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Chapter 1

The Seven Church Ages

The Seven Churches of Revelation 2 and 3 were literal churches in John's day; however, the prophecies about them extended far beyond those local cities. Among other things, they represent seven Church Ages that are actually seven stages of development in Church history from 33 to 1993 AD. The overall Church Age is a period of 40 Jubilees—or 49 x 40 years, which is a total of 1,960 years. The Church Age began on the Day of Pentecost in the second chapter of Acts and ended at Pentecost, May 30, 1993. If we would understand this part of the overall Plan of God depicted in the Message to the Seven Churches, we must study some Church history.

King Saul as a Type of the Church

But first let us indulge in a bit of review regarding one of the foremost biblical types of the Church: King Saul. In our book, The Wheat and Asses of Pentecost, we devoted an entire chapter on this fascinating Old Testament type. Saul was crowned king on the day of Pentecost (1 Sam. 12:17), and he reigned over Israel for 40 years (Acts 13:21). During that time, he persecuted David, the type of the overcomer, because his own heart was not right with God, but he blamed David for all his troubles. He felt that David was trying to usurp the legitimate authority that God had given Saul. He felt that David was causing a rebellion, a schism in the land, and turning people away from the established monarchy.

While his arguments must have seemed right to many of the people at the time, the Bible reveals that his true motives were

rebellion against God (1 Sam. 15:23), *guilt* in knowing that he had been disqualified in the sight of God from having

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an enduring dynasty (1 Sam. 15:26-28), and *fear* of the one God would raise up to replace him.

Saul started out as a fine young man, literally *the best in the land* (1 Sam. 9:2). But any time man gets his hands upon power over other men, it begins to corrupt him unless he has been trained rigorously by the heavy hand of God, even as God trained David through the persecution of Saul. Saul was a good king in his first year, but his problems began in the second (1 Sam. 13:1). Some years later, in the incident involving Agag in 1 Sam. 15, God rejected Saul fully. Yet even so, God allowed him to remain as king for many more years. In that time Saul's lack of repentance, along with God's refusal to speak with him, finally made him so desperate that he consulted with the witch of Endor (1 Sam. 28). He started by rebelling against God, and "**rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft.**" He ended in witchcraft, where rebellion ultimately leads.

But many wonder why God did not simply remove him immediately and make David king. First of all, David was only eight years old at the time. Of course, God could have seen to it that David were older, but instead, God thought it good to use Saul's rebellion to train David and teach him obedience by the things which he would suffer. God knows how to work all things out for our good, and this is a prime example.

King Saul had seven sons, who represent the Seven Churches in the book of Revelation. They unlawfully persecuted the Gibeonites, with whom Joshua had made a covenant (2 Sam. 21). As a result, the seven sons of Saul paid the price for their father's sins. They were hanged on the first day of barley harvest, the day of the wave-sheaf offering shortly after Passover (2 Sam. 21:9). The Gibeonites in this story represent the overcomers in the book of Revelation. Even as Saul persecuted the Gibeonites, so also did the Church persecute the overcomers in the past 40 Jubilees of its reign. The fact that the seven sons of Saul were hanged on the day of

the barley harvest shows that the Seven Churches will not receive the inheritance reserved for the overcomers, when they come into their inheritance. The wave-sheaf offering was the day Jesus was raised from the dead, coming into His inheritance. The overcomers identify with Him as His body; but the Seven Churches are disinherited at the same time. For a more complete discussion of the prophetic meaning of this story, see our books: [The Barley Overcomers](#) and [The Wheat and Asses of Pentecost](#).

The Seven New Testament Churches

With all this in mind, let us turn to the history of the Church and see how these Old Testament types and shadows play out from 33 to 1993 AD. First we give an outline of the seven Church Ages as described by John:

1. **Ephesus:** "Desirable" (33-64 AD)
2. **Smyrna:** "Bitter" or "Myrrh" (64-313 AD)
3. **Pergamos:** "Married to Power" (313-529 AD)
4. **Thyatira:** "Castle of the Goddess" (529-1517 AD)
5. **Sardis:** "Precious Stone, Remnant" (1517-1776 AD)
6. **Philadelphia:** "Brotherly Love" (1776-1914 AD)
7. **Laodicea:** "Power of the Laity" (1914-1993 AD)

Since there is so much that could be said about each of these churches, we will not write out the passages in Rev. 2 and 3. We hope that you will keep your Bible open and read through each passage before reading our comments.

These Seven Churches also have counterparts in the Old Testament Church (Israel). Understanding these Old Testament types and shadows give us a more complete picture of what has happened in the 40 Jubilees of the New Testament Churches. So we will list them for you here before starting our actual study.

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The Seven Old Testament Churches

1. **Pentecost Church at Sinai**, which refused to go up the mount to hear from God (Ex. 20:18-21). They preferred to send Moses and let him tell the Church what God said.
2. **The Korah Rebellion Church**, which refused to recognize the legitimate authority of Moses and Aaron, saying “God speaks to all of us; who says we have to follow you?” (Num. 16:3).
3. **The Balaam Church**, which joined itself to the Moabites by the council of Balaam (Num. 31:16). This problem extended later to Israel’s joining with the Canaanites, with the same idolatrous results.
4. **The Jezebel Church**, which is pictured in king Ahab’s marriage to Jezebel, the Baal-worshipping princess of Sidon (1 Kings 16:31, 32). It is a time when the true prophets of God were persecuted (1 Kings 18:13).
5. **The Remnant of Grace Church** during the days of Elijah who escaped the wrath of Jezebel (1 Kings 19:18).
6. **The Hezekiah Church**, which has enough strength and faith to forestall captivity and death long enough to bring forth his son, Manasseh (2 Kings 18-20). Then he sows the seeds of destruction by showing his wealth to the Babylonians. This Church ends with the captivity.
7. **The Captivity Church**, which seemed to prosper in Babylon. Most became too lukewarm to return to rebuild Jerusalem and the temple, because they were getting rich doing business in Babylon. Less than 50,000 returned (Ezra 2:64).

When we see how John describes the Seven Churches in Old Testament terms, it is apparent that there is a close parallel between the two. That which occurred in Israel in the Old Testament is being repeated in the 40 Jubilees of Church history since the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

Chapter 2

The Church of Ephesus

This is the “pentecostal” church of Acts 2. It is not a denomination, but a church that saw the fulfillment of Pentecost in 33 AD. John says that this church had “**left its first love.**” The meaning of this becomes apparent only when we compare it with the original pentecostal church under Moses. Under Moses, the people preferred to have a professional priest get the Word from God, and then have him tell the people what God said.

The feast of Pentecost was a commemoration of the day that the Spirit of God came down as fire upon Mount Sinai and spoke the Ten Commandments to the people. All the people, no doubt, heard the Word in their own tongue, including the mixed multitude that came out of Egypt with them. The events proved to be rather frightening to the people, and so “**they all said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us, lest we die**” (Ex. 20:19). Moses urged them to draw near to God and hear the rest of the Law, but “**the people stood afar off**” (Ex. 20:21). The Ten Commandments were all they could stand, and it would appear that the same problem has remained to this day. The Church generally teaches its people the Ten Commandments, for that small summary of the Law seems to have been written on their hearts. But they continually refuse to hear the rest of the Law.

Since the people refused to hear the Word of God, and “**faith comes by hearing,**” (Rom. 10:17) the people were left without the faith necessary to enter the Promised Land. The people all had sufficient faith to leave Egypt and to be justified by the blood of the Lamb; but they did not have the level of faith needed to inherit the Kingdom. Thus, they were caught in

the wilderness between Egypt and Canaan. They had to remain in the wilderness for a full 40 years before entering the Promised Land.

John tells us that the New Testament Church of Ephesus (33-64 AD) had the same problem, and this affected all seven Churches for the next 40 Jubilees. Consequently, they would have to spend the next 40 Jubilees in the wilderness before God would allow the overcomers to enter the Promise through the feast of Tabernacles. There was a “**church in the wilderness**” under Moses (Acts 7:38) that wandered in the wilderness for 40 years, and there has also been a church in the wilderness in the New Testament sense that has wandered in its own wilderness for 40 Jubilees from 33 to 1993 AD.

Both wilderness wanderings were for the same reason: they were too fearful to approach God directly and to receive divine revelation from His mouth. They preferred a man to tell them what God said. They thought it best to empower a professional priest to represent God to them. But faith does not come through any but God alone. That is a spiritual process, by which the Spirit of God leads us into all Truth. This may come through the preaching of men, or by the reading of the Scriptures, or even by the contemplation of nature itself. But without the action of the Holy Spirit, no man can truly *hear* the Word of God with ears that bring genuine faith. Hearing men brings only persuasion; hearing the voice of God produces faith.

John also introduces a new concept into the picture. He speaks of the overcomers as a smaller group within that Church to whom the reprimands do not apply. These overcomers are like Caleb and Joshua, the men who did have the faith to enter into the Promised Land and inherit the Kingdom. But even as the people attempted to stone Caleb and Joshua (Num. 14:10), so also has the Church in the New Testament era stoned and persecuted its overcomers.

While the majority of the Ephesus Church from 33 to 64 AD were listening to what men said about God, there were some who heard God for themselves. This does not mean that they refused to listen to men preach the Word. But when they listened to men’s preaching, they were listening to hear God through those men. They had a capability of discernment by the Spirit to know what was of God and what was not. It was inevitable that such capability of hearing directly from God would eventually clash with accepted teachings of men. Hence, it should be no surprise when conflicts arose and when the Church would accuse its overcomers of causing division, strife, and schism.

It is precisely this conflict that gave rise to the problem of Nicolaitanism. The word means “conquering the laity (common people)” and refers to the rise of a hierarchy that usurps the place of Christ over the people. This does not mean we should abolish leadership. Far from it. It means that God raises up leaders with various gifts and callings, but that every man must discern for himself whether those leaders speak under inspiration of God or not. The message to the Church of Ephesus commends them for hating “**the deeds of the Nicolaitanes, which I also hate**” (Rev. 2:6). It would appear that the Apostles themselves, especially Paul, fought against Nicolaitanism, always pointing them to the headship of Christ.

A good example of this is found in 1 Cor. 11:1, where Paul says, “**Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.**” Paul would not have expected anyone to follow him or be obedient to him if he were operating in his own flesh by his own carnal will and desire. The people were expected to follow him insofar as he was “**of Christ**” (that is, under the anointing of the Spirit). If Paul had become corrupted and carnal, God would not have expected others to follow him at all—regardless of his original calling. In the same manner on a corporate scale, God does not require that any man follow the corruptions of any religious leader or denomination just

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because they started out with a genuine revelation from God. To do so would be to accept the doctrine and deeds of the Nicolaitanes which God hates.

The Ephesus Church had left its first love by refusing to hear the voice of God, even as Israel refused to hear at the foot of Mount Sinai. In this they are reprimanded, for this is the root cause of the later problem of Nicolaitanism. Nonetheless, during the time of this earliest Church era, the leadership of the Church—under the influence of the Apostles—had recognized the problem and hated it. In other words, the problem existed, but God commended this Church for preaching against it and keeping it from developing fully as it later did.

Chapter 3

The Church of Smyrna

This was the Church of the Martyrs, covering the time from the beginning of Nero's persecutions in 64 AD to the Edict of Milan, when Constantine ended the persecutions in 313 AD. The name *Smyrna* means "myrrh," an anointing oil and spice which was used to prepare the dead for burial. The more one crushed it, the sweeter the fragrance.

So it was with the martyrs of this time period. They were crushed by the full fury of the Roman Empire, but the more they were killed, the more fragrant the aroma before God and men. Men marveled at their great courage and converted to Christ faster than Rome could kill them. The "ten days" of persecution that John mentions in Rev. 2:10 are generally taken to include the final ten years of the most horrible persecution of Diocletian from 303 to 313 AD. However, he was only the tenth emperor to make such persecution a policy of government. There were ten Roman Emperors who persecuted Christians as a matter of public policy. These may be thought of as ten "days" or times of persecution and tribulation for this church. They are as follows:

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------------|
| 1. Nero (64 AD) | 6. Severus (202) |
| 2. Domitian (95) | 7. Maximus (235) |
| 3. Trajan (107) | 8. Decius (249) |
| 4. Hadrian (127) | 9. Valerianus (257) |
| 5. Aurelius (165) | 10. Diocletian (303) |

In its Old Testament counterpart we find the Korah rebellion runs parallel to the Church of Smyrna. Korah was a pseudo-overcomer. He believed that all hear from God for

themselves—and he was right. But there was another truth he knew nothing about. It is the fact that God does call certain ones to leadership to assist those who are yet too immature spiritually to hear from God for themselves. Korah’s lack of understanding brought him to the place where he rebelled against God by not recognizing the legitimate authority God had invested in Moses and Aaron to lead Israel.

Another example would be if David had killed king Saul when he had opportunity. In 1 Sam. 24:10 we see that David would not rise up against Saul to kill him, “**for he is the Lord’s anointed.**” The fact that Saul was abusing his authority made no difference to David. However, keep in mind that this did not mean David had to remain in Saul’s court until he was executed.

Finding the proper balance is important. We should not leave our first love of hearing the Word for ourselves; but neither should we forsake the assembling of ourselves together to hear what God has said to others. Such assembly may have to come in the caves of the earth, as it did with David, or in the catacombs of Rome as in the time of Smyrna, or outside the denominational system today. But nonetheless, we all need fellowship with other believers who seek God and His Word.

John also talks here about “**the synagogue of Satan**” (Rev. 2:9). In his day these were those people who claimed to be true Jews (i.e., of the tribe of Judah), but yet they had risen up against Jesus, the king, the anointed one, and killed Him. Like Korah, they desired a calling that was not theirs, for they desired to “**seize his inheritance**” (Matt. 21:38).

Moses discerned that Korah’s real motive was to try to establish himself as a priest, though he was not called in that capacity (Num. 16:9, 10). He was attempting to usurp authority, and to do so he rose up against Moses. So also did the Jews of Jesus’ day rise up against Him with impure motives. This made them the synagogue of Satan, who said

they were Judeans, but who had disqualified themselves as “true Jews” no matter what their genealogy. Paul tells us that a true “Jew” is one who has a heart circumcision, not a fleshly one (Rom. 2:28, 29).

Chapter 4

The Church of Pergamos

This Church is addressed by the One who has the sharp sword with which to administer justice (Rev. 2:12). The Church of Pergamos is told to repent of their Nicolaitane doctrine, or else He will come and administer that justice upon them (2:16). This Church era began in 313 AD, when the emperor Constantine conquered Rome and began to turn it into a Christian Empire. This Church is commended for holding fast to His Name and for not denying His faith (Rev. 3:13). However, it also led to the formal establishment of Church hierarchy, and the bishops began to meet in formal Church Councils to decide what was “orthodox” Christian doctrine and what was “heresy.”

Up to this point the Romans had been good enough to purge the Church through its persecutions. But with the Empire’s recognition and favor of Christianity came many pagans into the Church, carrying with them their philosophical and religious backgrounds that ran contrary to the Bible. Furthermore, now that Christians had time to openly study and discuss the Scriptures, they were free to express different viewpoints and ideas. This freedom, of course, immediately led to doctrinal disputes. With the Roman government no longer the common enemy, Christians turned against one another and viewed the different ideas as dangerous heresies. Each side in a dispute held its view to represent “true Christianity.” It was not long before the Church began to splinter into many factions, as men refused to fellowship with those holding other viewpoints.

We today are somewhat used to the thousands of opposing viewpoints on every subject imaginable. We have largely

accepted the fact that people can be true Christians even if they do not recognize the whole truth as we see it. With America's tradition of religious toleration, we have a greater freedom to put forth our own beliefs and allow others to do the same without near the rancor that was evident in past years. This toleration comes as the result of learning a harsh history lesson, where men finally began to see that the Inquisition and the execution of heretics would never solve the problem of heresy, but would only result in widespread bloodshed. Such Protestant religious toleration was also helped greatly by the fact that Protestants were generally in the minority and would therefore have the most to benefit from tolerant attitudes.

However, back in the fourth century, they did not have the benefit of years of Church history, where they could learn from their mistakes. In those days the people were more idealistic, thinking it quite possible for men to arrive at a full knowledge of the Truth. The Church Councils were called to discuss, argue, and attempt to come to a consensus of opinion that would standardize Biblical Truth for the Universal Church. All were expected to conform to the opinions of the majority of bishops. The right to think for one's self or to seek God for a revelation of truth was taken from the people and put into the hands of the bishops. The people lost the right to have a personal relationship with God and to approach the throne of grace boldly (Heb. 4:16). As we said, this turned Christianity from a movement into a formal religion. While one can see the benefit and even the necessity of having Church Councils discuss the varying viewpoints among the bishops, we believe they made the mistake of thinking that truth would always be seen and understood by the majority.

The Church Councils put various doctrinal issues to a vote, and the majority opinion became synonymous with Truth. Unfortunately, as time progressed and as the bishops became more powerful and more political, more and more intrigue, blackmail, and other unethical forms of conduct were used to ensure that the Councils voted in certain ways. Conscience

became less and less important, and the career and wealth of the bishop became more important.

Jesus said that the Holy Spirit would be the Agent that would lead us into all Truth (John 16:13). Truth is therefore inseparable from revelation. One may learn facts by rational thinking, but Truth comes through an agency that goes beyond facts. Truth encompasses the entire person and character of Jesus Christ, Who is Truth personified (John 14:6).

As we study the Church Councils and their history, we are struck by the contentiousness and dearth of love manifested in the lives of many of the bishops whose job it was to discover the Truth. Few of them were really qualified to be led by the Spirit into all truth. Those who truly sought God for answers by prayer and fasting if necessary were always in the minority. Surely, if Moses had opportunity under the Old Covenant to go directly to God and obtain His ruling on various questions that arose from time to time, it would seem that Christians under the New Covenant would have had at least an equal level of opportunity to learn the Truth directly from the mouth of God. But in a religious organization, bishops or other leaders are chosen more for their ability to organize or inspire and motivate the people than they are for their spiritual prowess.

Hence, the Church Councils succeeded in defining and standardizing Church doctrine, but they did not necessarily establish Truth. Their goal was to maintain unity, and it was not long before this became their god. Christian love was withheld from all heretics but lavished upon pagans in the attempt to convert them to Christ. Resolutions from the Church Councils were used as weapons to persecute those who dissented from the majority opinion. When this did not work, and when love was no longer a valued Christian virtue, the Church of the Majority Opinion came to torture and kill in the name of Jesus Christ those who believed differently. And they actually believed that God was pleased with their zealotry for His cause.

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The emperor Constantine was mostly interested in unifying the empire, and because he had given Christianity such a prominent place in the empire, it was important to him that the Church be unified. Unity is good, but the means to obtain it can often be devastating, especially if it means executing all those who think differently. Freedom of conscience, however, is seldom the goal of the majority, but nearly always the goal of the dissenters.

In the era of the Church of Pergamos (313-529 AD) we see the rise of a Christian priesthood from humble pastors to wealthy, influential, and powerful men who took the sword of justice out of the hands of Jesus Christ and wielded it on His behalf to enforce their opinions and decisions. The word *Nicolaitane* means “conquering the laity (the common people).” Its roots go back to the Ephesus Church, where men desired a professional priest to hear the Word of God for them. When men empower a professional priest to open or close heaven’s doors to them, to grant or to deny them access to God, it is never long before such power begins to corrupt that same priesthood. Carnal men are attracted by power and wealth, and when they see wealthy bishops wielding such power over the minds and hearts of men, they are only too happy to enter the priesthood to fulfill their carnal dreams.

Constantine inadvertently put this political machine into the hands of a terrible executioner. At first the Church was content to excommunicate its heretics. But eventually, they realized that the threat of excommunication was not enough to deter men from heretical doctrines that they firmly believed to be true. This finally led to the terrible Inquisition in the 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries, where men and women were tortured, mutilated, and (if lucky) merely killed for believing differently.

God describes the Nicolaitane doctrine saying, “**which thing I hate**” (Rev. 2:15). It is one of the few things in the Bible that God says he hates. And when we see how this doctrine was used to murder literally millions of people in the

following centuries, we will understand completely why God hates it. God warns this Church specifically to repent of this doctrine, “**or else I will come unto thee quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth**” (Rev. 2:16).

First He reminds this Church that He is the one holding the sword—not the Church. If the Church wields it on His behalf, they had better know His mind and His ways; otherwise, they will abuse their authority, and God will surely hold them accountable. In other words, those who live by the sword will die by the sword. He will come with the Sword of His mouth, the true Word by which justice will be administered upon the head of the corrupted Church.

In the message to the Church of Pergamos, John also tells us of another problem, “**the doctrine of Balaam.**” This leads us to compare Pergamos with the Balaam Church of the Old Testament. Balaam was hired by the king of Moab to curse Israel, but he could not do so. Hence, he gave counsel to the king to get Israel to intermarry with the Moabites, and thereby introduce them to the idolatry of Baal-peor (Num. 25 and 31:16). Balaam knew this would bring the wrath of God upon Israel, for it was a violation of the divine Law. The plot worked very well.

So also with the Church of Pergamos. When Christianity became the recognized religion, millions of pagans joined the Church and overwhelmed its ability to instruct them in the ways of God. In their desire to convert pagans, the Church simply made them members of the religion, and it was not long before the Church itself turned to the idolatry of the “Moabites.”

Balaam had no trouble hearing the Word of the Lord clearly. He simply disagreed with what God said and looked for ways around it. The Moabites wanted Balaam to come with them and curse Israel. Balaam prayed about it, and God told him not to go (Num. 22:12). But Balaam really wanted to go with them in order to earn some extra cash, so he prayed again.

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God saw the desire of his heart, so He told him to go with them (Num. 22:20). At that point God became Balaam's "adversary" (vs. 22). The Hebrew word is *satan*.

The Angel of God told Balaam, "**Behold, I went out to withstand thee** [lit. "as a satan"], **because thy way is perverse before Me.**" In other words, from Balaam's perspective, the Angel of God was Satan, not because he really was a devil, but because Balaam's way was perverse and his perspective distorted. David seems to have recognized this principle as well, for he tells us in Ps. 18:26 that "**with the pure Thou wilt show Thyself pure; and with the froward [twisted] Thou wilt show Thyself froward [twisted].**" God Himself is not twisted, but our perception of Him is always as twisted as our own character. There are many today whom the Lord withstands as an adversary, and they regularly call God Satan and tell Him to get behind them.

Balaam did not like the Word God gave him on the first mountain, so he decided to try another mountain (Num. 23:13). That was no better, so he went to a third mountain (Num. 23:28). The Church has likewise learned the ways of Balaam. It rejected the Word that was given on Mount Sinai, so it went to Mount Zion to try again. But there it found the same God who requires obedience. In rejecting the Law revelation given through Moses, they also rejected the Grace revelation given by Jesus Christ (Luke 16:31). If one does not believe the Lawgiver, how can one believe the Gracegiver? It is the same God and Revelator who spoke. The spirit of Balaam is alive and well and has found a secure home in the rebellious heart of the Church.

Chapter 5

The Church of Thyatira

In this Church era we move from the Balaam Church of Pergamos to the Jezebel Church of Thyatira (Rev. 2:20-23). The city of Thyatira was located on the road from Pergamos to Sardis. The experts are uncertain as to the meaning of its name, and so Bible teachers are left to determine its prophetic meaning, based upon John's description and a knowledge of the era it describes (529-1517 AD).

Since the message to this Church includes a reference to "**that woman, Jezebel**" (Rev. 2:20), many believe that the name *Thyatira* comes from the Greek words, *thea*, "a female deity, goddess," and *tyrannos*, "a tyrant or ruler." In this way they conclude that *Thyatira* means "ruled by a woman." There are others who say the name comes from *thuo*, "to sacrifice" and means "continual sacrifice" and refers to the martyrdoms at the hand of the Roman Church.

The only way to really discover the meaning of Thyatira is to look at the history of the city and see how it was named at the beginning. In doing this, we find that Jezebel's home town of Tyre has much to do with the founding of the city of Thyatira. In fact, it would appear that Thyatira was meant to be a second Tyre after its destruction by Alexander the Great.

Ethbaal, King-Priest of Tyre

In studying the Old Testament Balaam Church, which parallels the New Testament Church of Pergamos, we see that it involved the doctrine of Balaam who taught the king of Moab how to induce Israel to sin through intermarriage. The intermarriage problem in Israel continued throughout their history in Canaan until it finally reached its apex in the days of king Ahab of Israel. King Ahab married Jezebel, who was the

daughter of Ethbaal, king of the Zidonians (1 Kings 16:31). He ruled from the city of Tyre.

According to historians, Ethbaal was the high priest of Baal who had overthrown king Pheles of Tyre and replaced him as king-priest. Thus, he was more than a mere follower of Baal. As high priest of the religion, he represented Baal on earth. As king, he ruled with temporal power as well. Hence, his name was actually a title: Eth-baal, one who rules with Baal, or by his authority, or in place of Baal. The name *Ethbaal* means “with, near, or together with Baal.” In Roman terminology, he would be the Vicar of Baal. The kingdom of Tyre in the days of Jezebel was a spiritual kingdom of Baal on earth, and its high priest ruled supreme as king. This sheds much light on Ezekiel 28, which compares the beautiful city of Tyre to the Garden of Eden and compares the prince of Tyre (Ethbaal) to the tempter in Eden.

In effect, in those days Tyre manifested the anti-kingdom of God, ruled by Ethbaal, an antichrist type. The prefix “anti-” means “in place of.” For example, Matt. 2:22 tells us that Archelaus reigned in Judea *anti*, or *in place of*, his father Herod. In like manner, Ethbaal ruled Tyre in place of Baal himself. Likewise, because Ahab had married Jezebel, Ethbaal’s laws governed Israel in place of the laws of God. Even as the serpent in Eden successfully tempted Adam to sin, so also did Ethbaal tempt Ahab to sin in marrying Jezebel.

In the New Testament message to the Churches, we find that Pergamos, “married to power,” represents the unlawful marriage between the Church and paganism, or Ahab and Jezebel. The next Church era, that of Thyatira, gives us the results of that marriage. In the Church’s rise to power on a temporal plane over the kings of the earth, it formed an antichrist system. That is, the popes claimed to rule *in place of* Christ, calling themselves the Vicar of Christ. There is a direct parallel in this to king Ahab ruling Israel in place of Ethbaal, even as Ethbaal ruled in place of Baal as his vicar.

The name of Jezebel’s father prophesies to us of the underlying problem in the Thyatira Church era from 529 to 1517 AD. King Ahab of Israel married Jezebel, and in so doing, he joined himself with her god, Baal. Thus, he placed Israel under the power of the kingdom of Baal on earth. This set the stage for an era in which Ethbaal—through his daughter Jezebel—was the real power behind Israel’s monarchy. Ahab was a mere king; Ethbaal was a king of kings to all who worshipped Baal. In Israel, the laws of Baal replaced the laws of God as given by Moses, and it became unlawful to think differently. Jezebel then persecuted the true prophets of God and the Remnant of Grace during the days of Elijah (1 Kings 18:13).

The History of Tyre

King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon conquered the city of Tyre about the same time that he conquered Jerusalem. This was no easy task, for Tyre had a wall that was 150 feet high. The Hebrew name for Tyre is *Tsur*, which literally means *rock*, no doubt referring to its great strength as a fortified city. The city of Tyre was a seaport divided into two parts. The main part of the city was built along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea in what is now Lebanon. The second section of the city was built upon a small island just offshore. When Nebuchadnezzar conquered the main part of Tyre, the people escaped to the island and remained free, for the sea itself provided a natural barrier against the Babylonian army, who did not have a navy to lay siege to the island.

Nearly three centuries later, Alexander the Great ran into the same problem. However, he decided to use the ruins of the old city to build a causeway to the island. They hauled the rocks and columns from all the destroyed buildings and threw them into the sea. So much material was required that they literally scraped the dust from the bedrock of the old city and threw it into the sea. Only then were they able to conquer the island city of Tyre.

In this conquest, Alexander the Great fulfilled the prophecy of Ez. 26:4, 5.

4 And they shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers; I will also scrape her dust from her and make her like the top of a rock.

5 It shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God; and it shall become a spoil to the nations.

Today this causeway is used by fishermen to dry or repair their nets, as the prophet said.

One of Alexander's four generals was Seleucus, who took part in the conquest of Tyre in 332 BC. After Alexander died in 323 BC, the empire was divided among the four generals. Seleucus took control of Asia Minor and Babylon. In 312 BC he established the Seleucid calendar which later was used in dating events in the books of the Maccabees. Shortly before he died in 280 BC, he founded the city of Thyatira.

As we said earlier, the name *Tyre* is, in Hebrew, the word *Tsur*, which means "rock" and refers to its strength as a fortress. According to The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, the name *Thyatira* means "the castle of Thya." In other words, they take *tira* to mean "castle"—no doubt based upon its literal meaning as a rock or stronghold. This is supported by the fact that in later times it was renamed Ak-Hissar, which in Turkish means "white castle."

Hissar is the Turkish equivalent to the Hebrew name *Hazor* found in Joshua 11. Hazor was the leading city of the northern part of Canaan. There is some debate as to whether Joshua conquered the city of Hazor, or if, in fact, he conquered Tyre. Hazor may be *Ha-Tsur*, "the rock." At any rate, Strong's concordance tells us that the name Hazor comes from the Hebrew word *chatsar*, which means "to surround with a stockade." (See Strong's #2690.) In other words, it is a castle.

Thus, the Turkish word for castle (*Hissar*) is the same as the Hebrew word for castle (*Hazor*). Both are closely related to *Ha-Tsur*, "the rock," and *Tsur* is the city of Tyre. And yet *Hassar* is the modern name for the city of Thyatira as well. The connections are obvious.

Putting all these facts together, we can say that there is a spiritual connection and very possibly a physical connection between the city of Tyre and the city of Thya-TIRA. Both names incorporate the concept of a rock, fortress, or castle. Yet there are other striking similarities. Both cities worshipped the sun-god and a female counterpart. Both cities were famous for their purple dye and had trade unions, or guilds, to protect themselves from competition.

Tyre and Thyatira Known for Purple Dye

In comparing Tyre with the city of Thyatira, it is evident that Seleucus intended Thyatira to be like a second Tyre. Thyatira was noted for its production of purple dye, as was Tyre. We see this in Acts 16, where Lydia, one of Paul's converts in Philippi, was in that city on business selling purple from her home town of Thyatira (Acts 16:14). So their main commercial activity was the same.

Her conversion perhaps foreshadows prophetically the Thyatira Church, which would be in need of a fresh conversion. Previous to meeting Paul, Lydia apparently had been a convert to Judaism, for it is said that she "**worshipped God.**" Nonetheless, she was in need of baptism into Christ (Acts 16:15) in order to give her a full revelation of the Truth.

So also with the Church of Thyatira from 529 to 1517 AD. While many of the people certainly attempted to worship God in the best way they knew, it is plain that their religious experience was in need of a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. The right to know Him personally had been taken from them in the rush to establish unity and single-mindedness in submission to "orthodox" Christian doctrine.

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Tyre and Thyatira Had Similar Religions

Secondly, we can compare their religion. The city of Tyre worshipped Baal, which was the name of their sun-god. The city of Thyatira in ancient times had a temple to the ancient Lydian sun-god named *Tyrimnos*. The first part of his name seems to connect him with the city of Tyre, as well as with the Greek word *Tyrannos*, “tyrant, or sovereign ruler.”

Ashtoreth was the goddess of the Zidonians (1 Kings 11:33). She was the female consort for Baal and represented the earth, even as Baal was the sun-god. So also we find that the city of Thyatira had a goddess to go with their sun-god. According to The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, “Another temple at Thyatira was dedicated to Sambethe, and at this shrine was a prophetess, by some supposed to represent the Jezebel of Rev. 2:20, who uttered the sayings which this deity would impart to the worshippers.” The Church of Thyatira is condemned for allowing “**that woman Jezebel, which calleth herself a prophetess, to teach and to seduce My servants to commit fornication, and to eat things sacrificed to idols**” (Rev. 2:20).

Thus, we see that there was both a male figure, the sun-god named **Tyrimnos**, and a goddess named **Sambethe** in the city of Thyatira. It would appear that Sambethe is the “**Thya-**,” while Tyrimnos is the “**Tyra-**.” Putting them together, as if to manifest the marriage of the god and goddess, they form the name of Thyatira.

The Church of Increased Temporal Power

This Thyatira Church era extends from 529 to 1517 AD, where the State—like king Ahab—came under the authority of the one calling himself the “vicar of Christ.” While the popes gave lip service to Christ, in reality they followed the precepts of another god. This era began with the Law Code of Justinian, the emperor of the Eastern Roman Empire who ruled from Constantinople. Because of changing times, as Will Durant tells us, “*the whole vast body of Roman law had become an*

empirical accumulation rather than a logical code” (The Age of Faith, p. 111). It was in serious need of revision. Justinian did this in 529 AD, calling it the *Codex Constitutionum*. All Roman legislation and laws up to that time were nullified. There was to be only this new system of law. Four years later, after getting the opinions and responses from other Roman jurists, he revised the Codex and published it under the Latin title, *Pandectae*.

This complete overhaul of the Roman legal system was extremely important, for as Will Durant informs us again, “*This Code. . . enacted orthodox Christianity into law. . . All ecclesiastical, like all civil, law, was to emanate from the throne*” (Ibid., p. 112). More than anything else, this merged the ecclesiastical power with the civil insofar as the enforcement of laws and decrees are concerned. Justinian and his wife were quite zealous orthodox Christians and often debated theological questions between themselves. However, there seems to be no evidence that he ever embarked upon a serious study of Biblical Law. His Law Code enacts orthodox Christianity into Law, but ignores the revelation of Law given through Moses. To its credit, the Church did attempt to have usury forbidden, but they failed. Had they succeeded—and stuck with it—the Church and the world itself would later be considerably different.

A few years later, in 536 AD, a Church Council held in Constantinople issued an edict and demanded that the emperor Justinian enforce it. He did, and this set a precedent that Justinian may not have intended or foreseen: the state had just become the servant to the Church. Orthodox Christianity now became the real legislator in the Empire, while the Emperor became the enforcer of the law. This would not necessarily have been a bad thing, had the Church limited itself to figuring out how to apply Bible Law to their culture. But unfortunately, Church leaders soon came to see how they could increase their power by overruling God’s Law and taking the power of legislation upon themselves. Thus, Church law

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and the traditions of men came to replace any vestiges of Biblical Law that did not suit them.

There are some who date the beginning of this Church era at 607 AD, when emperor Phocas gave to Pope Boniface III headship over all the Churches of Christendom. This was, of course, another important date in the rise of papal power. The consolidation of temporal power in the hand of the Roman popes was gradual. Actually, it was not until 1073 AD that Pope Gregory VII formally established a theocracy. He was the first to claim to be above all the kings in the world. Thus, we could set the time for the beginning of the age of Thyatira anywhere from 529 to 1073 AD. We put it at 529, because we are interested in the beginnings of such temporal power, rather than its climax.

Persecution of “Heretics”

In the 6th century, pope Pelagius defined a “heretic” as being anyone who does not submit to the Roman Church. *“Schism is evil. Whoever is separated from the apostolic see is doubtless in schism,”* he said. Later, Pope Damasus wrote: *“It is permitted neither to think nor to speak differently from the Roman Church.”* (See Guinness, Romanism and the Reformation, p. 35.)

In the 4th century, when the Church first began coming to power, they usually just broke fellowship with heretics and expelled them from the Church. Memories of torture and death were still too fresh from the Empire’s holocaust for the Church to adopt the same policy of persecution. But in the 12th century the Church became alarmed by the resurgence of heresy among the Albigenses in southern France. This eventually led to the establishment of the Inquisition by pope Gregory IX in 1231 AD.

The Albigenses were dualists who believed that everything was a struggle between two gods: one good, the other evil. The good God was Jesus Christ, the God of light, goodness, and spirit; while the evil god, Satan, was the god of darkness,

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evil, and matter. They believed that Satan was the god of the Old Testament; while Jesus Christ is the God of the New

Testament. This belief had flourished for centuries along the Mediterranean ever since the Manicheans had preached it in the third century. It still has influence in various groups today, manifested primarily by men’s abhorrence of the Law or of Yahweh Himself. It is also seen in the way the concept of resurrection from the dead has been undermined. (See our booklet, The Purpose of Resurrection.) And so, we agree that the Albigenses were wrong in their doctrines and concepts of God. However, we believe that the torture and murder sanctioned by the Inquisition was not the answer to the problem. If they had been left alone to suffer under the injustices of their own antinomian society, they would have either learned by themselves that imperfect men need laws for their protection (1 Tim. 1:9), or else they would have lost their members as the group self-destructed in anarchy.

The Inquisition was carried out directly under papal direction. Its scope went far beyond rooting out the dualistic views of the Albigenses. It sought to destroy all heresy—all views that ran contrary to established Church doctrine or which threatened the absolute authority of the pope over the minds of men. In 1252 AD pope Innocent IV officially sanctioned the use of torture to force confessions and make heretics recant their views. For the next 250 years Europe was drenched with the blood of those guilty of thinking or speaking “differently from the Roman Church.” It was so bad that even the Catholic professor Rossetti wrote: *“Daniel and St. John foretold that Satan’s delegate would use horrid cruelties and inundate Babylon with the blood of Christ’s martyrs; and the pope, to prove that he was not that delegate, did use horrid cruelties and caused Rome to overflow with the purest of Christian blood”* (Ibid., pp. 37, 38).

Literally millions of Christians were put to death, either directly or indirectly by the Church in the war against thinking differently. Finally, at the fifth Lateran Church Council in

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1516, A. Pucci, a Cardinal of the Church, told the pope, “*The whole body of Christendom is now subject to one head, even to thee; no one now opposes, no one now objects.*”

We can only imagine how God must have laughed at his statement. After that Council ended in 1517, Martin Luther sparked the Protestant Reformation by nailing his famous “95 Theses” on the Church door at Wittenberg, Bavaria. Just when the Church thought it had stamped out all its opposition and put all things under the feet of the Roman Church, their power began to fall. They had to relearn the lesson of Imperial Rome, that the more one persecutes Christians, the more they multiply, as others see the true character of both sides and ask themselves, *Which is more Christ-like?* As Tertullian said in the 3rd century: “Our blood is seed.” Spilling it spreads it.

The Protestant Reformation put the first cracks in the Roman Church. Then in 1789 came the great French Revolution which put an end to the temporal power of the Church in France. This was precisely 1,260 years after the beginning of the Thyatira age, dated from the publication of Justinian’s first Law Code in 529 AD. Historians tell us that the French Revolution ended in 1793, which is also 1,260 years after 533 AD, when Justinian published his revised Code. In other words, the French Revolution itself took place over a period of four years, precisely 1,260 years after the dates of Justinian’s Law Code.

A third date is also important. In 1796 Napoleon was appointed commander of the French army, marking the beginning of his rise to power. As a great military leader and destroyer of armies, he prided himself as being the “New Apollyon” (Neo-apollyon = Napoleon). He was an agent of a new power that was rising—the economic power of the Rothschild banks, which we will discuss more fully in Chapter Seven. The year 1796 was precisely 1,260 years after 536 AD, when Justinian agreed to enforce the decree of the Church Council.

Daniel 7:25 describes this time of 1,260 years as “**a time and times and the dividing of time.**” A prophetic “time” is either 360 *days* in short-term prophecy or 360 *years* in long-term prophecy. Daniel’s time period is thus one time (360) plus two times (720) plus half a time (180), for a total of 1,260 years. The book of Revelation defines it more specifically, telling us that it refers to 1,260 “days” (Rev. 11:3; 12:6) or “**forty-two months**” (Rev. 11:2).

The power of the Roman Church declined in religious influence with the Reformation and economically with the rise of the new Assyria and Babylon of the modern banking system. Hence, the torture and execution of heretics could no longer be maintained. With the rise of Protestant countries in which there remained Roman Catholic loyalists, it would have been risky to continue persecuting Protestant heretics, for this might easily have drawn a response in kind by the Protestant authorities against their Romanist citizens. Thus, in the political thinking of the day, it was no longer feasible to continue the policies of the Inquisition.

This does not mean that they repented of their tactics. Far from it. By the 19th century Rome had all but ceased to execute heretics, not because it had a change of heart, but because it had lost most of its political power. In fact, on July 16, 1870 the Church declared its doctrine of papal infallibility, justifying all the acts, doctrines, and decision of all the popes from the beginning of the Church. In effect, it declared that the murder of millions of “heretics” was fully justified in the eyes of God and carried out by an infallible move of the Holy Spirit. In declaring papal infallibility, the Roman Church essentially locked itself into a position where it became no longer possible to repent of its sins without destroying its own foundations.

Recently, as a concession to bring Protestant churches back under papal authority, the Roman Church has vaguely renounced the use of torture and execution as a means of securing Church unity. However, because of the doctrine of

papal infallibility, Protestants reuniting with Rome would have to accept the deaths of millions of so-called heretics as being right and needful in those days—and perhaps also in the future, if the Church were to regain the power to do so.

Some “Infallible” Papal Decrees

The Nicolaitane doctrine that God says He hates is perhaps best defined by pope Boniface VIII, who became pope in 1294 AD. In his Unam Sanctum, he states: “*All the faithful of Christ by necessity of salvation are subject to the Roman pontiff, who judges all men, but is judged of no one. This authority is not human, but rather Divine . . . Therefore, we declare, assert, define, and pronounce, that to be subject to the Roman pontiff is to every human creature **altogether necessary for salvation***” (Ibid., p. 29). In other words, one must be a Roman Nicolaitane in order to be saved.

This is all foreshadowed in the story of David and Saul. Saul, too, was a Nicolaitane type of the Church. Saul persecuted David, who was the “overcomer” of his day. When David escaped and did not remain under Saul’s authority where he would have been killed, Saul declared him an outlaw and put a price on his head. If anyone had murdered David in those years, he would have been rewarded, for the king had in effect declared his murder to be no murder at all.

We find the popes siding with Saul, declaring their right to change or violate the Law of God, the commands of Jesus Christ, and even the decrees of the apostles in the New Testament. Hear this from one of the “infallible” popes:

*“All the earth is my diocese, and I am the ordinary [the one who ordains or gives authority] of all men, having the authority of the King of all kings upon subjects. I am all in all and above all, so that God Himself and I, the vicar of God, have but one consistory, and I am able to do almost all that God can do. In all that I list **my will** is to stand for reason,*

*for I am able by the law to dispense **above the law,***

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and of wrong to make justice in correcting laws and changing them

“Wherefore, if those things that I do be said not to be done of men, but of God, what can you make me but God? Again, if prelates of the Church be called and counted of Constantine [the pope, not the emperor by that name] for gods, I then, being above prelates, seem by this reason to be above all gods.

“Wherefore, no marvel if it be in my power to change times and times, to alter and abrogate laws, to dispense with all things, yea, with the precepts of Christ; for where Christ biddeth Peter put up his sword, and admonishes His disciples not to use any outward force in revenging themselves, do not I, Pope Nicolas [using another past pope’s decree as a precedent to prove his authority] writing to the bishops of France, exhort them to draw out their material swords? And whereas Christ was present Himself at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, do not I, Pope Martin, in my distinction, inhibit the spiritual clergy to be present at marriage feasts, and also to marry? Moreover, where Christ biddeth us lend without hope of gain, do not I, Pope Martin, give dispensation to do the same? What should I speak of murder, making it to be no murder or homicide to slay them that be excommunicated?

*“Likewise against the law of nature, item against **the apostles**, also against the canons of the apostles, I can and do dispense; for where they in their canon command a priest for fornication to be deposed, I through the authority of Sylvester, do alter the rigour of their constitution, considering the minds and bodies also of men to be weaker than they were then” (Ibid., pp. 30, 31).*

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This pope is saying in his own “infallible” way that the priests today are morally weaker than they were in the days of the apostles, so we must allow for fornication among them, so long as they remain loyal to the pope. Schism or heresy is punishable by torture and death; but fornication among priests is understandable, since they are not allowed to marry.

He attempts to show by past precedent of other popes that it is a papal privilege to violate the Divine Law, for he is “*above the law.*” In order to “prove” his case he gave real examples where *he said* past popes had violated the precepts of Christ and of the apostles! Thus, it is clear *he believed* that being the “vicar of God” meant he had the right to alter the decrees of God Almighty—and he gives examples to prove his case!

If a king were to give his prime minister orders to do something, and the prime minister decided that the orders needed to be altered or abolished, what would this say about the prime minister? Is it his right to disobey the orders of the king? If he edits or abolishes the king’s decrees, does it prove he has the authority to do so? Would not this be the height of rebellion and pride? Would he not be removed from office and perhaps prosecuted for treason?

The popes think more highly of themselves than they ought to think (Rom. 12:3). The vicar of God has overthrown God! The claim to be under the authority of God is belied by their words and deeds. In this, they have become fully like king Saul, who, contrary to the command of God, offered the sacrifice to God himself, rather than await arrival of the one who was called to make the offering (1 Sam. 13:9). That sin brought the judgment of God upon king Saul:

9 Thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which He commanded thee; for now would the Lord have established thy kingdom upon Israel for ever. But now thy kingdom shall

not continue; the Lord hath sought Him a man after His own heart.

Even as this sin prevented Saul from having an enduring dynasty of kings, so also does this same sin prevent the Roman Church from ruling the earth for ever. Their kingdom will not continue indefinitely. It has already been curtailed in power. The papal throne will eventually come to a full end, because God is the same yesterday, today, and for ever. God resists the proud and gives grace to the humble. He will remove Saul and place David on the throne, for he is a man after God’s own heart. Daniel 7:18 and 27 makes it clear that after this Roman beast has prevailed over the saints for its allotted time, the kingdom and dominion would be taken from them and given to the people of the saints of the Most High. These are the ones who overcame, even while the seven Churches themselves were overcome by Saul’s rebellion and pride.

King Saul’s second major sin is recorded in 1 Sam. 15. In the war against Amalek, God gave him orders to destroy Amalek utterly (15:3). Saul chose to edit and change God’s decree, for we read in 15:9,

9 But Saul and the people spared Agag, and the best of the sheep, and of the oxen, and of the fatlings, and the lambs, and all that was good, and would not utterly destroy them; but every thing that was vile and refuse, that they destroyed utterly.

Saul thought God did not know what He was doing. He and all the people with him saw an opportunity to increase their wealth by altering God’s decrees to suit themselves. God says in verse 11:

11 It repenteth Me that I have set up Saul to be king; for he is turned back from following Me, and hath not performed My commandments.

When Saul tried to explain and justify his actions in sparing the best of the flocks and the king of Amalek, Samuel told him in verses 22 and 23:

22 Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

23 For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and stubbornness is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, He hath also rejected thee from being king.”

The same word applies to the Roman popes, who, by their own writings, claim to have the right to abolish or alter the word of God. Because they too have rejected the Word of the Lord, God has also rejected them from being king. Therefore, the Protestant Churches who think unity with Rome is the answer should hear the infallible Word of God, which was written for our learning. It is not difficult to understand the Word of God to king Saul, nor is it difficult to see that Saul was a type of the Church. To study the life of Saul is to understand the history of the Church—primarily the Roman Church, but also to some extent the Protestant churches. Keep in mind that the Seven Churches include the entire Church during its 40 Jubilees of history.

May God give us the wisdom to know the difference between Saul and David, that we may be found worthy as overcomers to sit in His throne and eat of the tree of life.

Chapter 6

The Church of Sardis

Sardis means “precious stone (i.e., the sardius stone), remnant.” Since a precious stone is rare, it carries the idea of a remnant, something not commonly found. Some teachers believe the word actually means “to escape,” but I cannot find any evidence to support this interpretation.

The Church of Sardis extends from 1517 to 1776 AD. It is essentially the Reformation Church, and they parallel the remnant of grace in Elijah’s day who had not bowed the knee to Baal during the reign of Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings 19:18). Elijah apparently felt that he was almost the last true believer in the whole land. Being part of that Sardis remnant can indeed be a lonely walk. They must be willing to give up the security of being in the majority.

The remnant will often be asked, “How can your beliefs be right when so many great theologians say you are wrong? Surely, if your teachings were true, there would be more people who believed them.”

The reply is that for many centuries those who believed and thought differently were murdered and tortured for their beliefs. If they had not been systematically murdered by the Church, perhaps they *would* be in the majority. But, incidentally, there were very few times in the Old Testament where the majority actually did believe the teachings of the prophets that God sent to them. True believers have nearly always been in the minority. Why should it be any different today? People are still just people.

In the description of the Church of Sardis in Revelation 3:4, we read:

4 Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white; for they are worthy.

The Sardis Church is the Reformation Church, but that does not mean that all who joined the Protestant movement were overcomers. Like all the revivals and reform movements of the Old Testament, they did not seem to last beyond a generation or two before the corruption process began to work in their midst as well. And so in the message to this Church, John gives counsel in Rev 3:2,

2 be watchful and strengthen the things that remain, that are ready to die. For I have not found thy works perfect before God.

He then tells this Church to remember what God has given them and to “repent.” Obviously, the need to repent indicates that they would end up doing or believing the same things taught by the Jezebel Church of Thyatira. For the most part, the Reformers knew better than to burn people at the stake or torture them for thinking differently. Those things were still too fresh in their minds from the years of the Inquisition.

However, many did fall back into Nicolaitanism by establishing denominations with a priesthood to tell the people what they had to believe and what not to believe. The penalties for “heresy” were not as drastic as the Roman Church had practiced; but nonetheless, they did often teach that one had to join their particular group in order to be saved. In other words, they consigned such people to hell, or outer darkness, or other divine punishments if they refused membership in their “True Church” or refused to come under the authority of their priesthood.

The Reformation gave to us the concept of imputed righteousness. This is really the heart of the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther had tried long and hard as a Roman monk to be righteous enough to know the assurance of justification before God. He had been taught that one was

saved when one was perfected. The Church had taught him that Grace was a gift that God gave us *to enable us to be perfect in all our works*. In other words, once God imparts Grace to a man, then he was supposed to have the innate ability to come into perfection. Once perfected, then he would know that he was justified and saved. In searching his own heart, Luther was honest enough to know that “**the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked**” (Jer. 17:9). He tried very hard to eradicate all impure thoughts from his mind and heart, for he had great faith in the idea that God had given him the Grace to be perfect. However, he found that he was a miserable failure. Finally, he discovered from Romans 4 that God imputes righteousness to the believer by faith.

Luther discovered that his justification came through the righteousness of Christ—not his own. He discovered that we are the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21), NOT in ourselves. Our righteousness is not really our own at all, but Christ’s, and His righteousness is applied to us *as though* it were our own. We are imputed, or reckoned, righteous, not because we actually are so, but because Christ is righteous. We are in Christ, and therefore, God sees only Christ when He looks at us.

Paul illustrates this in Rom. 4:13-22 with the example of Abraham. God said Abraham was the father of many nations, even though he had no children at all. In other words, God *imputed* children to him, reckoning him to already be the father of many nations—even though it was not yet so in the earthly reality. Abraham had faith, and therefore, God imputed righteousness to him (Rom. 4:22), reckoning him to be perfect, even though he was yet far from perfect. Even so, Paul says, God imputes righteousness to us through faith, not works (verse 23).

This revelation of the Word removed the huge load of guilt from Luther’s heart and mind, for now he knew that his righteousness was not based upon his own perfection, but

Christ's. Once he knew he was justified and could approach the throne of God boldly by faith, then he could pursue holiness from the grounds of forgiveness, not from the standpoint of a sinner attempting to become righteous by spending many years in prayer and fasting, buffeting the flesh, or hiding in a monastery away from the world and from women.

This concept struck at the heart of the Roman idea of salvation by personal righteousness. A religion's doctrine of salvation is always the heart of the religion. So this is what actually sparked the Reformation, although many other issues were raised along with this central issue.

Unfortunately, it was not long before Protestants who had rejected Romanist authority and many of their other doctrines once again began to embrace the Roman idea of salvation by perfection. It was reintroduced to Protestants largely through the Holiness Movement. Once again, in the guise of preaching holy living, they crossed the line into justification by works. They were correct in teaching that justification should result in holy living. However, many went too far by insisting that the Grace of God given for our justification was a divine empowerment to become perfected in our very nature.

If they had read and understood the revelation of the Law in the feast days of Israel, they would have known that there is a threefold process toward perfection. The feast of *Passover* teaches us of Justification by faith, where the blood of the Lamb covers our sin and imputes righteousness to us. The feast of *Pentecost* teaches us of Sanctification, but it is a feast mixed with leaven (Lev. 23:17) and can bring no man into perfection. The feast of *Tabernacles* is the third step in the process of salvation, and only therein will any man come into the perfection of his nature. Passover can take us out of Egypt; Pentecost can bring us to Mount Sinai, where we can receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit; but only Tabernacles can bring us into the inheritance of the Promised Land.

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These are the three parts of salvation. Passover justifies us in our spirit; Pentecost sanctifies the soul, setting it apart for

divine service; and Tabernacles redeems the body (Rom. 8:23; Eph. 1:14) either by resurrection or the "change" of the living who are alive and remain unto His coming (1 Cor. 15:51). To say that no man is *saved* until he is fully perfected is technically true, because God is in the process of saving us in three stages: spirit, soul, and body. However, to say that no man is *justified* until he has been fully perfected is incorrect, since justification was never meant to be more than the initial stage in one's salvation.

"Holy living" is good insofar as we are able to live godly lives, but no man can be perfected with a mere earnest of the Spirit (Ephesians 1:14; 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5) that was given to us through Pentecost. It was Paul's prayer that the Ephesians—who had already been justified and had been given the earnest of the Spirit—would "**be filled with all the fullness of God**" (Ephesians 3:19). The Ephesian believers were "**saved**" (Ephesians 2:8), but not yet filled with all the fullness of God.

It is the same with us today. To say that we are not justified until we have become perfected is simply wrong, and it leaves people in total bondage, fear, and guilt before God, so that they cannot enjoy fellowship with Him as they ought.

Some denominations with Holiness roots actually teach "sinless perfection" at the time of one's justification by faith. The results of this teaching vary in practice. Some are able to blind themselves to their own imperfections and are thus turned into little Pharisees who think they really are quite holy. But most become perpetually insecure because they know they have not attained perfection yet, and yet are too ashamed or embarrassed to admit imperfection, lest their fellow Christians in the Church consider them to be yet "unsaved." What bondage it is to be forced to put on a mask of righteousness, while struggling alone with unresolved guilt.

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Most evangelical teachers, however, are more realistic in this matter, treating works as mere evidence of an inward faith, but not demanding perfection to be saved. They realize that faith will motivate men to change their works to conform to Holy living, but that we grow into Christ over a long period of time. Hence, for them, *progress* is a more realistic test of faith, rather than sinless perfection. In this, I very much agree.

Unfortunately, there are many people with Holiness-background denominations who feel they have to get saved again and again, every time they sin or have an impure thought go through their mind. One should, of course, repent each time one sins. However, we should not attach it to justification. We do not keep “falling from grace” whenever human nature manifests itself.

May God set all men free from this load of guilt by the power of this Word: *You are the righteousness of God in Christ*. May all men come under submission to Jesus Christ alone. May all ministers of the Gospel point to Jesus Christ and seek to teach their children these basic principles of liberty as bondservants of King Jesus.

The message to such people in Sardis is “*repent*” and “*remember*” the Truth they had learned when they threw off the yoke of the Jezebel Church.

Chapter 7

The Church of Philadelphia

America is a political byproduct of the Protestant Reformation. John Calvin’s experiment in Switzerland, where he put into practice the principles of Christian government in the city of Geneva, taught people the basic principles of how to establish a Christian Nation. And so, in 1776 we come to an event that took place in Philadelphia in the New World that was the climax of Protestant thinking in the time of the Sardis Church. It was the signing of the Declaration of Independence on July 4, 1776.

This date was also important because it was 2,520 years after the beginning of Israel’s captivity and deportations by the Assyrians in 745 BC. As we pointed out in Chapter 15 of Secrets of Time, this was when the history of the House of Israel began to be repeated in a great historical parable. It was definitely a major turning point in biblical history.

Philadelphia means “brotherly love.” In the Greek language there were three main types of love: *eros*, *phileo*, and *agape*. The love in the name of Philadelphia comes from *phileo*.

Eros is the most selfish and immature form of love. It is best defined as NEED. Babies need their mothers, and their demands are based solely upon those needs. If people mature physically without learning to mature in love, their relationships are based upon mere physical attraction and self-gratification. They care little or nothing about other people and will violate the rights of others whenever it suits them.

Phileo is the kind of love a child learns in relating to their siblings. If parents do their job correctly, their children are

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taught to respect each other’s property and space. They are taught basic principles of justice and fairness. It is very much a judicial (legal) type of love. With children of this stage of

development, parents spend most of their time as referees to settle thousands of disputes and violations of individual rights. By the judicial decisions of the parents, the children learn to define basic human rights and responsibilities.

No child can bypass this stage of development without having a distorted view of others. If one were to bypass this *phileo* stage and go directly to *agape*, he would practice a lawless form of love, which, at his heart, would only be a free expression of his needs and desires. Such is the “free love” philosophy, where sexual relationships are based upon love, rather than upon marriage. Homosexual love is also the result of bypassing the *phileo* stage of development, and there are today entire “gay” church congregations who profess to love God and follow Jesus Christ, but they utterly reject the Law of God. They are, in fact, more Manichean than Christian, thinking the God of the Old Testament to be evil for making homosexual acts punishable by death. It is their view that homosexual relationships are pleasing to the New Testament God so long as they practice it with a loving attitude.

Agape is the unconditional love that characterizes mature people. It is the term used most by John to describe the love of God toward us. When applied to people, it describes a mature love that is unselfish, forgiving, understanding, and unconditional. It is not free of discipline, for even God knows that He must deal with men who are yet His immature children. He always relates to people according to *their* level of love. It is the kind of love parents must have in order to bring up their children to maturity in Christ.

The Church of Philadelphia (1776-1914) is well seen in the great American experiment. Its founders believed in liberty in law. It sought to bring the Church into a *phileo* relationship among its citizens and among all the nations. Prior to the

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Protestant Reformation the world saw few benevolent civil rulers or religious leaders. The only example most of them knew was of men with selfish interests who had not learned the basic principles of *phileo* love.

When we view the establishment of America in the city of Philadelphia—the first capital until 1800 AD—as an attempt by the people to establish a *phileo*-Christian government, it becomes apparent that 1776 to 1800 AD was a very important time in the history of the Church. It was the American Dream to fulfill the prophecies regarding the House of Israel, that this new nation would be a light to the nations (Is. 49:6), and that from the shores of this New World the Gospel of Jesus Christ would go forth into all the world. Countless sermons preached in the early American churches attest to this. They believed that they were establishing the fifth kingdom of Daniel 2, the great Stone Kingdom cut out of the mountain without hands, that was to smash the image on its feet—that is, the old corrupted world order in Europe that had been dominated by the Roman Church.

The early Americans believed that this new nation was to be the fulfillment of Isaiah 2:2 & 3, which says,

2 And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain [i.e., kingdom] of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills [lesser kingdoms]; and all nations shall flow unto it.

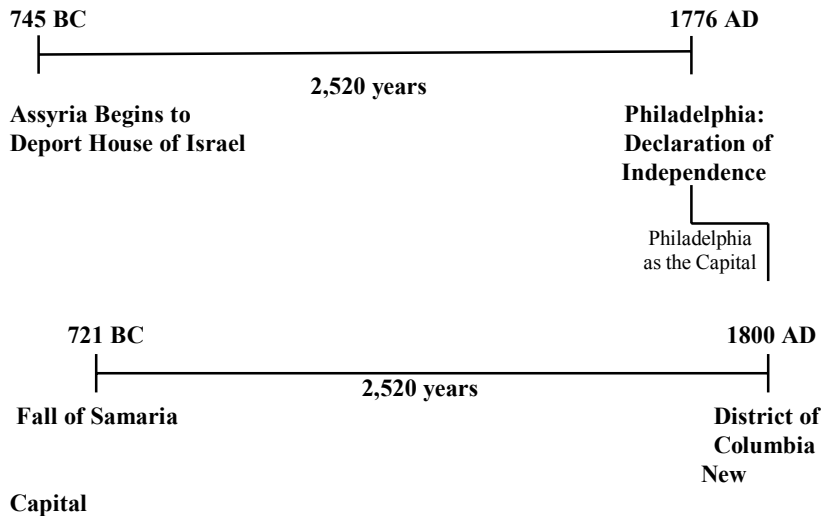
3 And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach of His ways, and we will walk in his paths; for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.

It was the intention of the Pilgrims and Puritans to set up a political and social order that would be an example of righteous laws that would bring liberty under God to all nations. And so,

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when Philadelphia became the capital of the new nation from 1776 to 1800, we find that this time period was precisely 2,520 years after the House of Israel was conquered by Assyria.

Assyria began to deport the House of Israel in 745 BC and completed that captivity by capturing Samaria in 721 BC.



It was 2,520 years from 745 BC to 1776 AD. It was 2,520 years from 721 BC to 1800 AD. The House of Israel thus spent 2,520 years (7 “times”, or 7 x 360 years) in captivity throughout the nations, before their judgment came to an end. This coincided precisely with the beginning of the era of the Church of Philadelphia and the new door that God opened.

The new door being opened in Rev. 3:8 has to do with the rise of the great missionary societies in 1790’s. This coincided with the decline of the temporal power of the Roman Church, brought about by the Rothschilds through the French Revolution and then the rise of Napoleon. As we said earlier, the great upheaval of the French Revolution took place from 1789 to 1793, paving the way for the rise of Napoleon in 1796. (See Chapter 5 regarding the Church of Thyatira.)

Meanwhile, God opened a great “Door” to the Church of Philadelphia. Many great missionary societies were established

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in the 1790’s and into the 1800’s. In 1792 the Baptist Missionary Society was established. Three years later the London Missionary Society was founded. In 1797 came the

Wesleyan Missionary Society. In 1800 came the Anglican Church Missionary Society. In 1804 came the British and Foreign Bible Society. In 1806 came the Hibernian Bible Society of Ireland. In 1816 came the American Bible Society. In 1861 came the National Bible Society of Scotland.

This began the great missionary movements of the next 200 years, which spread the Protestant brands of Christianity into all parts of the world. This fulfilled the Word to the Church of Philadelphia, “**Behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it**” (Rev. 3:8). He that had the key of David had opened a new door (Rev. 3:7), giving Christians of all denominations the opportunity to spread the Gospel to all parts of the world. Up to that time, only Roman Catholicism had had such opportunity, but they had spread their message primarily through conquest.

The prophecy of the “**key of David**” (Rev. 3:7) opening this door refers us to Isaiah 22:15-25, where Eliakim was given the key of David to be the keeper of the house, replacing Shebna, the Scribe. This occurred during the time of king Hezekiah. The keys of David were taken from Shebna and given to Eliakim. Applied to the Church of Philadelphia, we see the Roman Catholic Shebna being replaced by the Protestant Eliakim. The keys to the Kingdom claimed by Rome are now being given to others whose motives are more consistent with “brotherly love” than the ones who conceived the Inquisition and the conquests of Cortez.

Remember that the Church of Philadelphia parallels the Hezekiah Church of the Old Testament. The name *Hezekiah* means “strength.” And so God describes the Philadelphia Church as having “**a little strength**” (Rev. 3:8). In the days of Hezekiah, Shebna was the representative of “**the synagogue of Satan**” (Rev. 3:9), a man who may have been a tribal Judahite

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(“Jew”), but did not have the heart circumcision that God requires to be a “**true Jew**” (Rom. 2:29). Thus, he was replaced by Eliakim (“whom God sets up”), and this incident

foreshadowed a greater fulfillment in the time of the Church of Philadelphia in the late 1700's. Rev. 3:10, 11 says,

10 Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, 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.

11 Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown.

In Hezekiah's day, the Assyrian armies came to take the crown from Hezekiah. But God smote their army and saved Jerusalem (2 Kings 19:35). Thus, Hezekiah was spared from that "**hour of temptation**" (or trial).

In another way Hezekiah was spared again, for we read in 2 Kings 20 that the king was deathly ill and ready to die. However, God spared him and gave him another 15 years of life. The 15 years is significant in that it represents one hour in Biblical prophetic reckoning. A prophetic day or year often can also represent 360 years in long-term prophecy. By this reckoning, a prophetic "hour" is 1/24 of a year, or 15 years.

Thus, Hezekiah was given a 15-year extension of life, because God spared him from the *hour* of trial in his day. The parallel to the Church of Philadelphia is clear. All of these details show us that the Church of Philadelphia is the Hezekiah Church. The only difference is that the manner of fulfillment in modern times is on a much larger scale than in Hezekiah's day.

Unfortunately, we have the same weaknesses as did king Hezekiah of Judah. When he received letters from the king of Babylon, Hezekiah made a fatal mistake. 2 Kings 20:13 says,

13 And Hezekiah hearkened unto them and showed them all the house of his precious things, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the

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precious ointment, and all the house of his armour, and all that was found in his treasures; there was

nothing in his house, nor in all his dominion that Hezekiah showed them not.

Isaiah then told him that the Babylonians were going to confiscate all of it some day. To his credit, he humbly submitted to this Word.

When the Church—particularly in America, focused too much upon building religious empires to the glory of God, the new accumulation of wealth caught the attention of Babylon's covetous servants. The rise of Protestant denominations and their accumulation of property, expensive buildings, and healthy bank accounts made it worthwhile for unscrupulous men to seek control.

As a consequence, the servants of economic Babylon recognized that if they could just take over the seminaries, they could eventually control purse strings of the whole Church and change its teachings to conform to Babylonian ideas. Instead of destroying the Church outright, they could use the Churches to maintain control and propagate Biblical ignorance until such time as the people, out of sheer boredom, fell away from the irrelevant god being preached in the name of Christianity. Those who remained could be induced through guilt and fear to support the empty shell of religion out of sheer religious duty. They succeeded.

And so, like the time of Hezekiah, the Philadelphia era (1776-1913/14) was an interim era leading to the great Babylonian captivity of the 20th century. On December 23, 1913 AD the Federal Reserve Act was passed while most of the legislators were home for Christmas, and President Wilson signed it without reading it in February 1914. He admitted later that this was the greatest mistake of his career, but nothing was done about it. So ended the Hezekiah Church. So began the final Church of the Captivity, the Laodicean era, which thought itself rich and did not even know it had been taken to Babylon.

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Events Leading to Our Captivity

In 1750 AD a Jewish goldsmith, Amschel Moses Bauer opened a Counting House in Frankfort, Germany. Over the door of the business he placed a red shield. He died just four years later, but his son, Amschel, soon went to work for the Oppenheimer Bank, where he showed great aptitude. Later, he returned home to take over his father's business. He decided to adopt the red shield as the family name. Thus was born the House of Rothschild, the "Red Shield."

In 1773 he invited twelve influential and wealthy men to a meeting, where he unveiled a plan to make much wealth through a revolutionary movement in France. By using their combined wealth, they would be able to create bad economic conditions and reduce the people to near starvation. Then they could blame the bad conditions upon the king and his nobles, the Roman Church, Industrialists, and all employers in general. By then arousing feelings of hatred and revenge for their oppression, some real and the rest invented, they could create a revolution. The people would think they were throwing off the yoke of their oppressors, but would not realize that they were being used to replace old oppressors with new and worse ones.

As a result of this meeting in 1773, the Order of the Illuminati was created on May 1, 1776 to carry out the revolutionary plans of its financiers, the House of Rothschild and its allies. Its organizer was Adam Weishaupt, a Jesuit-trained professor of canon law, who left the Church and adopted the Rothschild's Luciferian religion. The Illuminati helped foment the American revolution, because it was in their interest to weaken the British Empire.

Then as they were organizing the French Revolution to weaken France, an act of God revealed their plans to the authorities. In 1784 their courier was hit by lightning on his way from Frankfurt to Paris. He was carrying a copy of the Illuminati plans. The police found the documents, and shortly

thereafter, the Bavarian government raided the homes and headquarters of the more influential conspirators. The next year they outlawed the Illuminati, and in 1786 they published the details under the title: "The Original Writings of The Order and Sect of The Illuminati." At this point the Illuminati went underground, infiltrating other secret societies and organizations and working through them. Officially, the Illuminati organization no longer existed. But its plan for a French Revolution succeeded in 1789 to 1793.

The French Revolution established a new constitution and passed laws that forbade the Roman Church from levying tithes (taxes) and also removed its exemption from taxation. The "reign of terror" that followed made the people ripe for a dictator to restore order and national honor. In 1796 AD Napoleon ("New Apollyon") was made commander of the French army in Italy. His financial backing from the banks led to his rise to power that would topple monarchies and firmly entrench the five sons of Amschel Mayer Rothschild as financial kings in five main cities of Europe.

These men also decided at that time to make Switzerland their international headquarters, and for their security, to keep it neutral in all wars and disputes. The fact that Hitler, for all his bombast against the Jews and money powers, never invaded Switzerland—the headquarters of his supposed enemies—proves that he, too, was their pawn, never intending to wage war against the Rothschilds. He was set up to incite those who could be motivated by emotional hatreds to fight wars that would generate tremendous sales for the munitions companies, all of which are owned by the Rothschilds or their subsidiaries.

There were two main purposes for World War 2. The first was to disenfranchise European Jews, so that they would settle the new Rothschild colony in Palestine. The second was to frighten the ordinary Jews into transferring their money into the Swiss banks controlled by the Rothschild family, so that they could steal it from their heirs, most of whom lost their birth

certificates in the war's destruction and could no longer prove that they were entitled to those funds. How ironic that these powerful Jews, who use their fellow Jews as expendable pawns, should be so revered for establishing the modern Israeli state. The average Jews (and Christians), blinded by religious emotion, suspect nothing sinister.

On September 26, 1917 the legal representative of Kuhn-Loeb & Co., Louis Marshall, wrote to his friend Max Senior, another leading Zionist: "*Major Lionel de Rothschild, of the League for British Jews, informs me that his organization is in agreement with the American Jewish Committee . . . The Balfour Declaration, with its acceptance by the Powers, is an act of the highest diplomacy. **Zionism is but an incident of a far-reaching plan; it is merely a convenient peg on which to hang a powerful weapon***" (*Pawns in the Game*, Wm. Guy Carr, p. 87).

He was referring to the long-range plan to bring the Jews and Arabs into a great conflict that would enrich the Rothschilds through arms sales and monetary loans. Secondly, after fanning the flames of evangelical Christianity into cementing all Bible prophecy upon the success of that nation, they would pull the rug out from under them and allow it to be destroyed. In its ashes the entire message of Christianity would be discredited, Bible prophecy would seem to fail, and the spiritual vacuum would be filled by Luciferianism, the true religion of the Rothschilds, whose present form for the masses is the very popular New Age Movement.

In the late 1700's the Illuminati was well financed by the Rothschild-led coalition and were able to easily infiltrate the new American government. The new nation very nearly succumbed to pressure to put the nation's monetary supply into the hands of the Rothschild banks. However, America's founders were able to forestall this economic captivity by inserting a clause in the American Constitution: "*The Congress*

shall have power: To coin money, regulate the value thereof, and of foreign coin" (Article 1, Section 8, Part 5). This was passed mostly through the influence and eloquence of Benjamin Franklin, who was very much aware of the Rothschild plot to control America economically.

Like the days of Hezekiah, when God turned back the Assyrian army, so also did God spare America to some degree from this captivity. Recall that when the House of Israel was conquered by the Assyrians (745-721 BC), an attempt was also made to conquer Jerusalem and the House of Judah. Judah was ruled by king Hezekiah at the time. He prayed, and God delivered the city. However, because of the people's continued rebellion against the Law of God, they were taken captive a century later by the Babylonians (604 BC). Even so, America was able to escape full captivity by the Rothschilds at its beginning, but ultimately could not escape from the hand of modern Babylon.

Benjamin Franklin died in 1790 just a few years after the American Constitution was adopted. The prime Rothschild agent at that time was Alexander Hamilton, the first secretary of the Treasury, known also as the Father of our National Debt and the stepfather of America. He succeeded in getting banking laws passed that violated the new Constitution. The so-called "Bank of the United States" was given a 20-year charter in 1791, giving the nation's economic system into the hands of private European bankers. (This bank was not owned by the United States, but it was named as such to deceive the public. The same tactic was later used by those who named "The Federal Reserve Bank.")

The individual states were alarmed that the federal government would give its entire monetary system into the hands of a single bank that was owned by foreign bankers. So they set up their own State Banks with their own currencies redeemable in gold or silver. This diluted the power of the Rothschilds over us, and our captivity remained incomplete for

another century. The Bank of the United States charter was not renewed in 1811, as Congress felt that if we were to have private banks issue money, it would be better to spread this power among many banks, rather than have a single central bank whose owners would have total economic power.

The War of 1812 with England was the bankers' answer, fomented to create economic chaos among American banks. In 1816, after a bitter struggle, Congress gave a second 20-year charter to the Bank of the United States. In 1828 and 1832 General Andrew Jackson was elected president specifically to oppose the renewal of this charter.

In June of 1832 the Senate passed a bill to renew the Bank of America charter. In July it passed the House. Jackson vetoed the bill on July 10, telling congress: *"It is to be regretted that the rich and powerful too often bend the acts of government in their selfish purposes . . . When the laws . . . make the rich richer and the potent more powerful, the humble members of society . . . have the right to complain of the injustice of their Government."*

The charter would not expire until 1836, but Jackson began removing funds from the Bank of America and would allow no more federal deposits to be made in that bank after October 1, 1833. It was rechartered in 1836 as a state bank in Pennsylvania, but it eventually failed.

From this time until the National Banking Act of 1863 the international money powers battled to regain control. In 1857 certain bankers met in London to draw up a plan to punish the American republic. They decided to divide America into two nations, using each to weaken the other, making both more controllable. The Rothschilds in the Paris bank would support and finance the South, while the Rothschilds in London would support and finance the North. They would exploit the issues of slavery—which was already a seriously divisive issue—in order to bring about a great Civil War. Their intention was not to free the black slaves, but rather to enslave everyone.

At first the South seemed to win all the important battles of the Civil War. But after the North's victory at Gettysburg in July 1863, the tide turned in favor of the North. The European bankers then induced five European nations to send troops to Mexico. From there they could be quickly dispatched to the United States to ensure a southern victory and partition into two nations. However, this plan was foiled when Tsar Alexander II of Russia immediately sent two warships to San Francisco and to New York City, under Admirals Lesowsky and Popoff. They arrived in September, just two months after the battle of Gettysburg. This action gave notice that if any European troops entered American soil, Russia would immediately intervene on the side of President Lincoln.

This Tsar had greatly improved the lives of Russians in 1861 by literally freeing 23 million serfs, who had been enslaved and forced to work on the land. He had introduced compulsory education in Russia to end illiteracy and bring modern civilization to Russia. He had spent his whole life trying to improve the lives of the poorer classes, including Jews. It is also the same Tsar who sold us the territory of Alaska in 1867.

Few Americans know how indebted they are to the Russian Tsar for preserving the Union and thwarting the plans of the Rothschild bankers. His bold action, however, sealed the fate of the Tsars, for from that moment on, the Rothschilds began planning the overthrow of the Tsars. Russia was chosen to be the nation of the great Socialist experiment in controlling the nations of the world. Furthermore, they attempted to assassinate Tsar Alexander in 1866 and again in 1879. They finally succeeded in 1881. This caused widespread resentment throughout Russia against Jews in general, for they reasoned that if the Jews could be so discontented at a Tsar who emancipated and educated them, and improved their lives so dramatically, then they did not deserve such freedoms. They mistakenly blamed all Jews for the sins of the few at the top, not understanding that those Russian Jews were deliberately

being manipulated in order to bring them into the ranks of the revolutionary movements that eventually toppled Russia. The top bankers, including Jews, cared little or nothing about the lower-class Jews, but merely used them when it served their purposes and disposed of them when no longer useful. All were mere “assets” and were expendable when their usefulness has expired.

In 1913-14 we surrendered to our 20th century Babylonian captors by passing the Federal Reserve Act. This established the type of Central Bank that the Rothschilds and their allies had failed to institutionalize in the American Constitution. These events all have taken place precisely 2,520 years after the same events in ancient times.

From 745 to 721 BC the Assyrians deported and dispersed the House of Israel. *2,520 years later* the Illuminati was founded (1776) by Amschel Mayer Rothschild to bring about revolutions that would weaken the two main European powers of the day: Britain and France. At this stage of development, the Illuminati was the prophetic parallel to the ancient *Assyrian Empire*, which was only partially successful in its conquests of Israel and Judah.

In 607 BC the Babylonians conquered Nineveh and replaced Assyria as the dominant Empire. *2,520 years later* (1914) the Federal Reserve Act was signed into law. This represented a later stage of development in the Rothschild plan, a modern *Babylonian Empire*, that would wield power through its financial system. The creation of the Federal Reserve Bank was a necessity in order to finance World War One for the purpose of destroying Tsarist Russia, replacing the Tsars with agents of western banks.

This eliminated a major competitor for world power, gave them revenge for Tsar Alexander’s interference during the Civil War, and provided them with a model on which to try out their principles of world government. By learning from their successes and mistakes, they hoped to perfect the way to total

dominion over the earth. Their goal was to fulfill the vision of Nimrod, who rebelled against the divinely-appointed government of Noah and Shem, and who built the original city of Babylon (Gen. 10:9, 10). This new “Babylonian Empire,” however, would be hidden—a secret from most people—for the book of Revelation calls it “Mystery Babylon.” The word *mystery* means “secret, or hidden.”

In 604 BC Babylon captured the city of Jerusalem. *2,520 years later* in 1917 the Bolshevik Revolution freed Russia from the Tsars and brought them into the hands of the Rothschilds and their allies in Europe and America. This is a matter of public record in congressional hearings in 1919 chaired by Senator Overman. The New York Times even reported a party held in New York City to celebrate the Russian Revolution. Jacob Schiff, the senior member of the Kuhn-Loeb bank, was invited to the celebration, because he had deposited 50 million dollars in an account in Sweden to finance Lenin. Schiff was too busy to attend the party, but he sent a note expressing his joy at the success of the revolution. That note was reprinted in full by the New York Times. (I have seen and read the article myself on microfilm at the library of the University of Minnesota.)

This is a brief summary of many volumes that have already been written on this topic in the past two centuries. It is not our purpose to dwell on the history of our economic captivity, but to show how American history parallels the story of Hezekiah. The Church of Philadelphia (1776-1914) is the Hezekiah Church, leading directly to the Church of the Captivity—Laodicea (1914-1994).

This “beast” system has many heads today. No single man is king, for each head hates the other, even though they are forced to work with them to maintain the body of the beast. The Roman Church has been relegated to the status of a single head of this beast. Its financial empire is massive, but it no longer holds the most power. The Rothschilds own over 10,000

corporations worldwide and are probably the most powerful of these beastly heads. However, there are many powerful family dynasties, and no single family is strong enough to rule as king of the world. If they were ever to agree on one head, he would be the classic “antichrist.” But I do not believe this will occur, because they all want to be king and are far too jealous of each other to agree on this issue.

How God is Dealing with Babylon

No matter what these rulers of Babylon plan, let us remember that God is using all of these nations and wicked men for His purposes. He raises up the basest of men at His will (Dan. 4:17) and disposes of them when they have finished their job of bringing judgment upon His disobedient people. As it was in Biblical days, so it is in the modern nations. God changes not. When the Church is lawless, God raises up the lawless ones to reign over them, in order to give the Church what is truly the desire of its heart: *lawlessness*. It will continue to be so until we learn that God is King, and His Law must be our only Constitution.

It is important that we understand the long-term reason God has raised up this new power called Mystery Babylon. It is for the same reason that God raised up the old city of Babylon. It was to judge His people, who had fallen into idolatry and rebellion against God. The same is true today. The Thyatira Church began in 529 AD when the Justinian codified orthodox Christianity into the law of the land. After 1,260 years, that power was eclipsed by the new economic power, organized by the Rothschilds and their allies. America managed to escape full captivity for over a century, even as Hezekiah escaped Assyrian occupation. But when the Church in America rebelled against God’s Law and established the laws of men in its place, then God gave us into the hands of the new Babylon. As a consequence, the solution to the problem is not to take up arms to fight these unscrupulous men. It is to repent of our lawlessness. That has always been the Biblical solution.

Freedom will not come by fighting the enemy, but by repenting of our lawless ways and turning to God with all our hearts. As we learn the truth about God, coming to know Him fully, we shall be free indeed. That inner, spiritual freedom must then be translated into our daily life in the world. The spiritual then will set the pattern for the earthly manifestation of freedom in every area of life, including the political.

The captivity of this Laodicean Church era to a secret, hidden, Babylonian-style government can only be the result of a spell-binding blindness to truth itself. No doubt these Luciferian powers that think-they-be fancy they have blinded us with their religious spells and with their control of the media. Even they do not realize that this blindness is from God, who is judging us for our rebellion against Him. In their pride they do not realize that they, too, are but pawns in a divine game that is larger than they realize.

Chapter 8

The Church of the Laodiceans

The Church of the Laodiceans is a prophetic paradox. It thinks itself to be rich, yet is poor. It thinks it sees, but is blind. It thinks itself clothed, yet is naked. It does not even know that it is wretched and miserable. Such language in Rev. 3:17 & 18 leaves us speechless.

Yet this is the state of the Church in the 20th century. Nakedness, blindness, and poverty are so commonplace that no one even realizes it is a problem. The Church does not have the white raiment (the righteousness of saints). It is blind to the truth of God's plan. It is poor and in need of true gold (faith) tried in the fire (1 Peter 1:7).

If we were to prove any of these statements adequately, it would require a complete book in itself. In brief, though, the Church has rebelled against the divine law, yet thinks it is righteous in its open disobedience. As a single example of this, God says usury (charging interest on money) is a sin; the Church sees nothing sinful in it. Hence, the Church not only allows but actively participates in something God says is sin. God has chosen this particular point of divine Law to judge us by our own works, so that would learn that lawlessness leads to bondage.

Blindness in Part

The Church has published thousands of books in recent years, teaching how God lost the House of Israel, thus abolishing the Birthright held by the tribe of Joseph (1 Chron. 5:1 & 2). They then teach that the birthright of Israel has somehow been given to the Judah remnant called Jews today. This "transfer theory" makes void the Word of God. Worse yet, when the Jewish nation took upon itself the birthright name of

Israel in 1948, unlawfully usurping the name given to the sons of Joseph (Gen. 48:16), the Church largely fell for the lie that this new nation was the regathered House of Israel in Bible prophecy. It is not. The “seven times” of judgment upon the House of Israel ended from 1776 to 1800 AD, as we have already shown. America has more to do with the regathered House of Israel than the Jewish State that was formed in 1948.

Judah’s and Jerusalem’s “seven times” of judgment began in 604 BC with that city’s captivity to king Nebuchadnezzar. It ended 2,520 years later in 1917 AD when British general Allenby took Jerusalem from the Turks. Thirty years later it was given to the Jews. If anything, the Jews should have named their nation “The State of Judah.”

To take the birthright name of Israel was to imply that they were the possessors of the birthright of Joseph (1 Chron. 5:1, 2). Virtually all Jews are well aware that they do not constitute the House of Israel, because for the past 2,000 years they have prayed to be united with the tribes of Joseph-Israel. Nonetheless, they have found it expedient for propaganda purposes to pretend to be Israel, and the Church has largely fallen for it. This blindness has prevented most Christians from seeing what God has really done in recent centuries to fulfill the prophecies in His Word.

Even so, it was in the plan of God that the true House of Israel be blinded until the time of the end. Isaiah deals with the “blind servant” theme in Isaiah 42:18-20, 43:8, and 44:18. Paul develops the theme more fully in Romans 9-11, where he deals with the condition of the cast off, dispersed House of Israel. Today it is popularly thought that Paul was talking about the Jewish dispersion in those chapters. However, Paul wrote the book of Romans around 58 AD, while the Jews were not dispersed until 70 AD. Paul was actually concerned about how the House of Israel had rebelled against God and how God had dispersed them throughout the nations at least eight centuries earlier.

In Paul’s day there were many Jews who felt that Israel had been cast off forever, and that therefore their birthright had been transferred to the remnant of Judah. Paul deals with this transfer theory squarely, telling us that God had NOT ultimately cast off the House of Israel (Rom. 11:2). In fact, Paul makes a point of telling us that his concern was for “**my kinsmen according to the flesh, who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption [huiiothesia, “the placing as sons”], and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.**”

Paul quotes from Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Deuteronomy, 1 Kings, the Psalms, Isaiah, Hosea, Joel, Micah, and Malachi, where these books deal with the lost House of Israel, to prove that God was going to find and regather Israel even as He had promised. Furthermore, in this regathering, Paul said, He was going to save the whole world (Rom. 11:11-15, 32-36). In essence, it takes Paul three full chapters to expound upon a theme that Jesus revealed in a single verse: Matthew 13:44,

44 Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure [Israel—Ex. 19:5] hid in a field [the world—Matt. 13:38], the which when a man hath found [Jesus—Ez. 34:11-16, 30] he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath [He gives His very life], and buyeth that field [the world].

In other words, it was God’s plan to purchase the whole world, so He hid a treasure in it. In order to obtain the treasure, it was necessary to purchase the field in which it was buried. Hence, He purchased the whole world with His blood. On the surface, God’s object and goal was to obtain the treasure. Yet His broader goal was to buy the whole world. Hence, it is not contradictory to say that Israel was “chosen” and yet that God has purchased the whole world. The relationship between these two concepts is made clear in this one verse.

God hid Israel in the world, causing them to be “**the lost sheep of the House of Israel**” (Ez. 34:16; Matt. 10:6). Even as their forefather, Joseph, had been “lost” in Egypt and presumed dead for 21 years, so also were their descendants lost in the world and presumed dead for 12 x 210 years from 745 BC to 1776 AD. (See Chapters 14 and 15 of Secrets of Time.) In the 1800’s, with the birth of modern archeology, men discovered that the ancient House of Israel was known to the Assyrians and Babylonians by the name *Khumri*. They translated the inscription at Behistun (the tomb of Darius the Great of Persia) and found that that this name, *Khumri*, translated into the Persian language as *Sakka*, *Scythians*, *Skuths*, or *Scots*. The Roman historians, writing in Latin, called them *Saxons*.

Archeologists in the last century discovered that Europe was largely populated by the lost sheep of the House of Israel, who had migrated there from the land of their captivity in “**Halah, and in Habor by the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes**” (2 Kings 17:6). After 1776 to 1800 AD their “seven times” of captivity began to end, and like their forefather, Joseph, they were discovered to be alive and well (Gen. 45:28).

It was in the plan of God that Israel be lost, in order that God might be seen as powerful and able to do all that He had said He would do—without the help of men. If men had generally known the whereabouts of Israel, they might have attempted to fulfill the Word of God by the strength of the flesh. Therefore, God worked in a hidden way, fulfilling His Word to the letter and in precise time cycles, so that we would know that it was Him and not us who did it.

Hence, a partial blindness came upon Israel, not enough to blind them totally to Jesus Christ, but enough that they would not know what was happening until God had completed the plan by the counsel of His own will.

Poor in Faith; Rich in Positive Thinking

The Church is also poor, not having the true gold tried in the fire. In other words, the Church does not have true Biblical Faith. But because it *thinks* it has faith, it is apparent that it has a counterfeit faith. Since the 1960’s we have seen the rise of Positive Thinking in the teachings of Norman Vincent Peale and his successors. Positive thinking is not faith. I think we should all think positively, but this must not be confused with faith.

Faith comes by hearing the Word and voice of God. When we truly hear His Word and act upon it, this is faith. Positive thinking is when man wishes something good to happen, and so he prays and demands it of God until he gets it. He feels that if he just pesters God long enough, and if he eradicates from his mind all negative thoughts, he will force God to grant him his wishes.

Faith acts to establish the will of God; positive thinking acts to establish the will of man. Most prayer today is the latter. It is a counterfeit faith. Those who have it are unaware that they are spiritually poor, because nearly everyone around them is in the same condition. They are all classic Laodiceans.

When Men Rule, There is Bondage

The word *Laodicea* means either “power OF the laity” (people) or “power OVER the laity” (captivity). I believe the word carries BOTH meanings, because when the people rule in a democracy, it is very easily and quickly conquered by ruthless, ambitious men who know how to make campaign promises that appeal to men’s selfish, ungodly desires. The legislature then passes laws that men think good, rather than find out what God said in His Law. It is not long before the power OF the people turns into power OVER the people. Man’s laws will always lead to bondage. Only God’s Law can be called “**the perfect law of liberty**” (James 1:25).

Ultimately, it makes little difference if one man rules the people or if the people all rule collectively in a democracy. Either way, imperfect men rule, and ultimately, they will put the people into bondage by the laws which they legislate. The only advantage in a democracy is that it usually takes longer for the bondage to take place. Our founders largely recognized this, and that is why they created a Republic under God, rather than democracy under men. It was hoped that the legislators would be godly men who would interpret and apply God's Law, rather than pass laws contrary to King Jesus. However, because there were already many Christians who had dispensed with God's Law, they compromised and did not establish the Bible as the supreme Law of the land.

Incidentally, the message to this church is addressed to **“the church of the Laodiceans.”** It is the only message addressed to the people in a plural sense. All the others are to the church of a particular city. Perhaps this is meant to convey the idea that the people had taken over the rulership in a kind of spiritual democracy.

Democracy means that man rules, as opposed to a theocracy, where God rules. The Church should be a theocracy with Jesus Christ as King. The Church should be led by the Word as interpreted by the Holy Spirit. Instead, the Church has usually disposed of or disregarded the Laws of God and then expected the Holy Spirit to lead them apart from His Word.

World War I was fought “to make the world safe for *democracy.*” Actually, it was fought to destroy all *rival* dictators and kings, so that it could be conquered by the new dictators of the financial Empire of Babylon. The war was fought to transform us from a republic to a democracy, so that we could all be equally enslaved. A democracy is the usurers' heaven.

None of this would have been possible if the Church had not rebelled against the theocracy of God. However, the Church had already prepared the hearts and minds of the people

for dictatorial rule. The Roman Church had set up its own dictatorship, making it difficult for Catholic nations to understand the basic principles of liberty in law. After all, the popes have claimed to be above the Law of God, having the right to overrule Jesus and the Apostles. Some Protestant denominations have gone the same direction, insisting that one must join their organizations and submit to the authority of their leaders in order to attain to the Kingdom of God.

These have turned into competing factions of Babylonian government run by men rather than by Jesus Christ. While they all claim to represent Jesus Christ, they all seem to overrule Him whenever they disagree with His Laws. For this reason, God finally sold us into captivity to the new Babylonian Empire. This not only affected the political and economic system, but it also blinded the eyes of the Laodicean Church, making them think they were rich when they were, in fact, poor.

The revelation of the Law is thus one of our major focal points. We seek to discover truths long hidden in its dusty, unused pages. The time has come for such a revelation to be taught and understood. It is time to anoint our eyes with spiritual eye salve, time to repent of our own ways and turn to His ways, time to put on the mind of God and come into agreement with Him as an Amen people. This is, in fact, the first thing that the Laodicean church was told: **“These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true Witness, the beginning of the creation of God”** (Rev. 3:14). Jesus did only those things that He saw His Father do (John 5:19). He was therefore a true Witness of God. A witness speaks only what He has seen or heard. Jesus did this, and we are to do the same.

The Church of Babylonian Captivity

When we speak of a “Babylonian” captivity, we must understand that there was an original captivity of Jerusalem and Judah from 604 to 534 BC to the literal Babylonian Empire, but that this has been and is being repeated on a larger

scale in subsequent history. This time, however, “Babylon” is no longer the old city, but a system of world-government, an economic system, and a religious system. In each area, it is man’s way of doing things. It is set up by men who are in rebellion against the laws and government of God.

During the Church Age, political “Babylon” was manifested primarily in the Roman Empire. After it had run its course, there arose a religious “Babylon” in the religious organization of the Roman Church. When this began to decline in the late 1700’s, we saw the rise of the third manifestation: economic “Babylon.” This is why Rev. 16:19 speaks of a great earthquake, which divides the city into three parts. In God’s judgments, He divided the city into three aspects of world domination over a period of time, rather than have all of them manifest at the same time, which, perhaps, might have proved fatal to us all.

The Laodiceans run parallel to the people in the days of Zerubbabel after the Edict of Cyrus freed them to return to the land of Judah. In both cases the people found themselves much too financially prosperous to brave the rigors of rebuilding the old waste places. And so they were content to remain in Babylon, rather than build Jerusalem and the Kingdom of God and establish His righteous government upon the earth.

The book of Ezra tells how Sheshbazzar (Zerubbabel) organized a migration of just 49,697 immigrants (Ezra 2:64, 65) who returned to the land of Canaan. This was a tiny minority of Judahites. It obviously shows that they were not being mistreated in captivity. Instead, they had prospered, and many had become quite wealthy. They had also learned the art of banking there. Since the divine Law permitted usury to be charged to foreigners, they were able to charge the going rates in Babylon—usually about 20-30%.

Perhaps we should also state here that the divine Law only permits interest on money to foreigners living *outside* the land. This was allowed, because such foreigners were not subject to

the divine Law in their native countries, and under man’s laws, usury was an accepted way of doing business. Deut. 23:20 says, **“Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury.”** However, in Lev. 25:35, 36 we read a passage which, on the surface, appears to contradict it:

35 And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee, then thou shalt relieve him; yea, though he be a stranger or a sojourner; that he may live with thee.

36 Take no usury of him, or increase.

Any foreigners (“strangers”) passing through the land, or sojourners living and working among the Israelites were expected to be obedient to the laws of the land. There was to be no double standard within the borders of the land of Israel. **“One law shall be to him that is homeborn, and unto the stranger that sojourneth among you”** (Ex. 12:49). It was very important in the eyes of God that Israel never oppress the stranger. **“Thou shalt neither vex [oppress, suppress, mistreat] a stranger nor oppress [squeeze or oppress] him; for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt”** (Ex. 22:21).

Thus, it is plain that God outlaws usury wherever His Kingdom government is to be found. When living in a foreign land where the Law of God is not established, it is permitted to loan money at interest, but certainly not among people who claim to live in God’s Kingdom. The people of Judah living in Babylon largely adopted the banking practices of their captors and had little or no regard for the Law of God. Hence, in Nehemiah 5:1 we read, **“And there was a great cry of the people and of their wives against their brethren the Jews.”** The problem was that they were charging interest on their loans during a time of drought (Neh. 5:10).

Some today teach that Jesus put His blessing upon usury in Luke 19:23, where He said to the man who had buried the pound his master had given him:

23 Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming, I might have required mine own with usury?

If we look at the entire parable, we see what Jesus really meant by this statement. A man who was going into a far country gave money to His servants for safekeeping and to use for business investment. The servant given ten pounds earned another ten pounds; the servant given five pounds earned another five. But the one given a single pound buried it and made nothing by investment. His excuse in Luke 19:21 was,

21 For I feared thee, because thou art an austere man; thou takest up that thou layedst not down, and reapest that thou didst not sow.

To paraphrase this, the man was saying that his lord, who represented Jesus in the parable, was a hard-nosed businessman who often took what was not his. The servant thought his lord was a thief when it came to business practices. But Jesus is not a thief, so He has the lord of the servant tell him,

22 Out of thine own mouth will I judge thee, thou wicked servant. Thou knewest [you claim to believe] that I was an austere man, taking up that I laid not down, and reaping that I did not sow; Wherefore then gavest not thou my money into the bank, that at my coming I might have required mine own with usury?

In other words, Jesus judged the man according to his own words. He thought Jesus was a thief, so why didn't he just use the money as a thief would have done?—by charging usury! That way, at least, the servant could have *honestly* acted upon his incorrect view of Jesus. Instead, the servant buried the pound. The servant was honest enough not to steal from others, but he believed that Jesus was a thief. Thus, the servant was acting in a self-righteous manner that actually blasphemed Jesus' character. This is why Jesus said the servant was wicked.

The bottom line is that this passage proves that usury is denounced as thievery in the New Testament. Jesus certainly did not condone it. But in recent years the Laodicean Church leaders have been so blind as to think that Jesus put away His own Law, making theft acceptable. Those who think that the God of the Old Testament was "austere" for outlawing usury should ask themselves if they prefer a New Testament God that approves of such theft!

The Church of the Laodiceans sees nothing wrong with charging interest on money. In fact, they have learned how to profit from the Babylonian way of life—by oppressing their brethren. They are just like their Old Testament counterparts in the fifth chapter of Nehemiah. There are prominent Christians and even television evangelists today who are majority stockholders in banks. They have made millions of dollars, profiting on what the Bible calls SIN. Yet they think that the Laodicean church is the one down the street. I think not.

The Laodicean church is the church of the captivity to Babylon in the 20th century. It has not only learned to accept this captivity, but also to join themselves to it, putting their brethren into bondage for a profit. The race is on to see who can get the most money in tithes and offerings, so that these ministries can build crystal cathedrals, Christian vacation resorts, television empires, mansions with gold faucets, and acquire personal fortunes that they put out at usury to make more money through other people's bondage. And in the midst of all this accumulated wealth, there is a famine in the land of hearing the Word of God (Amos 8:11). Thinking themselves to be rich in the eyes of the world, they are actually very poor by God's standard of measure.

The 40 Jubilees of the Church Age came to an end in 1993. At that point God began to do a new thing, working with today's overcomers. The Overcomer Age lies ahead, and we are now in the beginning years of transition from one age to the next, in which we will witness a new administration of divine

government introduced into the earth. Let us seek Him and study His Word, that we may know His will for us in these days. Let us pray that we be found worthy to be granted the blessings given to those who overcome.

Why God Blinded the Laodicean Church

It was necessary that the Church be blind to its captivity, otherwise it would have revolted and set up a government ruled by other ungodly men who had no respect for the Law of God. We could have had a hundred such revolutions and never come close to the Kingdom of God. Even if we had set Christians in positions of power in a new government, the problem would not have been solved as long as they thought God's Law was an evil thing. And so, God blinded us, in order that we would settle down in Babylon and fulfill the Word given by Jeremiah in his letter to the captives in Babylon (Jer. 29).

In Jeremiah's day, God had pronounced a 70-year judgment upon the people (Jer. 29:10) because of their refusal to keep God's Law. Once that divine decree had been issued, Jeremiah's advice to the people was to submit to their Babylonian captors, as God had decreed. We read in Jer. 29:6-11,

6 And now have I given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar, My servant; and the beasts of the field have I given him also to serve him.

7 And all nations shall serve him, and his son, and his son's son, until the very time of his land come; and then many nations and great kings shall serve themselves of him.

8 And it shall come to pass, that the nation and kingdom which will NOT serve the same Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that will NOT put their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, that nation will I punish, saith the Lord,

Lord, with the sword, and with the famine, and with the pestilence, until I have consumed them by His hand.

11 But the nations that bring their neck under the yoke of the king of Babylon, and serve him, those will I let remain still in their own land, saith the Lord; and they shall till it and dwell therein.

Those who refused to submit to God's judgment would find themselves under penalty for contempt of God's court (Deut. 17:12).

In Jeremiah's day the people as a whole decided to fight the Babylonians, refusing to abide by the judgment of God. Jeremiah put on a wooden yoke (Jer. 27:2) to let all nations and people know that this was the judgment of God upon them. Like an ox, they were to be good servants to king Nebuchadnezzar. However, the false prophet Hananiah grabbed the yoke and broke it (Jer. 28:10). He was a good patriot who did not want to submit to God's judgment. From his viewpoint, Jeremiah's message was treasonous and worthy of death (Jer. 26:11).

The next day Jeremiah came out wearing an *iron yoke* (Jer. 28:13). Because the people had rebelled against God's judgment upon them, now they were to have a worse time of bondage. A wooden yoke meant that they could serve their 70-year sentence in their own land by simply paying tribute to Babylon. An iron yoke meant that they would serve their sentence in a foreign land (Jer. 29:11), and those who refused to submit to *this* judgment would die from "**the sword, the famine, and the pestilence**" (Jer. 29:17 and 18). This was the law in Deut. 28:48.

48 Therefore, shalt thou serve thine enemies which the Lord shall send against thee, in hunger, and in thirst, and in nakedness, and in want of all things; and he shall put a yoke of iron upon thy neck, until he have destroyed you.

I repeat—had they submitted to the yoke of wood, their servitude could have been accomplished in their own land, through taxation, but they chose to rebel. Hence, the full penalty of the Law was enforced. The yoke of iron meant that they would have to serve their time as captives *in a foreign land* (Jer. 29:11).

Once the sentence of the Law had been decreed in the Divine Court, Jeremiah wrote to the captives who were already in Babylon and told them to settle down in Babylon, build houses, get married, have children, so their population would not be diminished. In other words, to some extent, “join the system.” However, this did not mean they were to participate in the sins of Babylon by learning the art of charging their brethren usury (Neh. 5). Neither did it mean they were to worship other gods (Dan. 3). Neither did it mean they were to stop praying to the true God (Dan. 6). They were to allow the Babylonians to transport them to the foreign land. They were to submit to its laws and to pay whatever tribute was put upon them, no matter what the king did with that money. (The king alone was answerable to God in that regard.) It was only when the king would attempt to force God’s people to sin that the line was drawn, where the people were to say, “**We ought to obey God rather than men**” (Acts 5:29).

These are very important lessons that we are to learn, because we too are in a Babylonian captivity. The same lessons of the past are applicable today. God sold us into captivity in 1913-14 to the secret empire known as Mystery Babylon precisely 2,520 years after the first Babylonian Empire. God decreed His judgment upon us for the same reasons as found in the Bible. It was a just sentence, but if the people had known what was going on, they would have risen up and rebelled against this righteous sentence. This is why God has blinded our eyes to the fact of our Babylonian

captivity. He made it secret, a “mystery,” so that the rebellious Church would NOT rebel against Babylon. In this way God, *in*

His mercy, ensured that we would remain in our own land during the captivity. We would have a yoke of wood, rather than an iron yoke in a foreign land.

This captivity is essentially a 70-year captivity also, except that one must also take into consideration the “Hezekiah Factor” that we described in Chapter 15 of Secrets of Time. In other words, there is an extra ten years added to the time cycles of our day, as prophesied in the story of Hezekiah. Thus, our 70-year captivity runs from the fall of 1913 to 1983, plus ten years to the fall of 1993.

The year 1993 was also the end of 220 years from Rothschild’s first meeting in 1773 to plan the captivity of the world through usury. The 220 years is related to the 210 years called “the time of Jacob’s trouble.” (See Secrets of Time, Chapters 14 and 15.)

November 29, 1993 was also the end of 46 years since the United Nations passed the Palestinian Resolution, forming a Jewish homeland. On November 29, 1993 the captivity began to come to an end. The story of God’s dealings with us since 1993 would fill an entire book in itself and cannot be treated here, but we believe that God decreed an end to the Babylonian captivity on November 29, 1993. We have observed the signs of the times and have seen them confirmed. However, we also knew in 1993 that Babylon would refuse to let us go, for the ancient city of Babylon did the same with Judah. We see this in Jer. 50:33, 34.

33 Thus saith the Lord of hosts: The children of Israel and the children of Judah were oppressed together; and all that took them captives held them fast; they refused to let them go.

34 Their Redeemer is strong; the Lord of hosts is His name; He shall thoroughly plead their cause, that He may give rest to the land and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon.

God sought occasion against Babylon and so blinded its eyes with greed, that they would not let God's people go when the lawful time of their authority had come to an end. This violation of God's lawful judgment means that God intends to destroy Babylon even as He did Egypt during the days of Moses. The times and places are different, but the principles are the same.

The Church Age defined by the Seven Churches of Revelation are now ended. We are at the dawn of a new day, where there is a divine stirring to do a new work in the earth. The Scriptures tell us that God intends to pour out His Spirit in a fuller manner than we have ever known, a day greater than Passover at Israel's Exodus or even the day of Pentecost in Acts 2.

When we analyze what God has done over the millennia of history, a very important picture begins to emerge. God called Israel out of Egypt a long time ago on the day of Passover (Ex. 12:17, 51). He brought them into the Promised Land under Joshua at the time of Passover as well (Josh. 4:19 and 5:10). God's deliverance in that time was limited to the level of Passover, because this was the level of faith that the people had. When they got to Sinai for Pentecost, the people refused to hear the Word of the Lord (Ex. 20:18-21). Hence, Pentecost could not be fulfilled for another 1,500 years when the Holy Spirit came in Acts 2.

The Seven Churches in the past Church Age were limited to a pentecostal level of the Holy Spirit. The earnest of the Spirit was given at Pentecost (Eph. 1:14), because the disciples in the upper room had the faith to hear the Word which their ancestors refused to hear at Sinai. But even the pentecostal level of God's acts has not been enough to bring righteousness to the earth. We need more. We need the fullness of the Spirit that comes through the feast of Tabernacles, the third great feast day in the Law.

The Church Age as we knew it was a pentecostal age. That age concluded in 1993 after 40 Jubilees of time. We are now in the transition to a new move of God.

Seeing the progression of history in this matter, we conclude that God is about to pour out His Spirit in a Tabernacles fullness upon the overcomers who are watchful, obedient, and expectant—those who are dissatisfied with their present level of anointing. The pillar of fire is about to move again, and those who have not built their house in the wilderness will be able to take down their tents and move with the presence of God to a new place in the Spirit. This is our hope and our desire. And this book has been written as a call to all aspiring overcomers to prepare their hearts, for the day comes quickly, and even now the first rays of light can be seen.

Chapter 9

The Post-Church Age of the Overcomers

In our study of the situation, we find two time cycles that have the greatest relevance to the events at hand. First, the Church Age of 40 Jubilees specifically ended on the day of Pentecost, May 30, 1993. Recall that king Saul, who had been crowned king on the day of wheat harvest, or Pentecost (1 Sam. 12:17), died after ruling 40 years. He was prophetic of the Seven Churches under the anointing of Pentecost in the New Testament. However, when Saul died, his son Ishbosheth became king for a short time over all the tribes of Israel except for the tribe of Judah. Judah broke with the rest of the tribes and crowned David as their king.

Ishbosheth reigned just two years before assassins killed him (2 Sam. 2:10). It appears that Israel was without a king for another five years, until they finally agreed to crown David as their king as well. Hence, David ruled in Hebron over Judah for 7-1/2 years before the other tribes crowned him king over all Israel (2 Sam. 2:11).

We may apply this to our own day, for the end of the Laodicean Church came on May 30, 1993. The death of Ishbosheth occurred two years later at Pentecost (2 Sam. 4:6), which applies to Pentecost, June 4, 1995.

David's coronation, in whatever form it may take, may thus be projected to November 30, 2000 AD, for this is precisely 7-1/2 years after May 30, 1993. Of course, it is too soon to tell if we are to take the "**seven years and six months**" (2 Sam. 2:11) ultra-literally or not. It may actually take place at one of the fall feast days: Trumpets, Jubilee, or Tabernacles.

Secondly, we are dealing also with the fall of Babylon, which appears to be a seven-year event. In Daniel 4 we see that king Nebuchadnezzar had a dream in which he saw a great tree stripped of its branches and chopped down. Daniel interpreted the dream for him, telling him that he (Nebuchadnezzar) was that great tree. He then prophesied the time element in this: **“and let seven times pass over him”** (Dan. 4:16).

This “seven times” was fulfilled in Nebuchadnezzar’s times of madness. It did not actually begin for twelve months (Dan. 4:29), and the Scriptures are vague as to precisely how long he was mad. It only says that **“at the end of the days”** (4:34) his sanity returned to him, and he praised God, recognizing Him as sovereign over all nations, including Babylon. We believe that this is prophetic of a final seven-year period, after which time the political and financial kings of Mystery Babylon will also have to admit that God is sovereign.

We believe this seven years began on November 29, 1993, the 46th anniversary of the Palestinian Resolution in 1947. Seven years later thus falls precisely on November 29, 2000 AD. Perhaps it is no coincidence that the 7-1/2 years from the end of the Church Age ends the next day, November 30, 2000. Essentially these two cycles appear to end together. On November 29 Babylon recognizes God as sovereign, and the next day David is crowned king.

With this broad overview in mind, we encourage our readers to seek God for further understanding and revelation about His purposes in the earth. Perhaps some day we will be able to share in public some details of what we have already seen up to this time. So far we are satisfied that this timetable is indeed accurate. We encourage all to recognize God’s sovereignty and to prepare their hearts to make Jesus king, not only of our own personal lives, but of the nations as well. We encourage a study of the Law to know His will (Rom. 2:18) and of the Prophets to know the timing of His great and marvelous Plan.