<sup>66013</sup>Revelation 7:13) and such whose persons and garments are washed in the blood of Christ are blessed indeed; they are justified by it, pardoned through it, and both they and their services are accepted on account of it. The instances of their happiness follow,

*that they may have right to the tree of life*; or “power over the tree of life”; that is, Christ, not of government over him, but of enjoyment of him; a liberty of eating of the fruit of this tree, having interest in it, and so a right to partake of it; which right, or liberty, is not obtained by obedience to the commands of God, or Christ, or of this book, for this is what is due to God, and obligatory on men; and which, when done, is but their duty, and can merit nothing; though a cheerful and evangelical obedience to the divine will makes such appear to have a right to such a privilege, as the disciples of Christ are not made so, but appear to be such by bringing forth fruit, (<sup>66158</sup>John 15:8) but to have interest in Christ, the tree of life, and a right, power, and liberty to eat thereof, is a free grace gift, (<sup>66017</sup>Revelation 2:7) and happy are those who enjoy such a privilege! (<sup>21088</sup>Proverbs 3:18 <sup>21018</sup>Song of Solomon 2:3).

*And may enter in through the gates into the city*: the Ethiopic version reads, “into this holy city”: and which intends not entrance into a particular church of Christ, the way into which is faith in Christ, and a profession of it, and submission to the ordinance of baptism; nor entrance into heaven, which, as a Gospel church, is often called a city, and into which none shall enter, but such who are justified by the righteousness of Christ, and are regenerated by his Spirit, the gates of it are Christ and his grace; but the holy city, the new Jerusalem, is meant, and entrance into that, which is so largely described in the preceding chapter, and particularly its gates; and

they must be happy persons, indeed, who enter there; and their right to it is from, and lies in Christ, his blood, righteousness, and grace, under a sense of which they yield a ready obedience to his will, which makes their right to appear. Frequent mention is made of the gates of this city in the book of Zohar; and, says R. Isaac <sup>f491</sup>,

“when the soul yr [çb snkl hkWz, “is fit” (or worthy, or has a right) “to enter through the gates of Jerusalem” that is above, Michael the great prince goes with it, who anticipates for it the peace of the ministering angels, wondering at him, and inquiring concerning it, saying, “who is this that comes out of the wilderness”, etc. (<sup><21R6></sup>Song of Solomon 3:6).”

**Ver. 15.** *For without are dogs*, etc.] That is, without the holy city are such persons who are comparable to dogs for their filthiness, impudence, and voraciousness, as are persecutors, heretics, and apostates, (<sup><40R6></sup>Matthew 7:6 <sup><30R2></sup>Philippians 3:2 <sup><6022></sup>2 Peter 2:22). Some think Sodomites are intended, as in (<sup><6238></sup>Deuteronomy 23:18). So Abarbinel and others interpret the law; and who abound in the Roman jurisdiction, called therefore Sodom, (<sup><6108></sup>Revelation 11:8) and indeed all wicked men, who will be cast out into outer darkness, may be signified hereby. The Jews say <sup>f492</sup>,

“when a man dies, if he be worthy (or righteous) he descends in the likeness of a lion to receive “his” soul, but if not, in the likeness of “a dog”, concerning which David says, (<sup><4221></sup>Psalms 22:20).”

*And sorcerers, and whoremongers, and murderers, and idolaters;* characters of the antichristian party, who will have no place in this city, or glorious kingdom of Christ; (See Gill on “<sup><6208></sup>Revelation 21:8”).

*And whosoever loveth and maketh a lie;* who loves both to invent and tell lies, and loves to hear them told by others; meaning more especially the doctrinal lies of antichrist, which are spoken in hypocrisy by him, and his followers are given up to believe.

**Ver. 16.** *I Jesus have sent mine angel*, etc.] As John, the writer of this book, sets down his own name, who was an eye and ear witness of the things contained in it, that they might be more surely believed, (<sup><6218></sup>Revelation 22:8) so Christ, the author of it, puts his name Jesus to it, to engage the greater attention to hear and read, and keep the words of it, as well as to make it plain and manifest, who is the person speaking of his

coming, (<sup><6217></sup>Revelation 22:7,12) and who that has any value for Jesus the Saviour, but will give credit, and pay a regard to this revelation of his, which he sent by his angel, one of his ministering spirits, made by him, and under his command, he being the Creator, Lord, and head of angels: this expresses the dignity of his person, and is no inconsiderable proof of his deity: and this was done, in order

*to testify*, to bear witness to the truth of the things contained in it; to signify and show them, to set them forth in emblems and visions:

*unto you these things in the churches*; to the servants of the Lord, (<sup><6216></sup>Revelation 22:6) to John, and by him to others, to the pastors of the seven churches, who were **ἐπι**, “over” the churches, as it may be rendered, and to the members of the churches, to all that were in them; for the Alexandrian copy, the Vulgate Latin and Arabic versions read **εν**, “in”; the Syriac version renders it, **μδq**, “before the churches”. What John saw he wrote in a book, and sent it to these churches, (<sup><6111></sup>Revelation 1:11). The words may be rendered, “concerning the churches”; and then the sense is, that the angel was sent to show to John, and by him to others, even to all the saints in all ages, the things relating to the church of Christ, in the several periods of time, represented in succession by the seven churches of Asia. Christ gives a further account of himself, for the greater confirmation of the faith of his people, in the certain accomplishment of the things herein written, by saying,

*I am the root and the offspring of David*. The former of these is mentioned in the note, (see Gill on “<sup><6685></sup>Revelation 5:5”); and the meaning of it is, either that Christ, as God, is David's Lord and head, from whom he had his being, both in a temporal and spiritual sense, and by whom he was supported and sustained; or that, as man, he sprung from the root of David, or descended from him; and so it falls in with the latter, which may be explanative of it, “the offspring of David”; that is, the soft of David, according to the flesh, a frequent name of the Messiah; (see Gill on “<sup><1001></sup>Matthew 1:1”). God promised that the Messiah should be of the seed of David, and according to his promise he raised up unto Israel of his seed, a Saviour Jesus, the same person here speaking, (<sup><4123></sup>Acts 13:23) who adds,

*and the bright and morning star*; Christ is compared to a “star”, as in (<sup><0247></sup>Numbers 24:17) for its light, the light of nature, and of grace, and of the new Jerusalem state being from him; and for its glory, his glory being



the glory of the only begotten of the Father, and he having a glory, as Mediator, which his saints will ever behold, and be delighted with; and for its influence, all the blessings of grace, life, and righteousness, being from him; and to a “bright” star, because he is the brightness of his Father's glory, and so splendid, shining, and illustrious, that he is light itself, and in him is no darkness at all; and to a bright “morning” star, which shows the night is going off and the day is coming on, and is the phosphorus, or bringer of light; as Christ by his first coming, who was then the dayspring from on high, put an end to the night of Jewish darkness, and sprung the great Gospel day, so often spoken of by the prophets, and brought life and immortality to light by the Gospel, and showed the way to eternal life by himself; so by his second coming, to which this character refers, he will put an end to the night of antichristian darkness, Pagan, Papal, and Mahometan; so that there shall be no more night, and shall make an everlasting day, and bring such light into the holy city, that it shall need no candle, nor light of the sun or moon. The dawn of light at the Reformation was a presage of this, (<sup><6128></sup>Revelation 2:28) called there the morning star. With great propriety and pertinence are these titles here assumed by Christ, as “the root and offspring of David”, or David's son, when he was about to sit on the throne of his father David, and possess his kingdom in the most visible and glorious manner; and “the bright and morning star”, when he was going to usher in such light into the new Jerusalem, as would make all other light unnecessary. Aijelet Shahaar, in the title of (<sup><6201></sup>Psalm 22:1) which is a psalm that belongs to the Messiah, is, by some Jewish writers <sup>f493</sup>, interpreted, *rqwbh bkwk*, “the morning star”, the title of Christ here.

**Ver. 17.** *And the Spirit and the bride say, come*, etc.] Hearing Christ say that he should come quickly, (<sup><6207></sup>Revelation 22:7,12) the Spirit and the bride express an earnest wish, and a most affectionate desire after his coming: by “the Spirit” may be meant the Spirit of God in the hearts of his people, who not only convinces them of, and acquaints with the coming of Christ to judgment, and gives them reason to expect it, but fills their souls with the love of his appearance, so that they look and long for it, and hasten in the breathings of their souls after it: and this in like manner he may be said to wish for, and desire it in them, as he is said to cry “Abba”, Father, in them, (<sup><6016></sup>Galatians 4:6) and to make intercession for them, (<sup><6186></sup>Romans 8:26,27). Hence, some interpreters, by the spirit, understand such as have the Spirit, and are spiritual men; either have spiritual gifts, the gift of prophecy, as John, who in (<sup><6221></sup>Revelation 22:20) expresses an



ardent desire that Christ would come quickly; or regenerate men in common, who are born of the Spirit, and bear his name, (~~ARF~~ John 3:5,6) and so by an hendyadis, “the Spirit and the bride” signify one and the same; namely, the spiritual bride of Christ, who is sanctified by the Spirit of God; even all the elect of God, whom Christ loved from all eternity, and who are espoused to him as a chaste virgin; the new Jerusalem, who is as a bride adorned for her husband, and is the bride, the Lamb's wife: these wait for the bridegroom's coming, and most earnestly desire it, as there is good reason for them so to do, since his appearing in itself will be a glorious one, being in his own glory, and his Father's, and the holy angels; and seeing then will be the solemnization of the marriage day between Christ and his church; it will be the saints' redemption day; they will then possess full salvation in soul and body; complete grace will be given to them, and glory will be revealed in them, and they shall be for ever with the Lord.

*And let him that heareth*; what the Spirit and the bride say; or the words of this prophecy; or that has spiritual ears given him, and he hears so as to understand spiritual things, the kingdom of Christ, and the glories of it, let him join the Spirit and bride, and

*say, come* likewise; or express his wishes and desires in the same earnest and affectionate manner, that Christ would hasten his second coming:

*and let him that is athirst come*. These seem to be the words of Christ inviting such who thirst after him, his grace and righteousness, after more knowledge of him, and communion with him, to come unto him, by faith, and partake thereof, (~~ARF~~ John 7:37) or who thirst after his second coming, and the glories and delights of the new Jerusalem state, to come into it, and eat of the tree of life, and drink of the river of water of life in it; for the character seems to design such, to speak in the language of the Jews, who use like phrases with this, who hunger,  $\mu\upsilon\upsilon\upsilon \mu\upsilon\mu \tau\omega\tau\epsilon\lambda \mu\upsilon\alpha\mu\chi\omega$ , “and thirst to drink living water”<sup>f494</sup>, as appears by what follows:

*and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely*. The water of life designs the free favour and love of God, and the communications and displays of it in the new Jerusalem state, even the comfort, refreshment, and glories of that state: to “take” it is to enjoy it, to partake of it, being led unto it, and that being given to them by Christ the Lamb in the midst of the throne, (~~ARF~~ Revelation 7:17 21:6) and which is had “freely”, without money, and without price, as in (~~ARF~~ Isaiah 55:1) which seems to be referred to; for the happiness of this state, as well as eternal life, is the free

gift of God through Christ; and the persons encouraged to partake of it are “whosoever will”; that is, whoever has a will to divine and spiritual things, wrought in him by God, for no man has such a will of himself, (<sup><3813></sup>Philippians 2:13) though this does not so much regard the character of the person that may take of the water of life, as the free manner in which he may take it: so the Jews are wont to express themselves, when they would signify the liberty that might be used, or the free way in which anything might be taken, particularly when speaking of the law, and the things of it, **I wj yw aby I wj yl hxwrj I k**, “whosoever has a mind to take, let him come and take”, as it is said, (<sup><2801></sup>Isaiah 55:1) “ho, everyone that thirsteth”, etc. <sup>f495</sup> that is, he is free to take, he is welcome to it; which passage referred to, is thus paraphrased by the Targumist, “ho, **ybx d I k**, “whosoever “will” learn, let him come and learn, etc.

**Ver. 18.** *For I testify to every man*, etc.] These are not the words of a scribe, who having wrote out a copy of this book, added the following adjuration to it, to deter persons from adding to it, or diminishing it; for the book is not yet finished, and both Christ and John speak after this; and to insert such a passage into the text would be a bold and daring action; nor are they even the words of John, the inspired writer of it, but of the Lord Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, as appears from (<sup><6216></sup>Revelation 22:16,17,20) who in a most solemn manner declares to every man, high or low, rich or poor, of whatsoever character, or however dignified, either in a civil or ecclesiastic way,

*that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book* read or explained,

*if any man shall add unto these things.* To “add” to the things contained in this book, is not to deliver, or write an exposition of it, in a modest manner, with a sincere view to give light into it, agreeably to the analogy of faith; for to expound Scripture, or to preach from it, consistent with it, is not to add unto it, but to give the sense of it; but then may it be said to be added unto, and so this book, when it is wrested and perverted, and a false gloss is put upon it, as the Pharisees did upon the law; and when unwritten traditions are made to be equal to it, or above it, as the same persons made the traditions of the elders, whereby they transgressed the law, and made the word of God of none effect, and so broke through the precept given, (<sup><6012></sup>Deuteronomy 4:2) as do the Papists in like manner; and when men pretend to visions and revelations, and make them the rule of faith and practice, and to confirm things that are neither in this book, nor in any

other part of the word of God; and when men interpolate it, and set up human fictitious writings upon equal authority with it; which shows the authenticity of this book, and of all the whole Scripture, and the perfection of it, whose canon is closed with it: the punishment of such a crime follows,

*God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book;* the things threatened to the antichristian party, (<sup><6622></sup>Revelation 2:22,23 <sup><6630></sup>Revelation 13:10 <sup><6649></sup>Revelation 14:9-11) the seven last plagues in which the wrath of God is filled up, which will be inflicted on the same, (<sup><6616></sup>Revelation 16:1-21), the lake of fire and brimstone, into which the beast, the false prophet, the devil, and all wicked men will be cast, (<sup><6620></sup>Revelation 19:20 <sup><6610></sup>Revelation 20:10 <sup><6618></sup>Revelation 21:8) (see <sup><3115></sup>Proverbs 30:5,6).

**Ver. 19.** *And if any man shall take away from the prophecy of this book,* etc.] As he may be said to do, who denies the authority of this book, which has been done by some, and which the Holy Ghost foresaw; or takes it away from, or denies the reading of it to the people, as the Papists do with respect to the whole Scripture; and who wilfully pervert the sense of it, and will not have the things in it, relating to antichrist, to belong to him.

*God shall take away his part out of the book of life;* by which is meant eternal election, which is the meaning of the phrase throughout this book, in which whoever are written shall certainly be saved. The worshippers of the beast, or the antichristian party, who are chiefly regarded here, are not written in it, (<sup><6613></sup>Revelation 13:8 <sup><6617></sup>Revelation 17:8) wherefore taking away the part of such, is only taking away that which they seemed to have; (see <sup><6618></sup>Luke 8:18) and the sense is, that such shall be cast into the lake of fire, which is the second death, and will be the portion of all that are not written in the book of life, (<sup><6615></sup>Revelation 20:15). The Alexandrian copy, one of Stephens's, and the Complutensian edition, read, "the tree of life"; and so do the Syriac and Ethiopic versions; the sense is the same; (see <sup><6612></sup>John 15:2) and out of the holy city; the new Jerusalem, before described, a part in which is a right to enter into it through the gates, and possess the glories of it: what is mentioned here is only a seeming one, which wicked men may flatter themselves with; and the meaning is, that such shall never enter into it, and enjoy the happiness of it, but shall ever be without, (<sup><6617></sup>Revelation 21:27 <sup><6615></sup>Revelation 22:15)

*and from the things which are written in this book;* the blessings promised to the overcomers in (<sup><6607></sup>Revelation 2:7,11,17,26 <sup><6605></sup>Revelation 3:5,12,21)

which such as detract from this book shall have no share in. The Alexandrian copy, with some others, and the Syriac version, leave out the copulative “and”, and read “which are written”, etc. connecting them with the book of life, and holy city, which are written, and spoken of, in this book. The Ethiopic version connects the words with the holy city, only reading them, “which is written”, etc. The Jews say of their Talmud, that nothing is to be added to it, or diminished from it <sup>f496</sup>.

**Ver. 20.** *He which testifieth these things*, etc.] Not the angel, (<sup>4216</sup>Revelation 22:16) nor John, who sometimes used this way of speaking, (<sup>4213</sup>John 21:24) but Christ, as appears from what follows; for he

*saith, surely I come quickly*; who not only asserts the speediness of his coming, as in (<sup>4217</sup>Revelation 22:7,12) but expresses the certainty of it, so that it ought not to be doubted of by any, especially by his own people; though it may seem to be deferred, and, upon that account, be derided by ungodly men; and Christ may have some respect, in this strong repetition of it, to the certainty of the punishment that will then be inflicted upon such who add to, or diminish from this book; for he himself will certainly come in person, and execute the vengeance threatened. John next puts his

*Amen* to it, signifying his assent unto it, declaring his faith in it, and expressing his earnest desire after it, and wish for it: and in words at length adds,

*even so come, Lord Jesus*; quickly, speedily as thou hast said, and in all thy glory; set up thy kingdom, let that come, introduce thy people into it, and destroy thine enemies; this he said as one that loved the appearance of Christ, longed for it, hastened to it, and was impatient at the delay of it.

**Ver. 21.** *The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.*] That is, let a sense of the love of Christ, shown in all his regards to his church and people, which is always the same in itself, though the saints have not always the same perception of it, abide upon you: may you see your interest in the redeeming grace of Christ, in all its branches, and in his justifying, pardoning, sanctifying, and persevering grace; let the fulness of grace in Christ be the object of your trust and confidence; may you have a supply from it to enable you to overcome every temptation, to exercise every grace, and discharge every duty. This shows this book was written in the form of an epistle, and sent to the seven churches of Asia, (<sup>4011</sup>Revelation 1:11) and through them to the churches in all ages. It

begins with a salutation of them, (<sup><66004></sup>Revelation 1:4) and ends with one commonly used by the Apostle Paul in all his epistles, (<sup><53187></sup>2 Thessalonians 3:17,18). The Arabic version, instead of “you”, reads “us”; and the Complutensian edition and the Syriac version read, “with all the saints”.

# FOOTNOTES

- Ft1** -- Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 308.
- Ft2** -- Adv. Haeres. 50:4. c. 37, 50. & 50:5. c. 30.
- Ft3** -- Paedagog. 50:2. c. 12.
- Ft4** -- Adv. Marcion. 50:4. c. 5.
- Ft5** -- Comment. in Matthew p. 417. Ed. Huet.
- Ft6** -- Apud. Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:3. c. 28. & 50:7. c. 23.
- Ft7** -- Suidas in voce **τωαννης**.
- Ft8** -- Vid. Epiphan Haeres. 51.
- Ft9** -- Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 50:5. c. 36. Euseb. Ecclesiastes Hist. 50:3. c. 18.
- Ft10** -- Shemot Rabba, sect. 3. fol. 73. 2.
- Ft11** -- Targum. Jon. in <sup><673></sup>Deuteronomy 32:39. Zohar in Exodus fol. 59. 3. & in Numbers fol. 97. 4. & 106. 2. Seder Tephillot, fol. 205. 1. Ed. Basil. fol. 2. 2. Ed. Amsterd.
- Ft12** -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 2. fol. 179. 1.
- Ft13** -- Misn. Yoma, c. 3. sect. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6.
- Ft14** -- Misn. Sabbat, c. 14. sect. 9. T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 67. 1. & 111. 1. & 128. 1. Raya Mehimna in Zohar in <sup><682></sup>Leviticus 12:1.
- Ft15** -- Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 1. 2. Vid. Jarchium in. Psal. lxxviii. 14.
- Ft16** -- T. Bab. Bava Kama, fol. 38. 1.
- Ft17** -- Targum in <sup><1084></sup>1 Chronicles 3:24. vid. Beckii Not. in ib. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 85. 2.
- Ft18** -- Misn. Menachot, c. 8. sect. 1. 3. & Bartenora in ib. So Alpha penulatorum, "the chief of beggars", in Martial, 50:50. 2. Ep. 57.
- Ft19** -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 55. 1. & Avoda Zara, fol. 4. 1. Echa Rabbati,

fol. 52. 1. Baal Hatturim in <sup><1532></sup>Deuteronomy 33:21. & Raziel, fol. 9. & 12. & Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 70. 1, 2.

**Ft20** -- Nat. Hist. 50:4. c. 12.

**Ft21** -- Epist. ad Tarsenses, p. 76.

**Ft22** -- Irenaeus adv. Haeres. 50:5. c. 30.

**Ft23** -- De praescript. Haeret. c. 36.

**Ft24** -- Apolog. 2. p. 98, 99.

**Ft25** -- Epist. c. 11. p. 244. Ed. Voss.

**Ft26** -- Epist. ad Magnes. c. 9.

**Ft27** -- Apud Script. Quaest. & Respons. ad Orthodox. inter Justin. Opera, p. 468.

**Ft28** -- De Corona, c. 3.

**Ft29** -- Homil. in Exodus fol. 41. 7.

**Ft30** -- Nat. Hist. 50:5. c. 29.

**Ft31** -- Herodot. de Vita Homeri. c. 2.

**Ft32** -- Vid. Hiller. Onomastic. p. 932.

**Ft33** -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 7. sect. 4.

**Ft34** -- De vita Mosis, 50:3. p. 671.

**Ft35** -- Ad Fabiolam. fol. 19. H.

**Ft36** -- Cele Hamikash, c. 8. sect. 17.

**Ft37** -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 18. 2. & 19. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 74. 2. Vid. Jarchi & Kimchi in <sup><3418></sup>Ezekiel 44:18.

**Ft38** -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 7. sect. 2.

**Ft39** -- T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 54. 1. Maimon. & Bartenora in Misn. Sabbat, c. 5. sect. 2.

**Ft40** -- Servius in Virgil. Aeneid. 50:8. p. 13. 55.

**Ft41** -- Jonathan ben Uzziel in <sup><1210></sup>Exodus 40:4.

- Ft42** -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 95. 4. & 131. 1.
- Ft43** -- T. Bab. Pesachim, fol. 5. 1. Bereshit Rabba, sect. 63. fol. 55. 2. Vajikra Rabba, sect. 30. fol. 171. 2. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 71. 4.
- Ft44** -- Bereshit Rabba, sect. 73. fol. 64. 3. Targum Jerus. in <sup><OR2></sup>Genesis 30:21. & Jon in <sup><RS2></sup>Deuteronomy 28:12. Zohar in Genesis fol. 67. 3. Pirke Eliezer, c. 34. T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 2. 1. & Sandedrin, fol. 113. 1.
- Ft45** -- Contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51.
- Ft46** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 36.
- Ft47** -- L. 7:c. 46.
- Ft48** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:3. c. 39.
- Ft49** -- Pesikta Rabbati apud Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 60. 4.
- Ft50** -- Misn. Bava Metzia, c. 4. sect. 10.
- Ft51** -- Vid. Irenaeum adv. Haeres, 50:1. c. 27. & Tertull. de Praescript. Haeret. c. 46, 47.
- Ft52** -- Clement. Alex. Strom. 50:3. p. 436. & Euseb, Hist. Eccl. 50:2. c. 29.
- Ft53** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 33. 3.
- Ft54** -- Adv. Haeres. 50:3. c. 3.
- Ft55** -- Vid. Smith. Notitia septem Ecclesiastes Asiae, p. 164, 165.
- Ft56** -- Hist. Ecclesiastes 50:4. c. 15.
- Ft57** -- L. 7. c. 46.
- Ft58** -- Hist. Ecclesiastes Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 595, 596. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
- Ft59** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 167.
- Ft60** -- Vid. Arrian. Epictet. 50:2. c. 9.
- Ft61** -- Apud Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.
- Ft62** -- De Civitate Dei, 50:18. c. 52.



- Ft63** -- Vid. Minut. Felix, p. 42.
- Ft64** -- Contr. Haeres. Haeres. 9.
- Ft65** -- De praemiis & Poenis, p. 921.
- Ft66** -- L. 7. c. 46.
- Ft67** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.
- Ft68** -- Ib. 50:5. c. 1.
- Ft69** -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburgh. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
- Ft70** -- Notitia, p. 120.
- Ft71** -- Servius in Virgil. Aeneid. 50:1. p. 403, & 50:2. p. 633. Ed Basil. 1586.
- Ft72** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 112.
- Ft73** -- L. 1. sive Attica, p. 8.
- Ft74** -- L. 3. sive Laconica, p. 215.
- Ft75** -- L. 9. Epig. 14.
- Ft76** -- Hist. 50:4. c. 14.
- Ft77** -- In Icaro Menippo.
- Ft78** -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:17. c. 1. sect. 3. De Bello Jud. 50:1. c. 28. sect. 4.
- Ft79** -- T. Hieros. Sanhedrin, fol. 28. 4. & Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 106. 1. Bemidbar Rabba, sect. 20. fol. 229. 1. Yalkut, par. 1. fol. 244. 3, 4. & par. 2. fol. 76. 4.
- Ft80** -- De vita Mosis, 50:7. p. 647, 648.
- Ft81** -- Antiqu. 50:4. c. 6. sect. 6, 7, 8, 9.
- Ft82** -- Apud Hottinger. Exercit. Antimorin. p. 109.
- Ft83** -- T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 75. 2. Jarchi in <sup>1063</sup>Exodus 16:13, 14. Mitzvot Tora, pr. affirm. 30.

- Ft84** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 38. 4.
- Ft85** -- Midrash Shirhashirim, fol. 11. 2. Midrash Ruth, fol. 33. 2. & Midrash Kohelet, fol. 63. 2. Pesikta in Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 75. 4.
- Ft86** -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Numbers fol. 96. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 68. 4.
- Ft87** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 88. 1.
- Ft88** -- Alleg. 50:2. p. 93. Quod det. potior. p. 176. Quis rer. divin. Haeres. p. 491, 492. & Leg. Alleg. 50:3. p. 1103.
- Ft89** -- Metamorphos. 50:15. fol. 1.
- Ft90** -- Zohar in Leviticus fol. 8. 1.
- Ft91** -- De Servis, p. 342.
- Ft92** -- Contra Haeres. 50:2. Haeres. 51.
- Ft93** -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburgh. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
- Ft94** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 130.
- Ft95** -- De Urbibus.
- Ft96** -- Notitia, p. 126.
- Ft97** -- Antiqu. 50:8. c. 13. sect. 1. 4, 7.
- Ft98** -- Juchasin, fol. 7. 1.
- Ft99** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 13. 26. & 50:5. c. 24.
- Ft100** -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 418. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 10. p. 254. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 9. c. 3. p. 3.
- Ft101** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 138.
- Ft102** -- Nat. Hist. 50:37. c. 7. Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 17.
- Ft103** -- Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 6. Albert. Magn. de Rebus Metall. 50:2. c. 17. Schroder. Pharmacopoeia, 50:3. c. 5. p. 18.
- Ft104** -- R. David Kimchi in Psal. 1:2.

- Ft105** -- T. Bab. Zebachim, fol. 35. 1.
- Ft106** -- Tzeror Hammor, fol. 10. 3.
- Ft107** -- Maimon. Biath Hamikdash, c. 6. sect. 11, Misn. Middot, c. 5. sect. 3. T. Bab. Yoma, fol. 19. 1.
- Ft108** -- L. 7. c. 46.
- Ft109** -- Ignat. Epist. p. 39. Ed. Voss.
- Ft110** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.
- Ft111** -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 3. c. 2. p. 2. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 6. c. 2. p. 4. cent. 8. c. 2. p. 4.
- Ft112** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 143.
- Ft113** -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 44. 2. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 70. 3.
- Ft114** -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 15.
- Ft115** -- L. 7. c. 46.
- Ft116** -- Euseb. Hist. Eccl. 50:4. c. 26. & 50:5. c. 24.
- Ft117** -- Eccl. Hist. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 2. p. 3. cent. 5. c. 7. p. 418. cent. 7. c. 2. p. 3. c. 7. p. 112. c. 10. p. 254.
- Ft118** -- Smith. Notitia, p. 150.
- Ft119** -- Zohar in Deuteronomy fol. 121. 4. so in T. Bab. Sabbat, fol. 119. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 111. 1. Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 46. 1.
- Ft120** -- Cabal. Denud. par. 2. p. 7.
- Ft121** -- Lex. Cabal. p. 130. & Baal Hatturim in ~~Genesis~~ Deuteronomy 28:15.
- Ft122** -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 77. 1.
- Ft123** -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 106. 2.
- Ft124** -- Vajikra Rabba, sect. 34. fol. 173. 4. vid. Targum in Cant. 8:9.
- Ft125** -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 96. 3. Debarim Rabba, sect. 8. fol. 243. 3. & Vajikra Rabba, sect. 12. fol. 155. 3.
- Ft126** -- Misn. Succa, c. 5. sect. 5.

- Ft127** -- Misn. Tamid, c. 3. sect. 7.
- Ft128** -- Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 8. Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 1.
- Ft129** -- De Legibus, 50:2.
- Ft130** -- Ruaeus de Gemmis, 50:2. c. 4.
- Ft131** -- Ruaeus, ib. & Albert. Magn. de Reb. Metall. 50:2. c. 17.
- Ft132** -- Misn. Sanhedrin, c. 4. sect. 3. & Maimon. Hilchot Sanhedrin, c. 1. sect. 3.
- Ft133** -- Misn. Middot, c. 1. sect. 1.
- Ft134** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 106. 3. & Raya Mehimna in ib. fol. 96. 3. T. Bab. Beracot, fol. 17. 1. Abot R. Nathan, fol. 1. 3. Caphtor, fol. 82. 2. & 86. 2. & 108. 2. & Nishmat Chayim, fol. 30. 2.
- Ft135** -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 90. 3. & 92. 1. & in Leviticus fol. 24. 3. & in Deuteronomy fol. 118. 4. Tikkune Zohar apud Rittangel. not. in Jetzira, p. 133, 134.
- Ft136** -- Ganz. Tzemach David, par. 1. fol. 46. 2. & 47. 1, 2.
- Ft137** -- Bemidbar Rabba, sect 2. fol. 179. 1. Vid. Pirke Eliezer, c. 4.
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- Ft139** -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in ib. fol. 95. 4.
- Ft140** -- Aben Ezra in ~~Numbers~~ Numbers 2:2.
- Ft141** -- Raziel, fol. 45. 2.
- Ft142** -- Cicero, Orat. pro Sextio. p. 904.
- Ft143** -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:15. c. 6. sect. 6, 7.
- Ft144** -- Zohar in Exodus fol. 6. 3. & Tzeror Hammor, fol. 109. 1. & 161. 3.
- Ft145** -- T. Bab. Sanhedrin, fol. 98. 2.
- Ft146** -- Vid. Alex. ab Alex. Genial. Dier. 50:2. c. 30. & Salmuth in Panciroll. rer. Memorab. par. 1. tit. 42. p. 145.

- Ft147 -- Misna Tamid, c. 1. sect. 4. & c. 5. sect. 4. 5.
- Ft148 -- Joseph. Antiqu. 50:18. c. 1. sect 3.
- Ft149 -- Zohar in Genesis fol. 28. 2.
- Ft150 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 49. 3, 4.
- Ft151 -- Targum in ~~2054~~Hosea 5:14. & 11:10. & 13:7.
- Ft152 -- Antiqu. 50:3. c. 6. sect. 6.
- Ft153 -- Raya Mehimna in Zohar in Exodus fol. 48. 3.
- Ft154 -- Yalkut Simeoni, par. 2. fol. 40. 3.
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- Ft157 -- Victor Aurel. de Viris Illustr. in Fur Camill.
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- Ft159 -- In Oneiro Criticis, apud Mede.
- Ft160 -- Shaare Zion, fol. 102. 2.
- Ft161 -- Dion Cassius in Vita Trajani.
- Ft162 -- Euseb. Eccl. Hist. 50:4. c. 2.
- Ft163 -- Dion Cassius in Vita Hadrian.
- Ft164 -- T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 57. 1. & Hieros. Taanith, fol. 69. 1. Echa Rabbati, fol. 52. 3.
- Ft165 -- Jucaasin, fol. 142. 2. & 143. 1.
- Ft166 -- T. Hieros Taanith, fol. 68. 4. & T. Bab. Gittin, fol. 157. 2. Shirhashirim Rabba, fol. 13. 1.
- Ft167 -- Spartianus in Vita Hadriani, & Aurel. Victor. Epitome.
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- Ft170 -- Apolog. c. 40. & ad Scapulam, c. 3.

- Ft171** -- Cassiodor. Chronicon. & Eutrop. Hist. Roman. 50:8.
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- Ft178** -- Apud Euseb. Prepar. Evangel. 50:2. p. 38.
- Ft179** -- Capitolinus in Vita ejus.
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- Ft183** -- Ad Demetrianum, p. 278.
- Ft184** -- Targum in <sup><1212></sup>1 Chronicles 21:12, 14, 17. & in <sup><1468></sup>2 Chronicles 6:28. & 20:9.
- Ft185** -- T. Bab. Taanith, fol. 8. 2. & Sanhedrin, fol. 29. 1.
- Ft186** -- Eutrop. 50:9.
- Ft187** -- Victor. Aurel. de Caesaribus, & Epitome.
- Ft188** -- Apud Euseb. 50:7. c. 21, 22.
- Ft189** -- Adv. Gentes, 50:1. p. 13.
- Ft190** -- Euseb. 50:9. c. 8.
- Ft191** -- Aurel. Victor. Epitome.
- Ft192** -- Herodian, 50:1. c. 37.

- Ft193** -- Tosaphtha in Zohar in Exodus fol. 79. 4.
- Ft194** -- Shaare Ora, fol. 31. 2.
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- Ft196** -- T. Bab. Cetubot, fol. 111. 1.
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- Ft205** -- Ib. c. 11.
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- Ft207** -- Contur. Magd. cent. 4. c. 16. p. 909. Vid. Eutrop. 50:9.
- Ft208** -- Euseb. Hist. 50:8. c. 13. & de Vita Constantin. 50:5. c. 25.
- Ft209** -- Ib. 50:9. c. 10.
- Ft210** -- Ib. c. 9. & de Vita Constant. 50:1. c. 38. Vid. Aurel. Victor. de Caesaribus.
- Ft211** -- Aurel. Victor. Epitome.
- Ft212** -- Euseb. Hist. 50:9. c. 10. & de Vita Constantin. 50:1. c. 59.
- Ft213** -- Euseb. de Vita Constantin. 50:2. c. 18.
- Ft214** -- Raziell, fol. 36. 1. 2.
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- Ft336 -- Hist. Eccl. Magdeburg. cent. 4. c. 3. p. 73, 74.
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- Ft348 -- The reader will bear in mind that the original edition of this work was published in the year 1747. — Ed.
- Ft349 -- Zohar in Numbers fol. 70. 4.
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