

In the Lord's Day

Removed from Man's Day into the Lord's Day

A Study about the Rapture
and Subsequent Events,
Preceding the Tribulation

Arlen L. Chitwood

This book, *In the Lord's Day*, deals with:

- 1) *The time of the resurrection of the dead and translation of the living "in Christ" (commonly called, "the rapture").*
- 2) *Judgment awaiting Christians at Christ's judgment seat, followed by two inseparably related events — a relinquishment of crowns, and the redemption of the inheritance.*

These are the things dealt with in the opening five chapters of the Book of Revelation. And viewing the book as a whole, these opening five chapters provide *a sequence of events* relative to the rapture and beyond which *clearly PRECEDES the beginning of the seven-year Tribulation period on earth.*

The Book of Revelation is *the ONLY book in Scripture* which provides *a comprehensive, continuous coverage of ALL these referenced events together, in the same place.*

The *same* truths concerning these events are taught elsewhere in Scripture, particularly *in Old Testament typology.* But the Book of Revelation is *the ONLY book in Scripture where these events are ALL seen together in a sequence which includes the subsequent Tribulation.*

Not only *MUST* the rapture and events surrounding the judgment seat occur *PRECEDING the Tribulation*, but these events *MUST, according to Revelation chapters one through three, be ALL-INCLUSIVE.*

That is, *ALL Christians (ALL of the dead and the living "in Christ" throughout the entire 2,000-year dispensation) MUST be removed TOGETHER, at the SAME time and place, to APPEAR before Christ in judgment.*

According to these chapters, *there can be NO such thing as a selective removal of Christians from the earth at the time of the rapture; NOR can there be more than one time and place for events surrounding the judgment seat.*

A separation of Christians on the basis of faithfulness will occur, but NOT at the time of the rapture. Rather, this separation will occur at the judgment seat ALONE.

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“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

Knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we persuade men...” (II Cor. 5:10, 11a).

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by
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By the Same Author —

RUTH
ESTHER
BY FAITH
RUN TO WIN
LET US GO ON
MOSES AND JOHN
END OF THE DAYS
DISTANT HOOFBEATS
THE BRIDE IN GENESIS
SO GREAT SALVATION
SEARCH FOR THE BRIDE
GOD'S FIRSTBORN SONS
WE ARE ALMOST THERE
SIGNS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL
SALVATION OF THE SOUL
HAD YE BELIEVED MOSES
THE MOST HIGH RULETH
THE SPIRITUAL WARFARE
THE STUDY OF SCRIPTURE
FROM EGYPT TO CANAAN
MYSTERY OF THE WOMAN
COMING IN HIS KINGDOM
SEVEN, TEN GENERATIONS
REDEEMED FOR A PURPOSE
JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST
THE RAPTURE AND BEYOND
FROM ACTS TO THE EPISTLES
MYSTERIES OF THE KINGDOM
PROPHECY ON MOUNT OLIVET
NEVER AGAIN! OR YES, AGAIN!
THE TIME OF JACOB'S TROUBLE
BROUGHT FORTH FROM ABOVE
ISRAEL — FROM DEATH TO LIFE
JUDE — ACTS OF THE APOSTATES
O SLEEPER! ARISE, CALL...! (JONAH)
THE TIME OF THE END (REVELATION)
MIDDLE EAST PEACE — HOW? WHEN?
SALVATION BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH
MESSAGE IN THE GOSPELS, ACTS, EPISTLES
ISRAEL — WHAT DOES THE FUTURE HOLD?

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FOREWORD

This book, *In the Lord's Day*, presents an overview of that taught in Revelation chapters one through five.

And *two things* often overlooked when studying material from the Book of Revelation, though *BOTH* are clearly stated in the opening verse, are *the SUBJECT of the book* and *HOW the book is structured*.

The Book of Revelation has to do with *an unveiling of the Son, which has been made known a certain way*, through the means stated in the English text (KJV), “signified.” This is simply another way, as through “signs” (a similarly related way), or through the types, that God has made His Word known to man.

And, when studying the Book of Revelation, if individuals would give more thought to the opening verse of the book — relating the subject of the book, along with how the book has been structured — *they would have far, far less trouble with interpretation in the book*.

The word “signified” (v. 1) — “...and he sent and *signified* it by his angel unto his servant John” — relating how the book has been structured, is a translation of the Greek word *semaino*, which is the verb form of the word for “sign” (*semeion*). The Apostle John introduced, opened up, and developed matters in his gospel account through *signs*. And in the Book of Revelation, he introduced, opened up, and developed matters *in a quite similar manner*.

God, throughout His revelation to man, shows *an affinity for the use of types, numbers, signs, and metaphors to make Himself, His plans, and His purposes known*. And *this MUST be recognized*, else man will find himself failing to go beyond the simple letter of Scripture (*cf.* II Cor. 3:6-4:6).

Man, for example, will find himself understanding *Biblical history* but failing to understand the God-designed *typical significance* of that history. Or if *numbers, signs, or metaphors* are used — which they often are — he will find himself failing to understand the God-designed significance of these as well.

At the very outset, God makes it clear that the Book of Revelation has been structured in *a particular manner*, closely related to the manner in which the Spirit had led John to structure his gospel.

The Gospel of John was built around eight signs, taken from among the numerous signs which Jesus had previously performed during His earthly ministry; and, as evident from the revealed purpose for these signs (John 20:30, 31), *they were recorded and directed to the Jewish people during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel* (which occurred between 33 A.D. and about 62 A.D.).

To understand how the word *semaino*, translated “signified,” is used introducing the Book of Revelation, note how John uses this same word three times in his gospel (12:33; 18:32; 21:19). The context leading into each verse provides an illustrative statement which allows that stated in the verse to be understood.

Note the first of these three usages, within context:

“And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me.

This he said, signifying [from *semaino*] what death he should die”
(vv. 32, 33).

Aside from Rev. 1:1 and the three verses in John’s gospel, the only other usages of the word *semaino* in the New Testament are in Acts 11:28; 25:27. And the same thought is set forth through the use of the word in these two passages, though the illustrative statement is inferred in the first usage.

Thus, “signified,” a translation of *semaino*, has to do with making something known through a manner which carries the reader *from a somewhat indirect means to a direct means, using an illustrative statement as a means of explaining a matter*.

This is seen in the Book of Revelation centrally through the use of numerous *numbers* and *metaphors*, though *other illustrative means* are used as well. And all illustrative means of this nature in the book are, they would have to be, in line with the meaning of the word *semaino* and the manner in which this word is used elsewhere in the New Testament.

INTRODUCTION

Material covered in the five chapters of this book, dealt with in the opening five chapters of the Book of Revelation, has to do, centrally, with events pertaining to Christians *AFTER the present dispensation has run its course but BEFORE the Tribulation begins*.

These opening five chapters (the five chapters in this book corresponding to the opening five chapters in the Book of Revelation) have to do with Christians being removed from the earth and appearing before Christ's judgment seat (chs. 1-3), with initial regal actions resulting from that judgment (ch. 4), and with events anticipating the subsequent redemption of the inheritance (ch. 5).

And *ALL of this* anticipates the ensuing Tribulation and the Messianic Era which follows (chs. 6-20a).

The Judgment Seat of Christ

In that coming day when Christians appear before the judgment seat of Christ, "Every man's work shall be made manifest...it shall be revealed by [in] fire." There will be works comparable to "gold, silver, precious stones"; and there will be works comparable to "wood, hay, stubble."

One set of material reveals *works of intrinsic value, which will endure the fire*; but the other set of material reveals *valueless works, which will be burned in the fire*.

Works performed by Christians during the present time can vary a great deal in worth. Such works can be performed under the leadership of the Holy Spirit and redound to the praise, honor, and glory of the Lord; or such works can be performed under the leadership of man and redound to the praise, honor, and glory of man.

At the judgment seat, *ALL will be revealed*; for "the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is."

1) "Works...Revealed by Fire"

Works emanate out of faithfulness to one's calling and bring faith to its proper goal, which will result in the salvation of one's soul (*cf.* James 2:14-26; I Peter 1:5-11).

At the judgment seat, the worth of every man's work in this realm will be revealed; and decisions and determinations emanating out of this judgment will determine every man's position in the coming kingdom (*cf.* Matt. 16:24-27; 24:45-51; 25:14-30; Luke 19:12-27).

"Judgment" on the basis of *works* is alien to the thinking of many Christians, for they have been exposed time and again to a proclamation of salvation by grace through faith apart from works, *unbalanced* by the proclamation of the coming judgment of Christians on the basis of works. The emphasis has been placed almost entirely upon the finished work of Christ at Calvary, with little regard given to Christian living, the coming judgment seat, and the coming kingdom.

Teachings of this nature have centered almost solely around the salvation which we presently possess; and things having to do with the inheritance awaiting Christians, the salvation of the soul, etc., have been removed from their respective contexts and applied to our present salvation.

Ministries centering around this type teaching in the Churches have produced both *confusion* and *complacency* in Christendom.

Then, there is another type widespread teaching in the Churches which recognizes works but has every Christian performing good works.

The reasoning of those who teach along these lines centers around the thought that if a person is really saved he will produce good works; if, on the other hand he doesn't produce good works, this simply shows that he was never really saved in the first place.

Aside from being completely contrary to any Scriptural teaching on the subject, such a teaching produces both an erroneous view of salvation by grace through faith and an erroneous view of issues surrounding the judgment seat of Christ.

IF every Christian produces good works to show that he has been saved, then works have entered into an area where works CANNOT exist.

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work" (Rom. 11:6).

(*"Grace" — that which God is able to do completely apart from human intervention or merit.*)

The presence or absence of works on the part of Christians can have *NO connection whatsoever* with their prior reception of the finished work of Christ. Christ's finished work *ALLOWS* an individual to be placed in the position where *he CAN produce good works*.

There is *NOTHING* in Scripture which teaches that he, of necessity, *WILL produce good works*. Such would be *COMPLETELY CONTRARY to the teaching of salvation by grace through faith apart from works*.

Man's works simply CANNOT enter into salvation by grace at ANY time, either preceding or following salvation.

Relative to eternal salvation, man simply *CANNOT* do anything to:

- 1) *Be saved.*
- 2) *Stay saved.*
- 3) *Show that he has been saved.*

If man could do *ANY one of the three*, salvation would *CEASE* to be by grace through faith, for man's works would have entered into an area where *works of this nature CANNOT exist*.

If it be maintained that every Christian *MUST* produce good works to show that he has been saved, then it *MUST* follow that every Christian would appear at the judgment seat of Christ with works which would "abide" the fire.

Possessing works of this nature, *every Christian would "receive a reward."*

But such a thought is at once seen to be *erroneous* by reference to the text in I Corinthians chapter three. There will be Christians appearing at the judgment seat who will "suffer loss" and "be saved; yet so as by ['through'] fire" (v. 15).

ALL of their works will be burned, but they themselves will "be saved," *i.e., they themselves will be delivered*. And this *deliverance* will occur "through fire."

This *deliverance* at the judgment seat *can have NOTHING to do with eternal salvation*, for all issues surrounding one's eternal salvation, whether during the present time or at the future judgment seat, are *PAST issues* (e.g., Christ's finished work at Calvary, the Spirit's finished work of breathing life into the one having no life, allowing him to pass "from death unto life").

God judged sin in the person of His Son at Calvary, God is satisfied, and the Spirit can breathe life into the one having no life on the basis of this finished work of God's Son.

And this work of the triune Godhead is *a past, finished deliverance* which could *NEVER* be referred to in *the future sense* seen in I Cor. 3:15.

The *deliverance* seen in I Cor. 3:15 is, contextually, *a deliverance out of the fire at the judgment seat*. Though all of the person's works will be burned and he will appear naked in Christ's presence (Rev. 3:17, 18), he himself will not be burned. Rather, he will be delivered — *delivered from being burned with his works*.

But, though he himself will be delivered in this respect, "so as by ["through"] fire," he will be unable to escape the dire consequences which will result from his works being consumed by the fire and his consequent naked appearance.

And there can be *NO deliverance from these consequences*, for there will have to be a "just recompense" — *exact payment for services rendered in the house during the time of the Lord's absence*.

IF the preceding were NOT the case, God would NOT be perfectly just and righteous in His dealings with His household servants.

One-sided views of the judgment seat which maintain that every Christian will appear with good works are little different than the teaching which ignores works.

Confusion and complacency, once again, can ONLY be the ultimate result.

Much of the preceding, erroneous teaching is fostered by a misunderstanding of I Cor. 4:5. This verse in the King James Version reads:

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God."

The problem emanates from both a mistranslation in the text and a noncontextual understanding of the words, "then shall every man have praise of God."

The words "every man" could be better translated "each man"; and the reference is back to *the faithful stewards* in verse two. Faithful

stewards will, individually, receive praise from God; but there is nothing in Scripture which teaches that “every man,” which, apart from the context would also include *unfaithful stewards*, will receive such praise.

To the contrary!

Scripture quite clearly reveals that *BOTH faithful and unfaithful stewards* will appear at the judgment seat, that the judgment seat will be operable in *TWO realms*, and that *faithful stewards ALONE* will receive praise of God.

2) “If Any Man’s Work Abide”

“Rewards” are being reserved for *the faithful ALONE*. This is one side of the judgment seat. Christians have been “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10).

Works of this nature, performed by a Christian exhibiting faithfulness to his calling, will “abide” at the judgment seat. They will be manifested as works comparable to “gold, silver, precious stones” and will endure the fire.

Such works will result in *the Christian receiving a reward and a position with Christ in the kingdom*.

Works which endure the fire will be the type works necessary to bring faith to its proper goal, resulting in the salvation of the Christian’s soul. Following the testing of such works, *the Christian will receive praise from his Lord*.

He will hear his Lord say:

“Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things...” (Matt. 25:21a, 23a).

And he will subsequently be positioned, in *a regal capacity, among those destined to rule as joint-heirs with Christ* (Matt. 24:45-47; 25:19-23; Luke 19:15-19).

3) “If Any Man’s Work Shall Be Burned”

“Suffering loss” is in store for *the unfaithful*. *This is the other side of the judgment seat*.

It is possible for a Christian to appear before the judgment seat of

Christ *WITHOUT* one single good work to his credit. He will possess works, but *NOT* works done under the direction of the Holy Spirit, for the praise, honor, and glory of the Lord. Such works, comparable to “wood, hay, stubble,” will be burned. They will *NOT* endure the fire. But the Christian himself “shall be saved [‘delivered’]; yet so as by [‘through’] fire.”

The presence of works, the absence of works, or the type works *can have NO bearing on his eternal salvation, wrought completely apart from his own works.* He will come out of this judgment, as Lot from Sodom, with nothing to show but escape from the condemnation befalling the unregenerate.

Works consumed by fire will be the type works unable to bring faith to its proper goal, resulting in the loss of the Christian’s soul.

Following the testing of such works, the Christian will be *rebuked* by his Lord. He will hear his Lord say:

“Thou wicked and slothful servant...” (Matt. 25:26a).

Then, that which had been entrusted to him during the time of his Lord’s absence will be taken from him.

He will be *denied a position with Christ in the kingdom*, a position which could have been his had he previously exercised faithfulness in his calling; and he will then be appointed “his portion with the hypocrites.” (Matt. 24:48-51; 25:19, 24-30; Luke 19:15, 20-26).

He will then find himself cast “without,” into the place which Scripture calls, “the outer darkness” (ASV).

In this place there will be “the weeping and the gnashing of teeth [an Eastern expression denoting deep grief]” (ASV) on the part of Christians who realize too late that they could have occupied one of the proffered positions with Christ in His kingdom.

Their rights as firstborn sons — the rights of primogeniture — will have been forfeited; and they, as Esau, will *lift up their voices and weep.*

Receiving Rewards, Suffering Loss

Receiving rewards or suffering loss at the judgment seat of Christ are grave issues about which most Christians seem to know very little, or, for that matter, appear to even be concerned.

But such will have no bearing upon the fact that there is a day coming in the not too-distant future when every Christian *MUST* render an account to his Lord for the “things done in his body” (II Cor. 5:10).

Events of that day will come to pass at the end of the present dispensation, immediately preceding the Messianic Era; *issues of that day* will surround a review of the works performed by Christians in view of their receiving rewards or suffering loss; the *purpose of that day*, aside from providing a “just recompense,” will be to make decisions and determinations concerning Christians occupying positions with Christ in His 1,000-year rule from the heavens over the earth.

Everything is moving toward that 1,000-year Messianic Era when God’s Son will reign supreme.

Man’s Day, in conjunction with *man’s rule* over the earth under Satan, is *about to end*; and the Lord’s Day, in conjunction with *Christ’s rule* over the earth with His co-heirs, is *about to commence*.

1

Caught into His Presence (I)

Removed from the Earth into the Heavens

“John, who am also your brother, and companion in tribulation, and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the Word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.

I was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day, and heard behind me a great voice, as of a trumpet,

Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man...” (Rev. 1:9-13a).

John was on the Isle of Patmos, in the Aegean Sea (a northern branch of the Mediterranean Sea lying between Greece and Turkey), for a specifically stated purpose: “for [‘because of’] the Word of God, and for [‘because of’] the testimony of Jesus Christ” (v. 9; cf. v. 2).

John was the one whom God had chosen to receive and record “the revelation [‘the unveiling’] of Jesus Christ” (v. 1), further described in verses two and nine as “the word of God” and “the testimony of Jesus Christ.” And John had been taken to the Isle of Patmos *for this specific purpose*.

The Isle of Patmos was about ten miles long and six miles wide, and there was a penal colony on this island in John's day.

The existence of this penal colony has given rise to a widely-held teaching that John had been imprisoned and exiled to this island by a Roman ruler because of his proclamation of the Word of God (usually understood as Domitian [who ruled from 81 A.D. to 96 A.D.]; and this Roman ruler is cited because of the widely accepted late date for the writing of the Book of Revelation).

The beginning of this teaching that John had been imprisoned and exiled to the Isle of Patmos can be traced back to at least the latter part of the second century, extending into the third century, a century or more after the Book of Revelation had been written.

This was taught by several of the early Church fathers during this time (Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, and Eusebius all taught this).

And this same teaching has been passed down, taught through the centuries, and carried into modern times.

The teaching that John had been imprisoned and exiled to this island in the Aegean Sea though has *no basis in fact*. It is strictly *tradition*, and this teaching undoubtedly arose and has continued to be accepted down through the centuries because of a misunderstanding of the stated purpose for John being on this island, given in verse nine of the opening chapter.

It is specifically stated that he was on this island for *ONE purpose*: "for ['because of'] the Word of God, and for ['because of'] the testimony of Jesus Christ."

John, being on this island *because of the Word*, takes one back to that previously stated concerning the content of the book, in verses one and two.

John was on the Isle of Patmos *for a purpose which he himself provides*, as the Spirit moved him to write. He was there "because of" *the revelation (the unveiling) of Jesus Christ* (the manner in which the book opens, introducing the subject matter of the book), which is declared to be "the word of God" and "the testimony of Jesus Christ" (v. 2; cf. John 1:1, 14; Rev. 19:10b, 13).

And the thought behind "because of," contextually, would have to be understood in the sense of John being there to receive

and record God bringing *to completion all that He desires man to know and understand concerning His Son* — “the revelation [‘the unveiling’] of Jesus Christ.”

God appears to have an affinity for taking individuals whom He has chosen *to isolated or out-of-the-way places to receive His revelation.*

Moses wrote the Pentateuch while in the desert; *David* wrote a number of Psalms while out in the hills being pursued by Saul; *Ezekiel* wrote from a place of exile, from Babylon; and *Paul* was seemingly taken to a place in Arabia, then evidently into heaven, to receive the revelation of the mystery, while later writing epistles from prisons.

Thus, it should not be thought strange at all to see God removing John from surroundings which the outside world offered and taking him to the remote Isle of Patmos to receive the capstone for all Scripture. In fact, something of this nature should be thought of far more as *expected* rather than strange.

But why *this particular island*? The answer is probably in its *location*. The Isle of Patmos, along with being a place removed from the outside world, was located out in a part of the Mediterranean Sea, with the “sea” being used in Scripture to depict *the Gentile nations*.

The Book of Revelation is first of all about *the Church*, as events transpire throughout the dispensation, with the Church on earth among the nations; and it is about events which will transpire once the Church has been removed from the nations into the heavens (chs. 1-5, 19a, 20a).

And the book, in a larger respect, is also about *Israel and the nations* during the Tribulation; and the book continues with that which will occur once Israel has been brought to the place of repentance (chs. 5-20a).

Thus, to see John removed from his surroundings and taken to an isolated, out-of-the-way place located out in the sea can only be seen as quite appropriate for the subject matter at hand. It can be seen as one of the many ways *significance* always surrounds acts of a triune God.

I Became in Spirit

Verse ten should literally read, “I became in spirit in the Lord’s

day..." And John was not only removed in this manner from the Isle of Patmos into heaven but he was also moved forward in time as well.

John was moved forward to a time at *the END of the present dispensation*.

(John's removal from the Isle of Patmos into heaven is simply stated to have been "in spirit." Chapter four [vv. 1, 2], depicting the same scene again, adds information.

And whether this was an actual bodily removal or a removal by means of visions is unrevealed and immaterial to the literality of and teachings drawn from the subject matter at hand [*cf.* Dan. 7:1, 2; 8:1, 2; 10:1].

Also note that Paul, after he had been taken into what was seemingly Arabia, in like manner, was also evidently removed into heaven to receive the revelation of the mystery [*cf.* II Cor. 12:1-7; Gal. 1:11-18; Eph. 3:1-6].)

John, once removed from the Isle of Patmos into heaven, was shown things which would occur relative to the Church (judgment, with a view to the impending Messianic Era) and corresponding things relative to the transfer of the government of the earth from angels to man (chs. 1b-4; *cf.* Heb. 2:5).

And he was then shown things preparatory to the redemption of the inheritance, which had to do with both *heavenly* and *earthly* spheres of the kingdom about to exist under *Christ, His co-heirs, Israel, and the nations* (ch. 5).

John was then moved farther forward in time, into and through seven subsequent years (Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week, the Tribulation).

And he was shown things which would transpire on earth relative to Israel and the nations during and immediately following these seven years (chs. 6-19).

And during this time, not only would "the inheritance" be redeemed *through judgment* (the judgments of the Tribulation) but "the bride" previously shown forth at the judgment seat *would become the Son's wife*, allowing the Son to be in a position to reign (*cf.* Gen. 2:18).

(According to the manner in which God established matters in the beginning relative to man holding the sceptre in the stead of Satan and his angels, a sovereign cannot reign apart from possessing a consort queen [Gen. 1:26-28; 2:18-24]. The man and woman must reign *together*, seated on the throne as *ONE complete being*.

Thus, God's Son today is *NOT* in a position to assume the sceptre and reign. He *MUST* have a wife to ascend the throne with Him, a wife which, in the antitype of Eve in Gen. 2, is not only *part of His body* but *will complete Him* [cf. Eph. 1:22, 23; 5:23, 30; Heb. 2:10]. *And the Son will NOT possess a wife in the manner seen in the type UNTIL the end of the coming Tribulation* [cf. Ruth 3, 4].

A knowledge of this fact will address, resolve, and put to rest widely-held false teachings concerning a present existence of some type mystery form of the kingdom in which the Son is presently reigning; or, others become even more specific and see the Son already seated on David's throne within this purported mystery form of the kingdom.

The preceding may sound strange to those properly instructed in things pertaining to the kingdom [cf. Matt. 13:52]. And so it should.

Strange though or not, all of the preceding is widely held in Christian circles today, even taught in numerous Bible schools and seminaries. But the one Biblical fact concerning *the necessity* of the man and the woman ascending the throne *together* will, *ALONE*, show the fallacy of such teachings, for Christ *DOES NOT* presently have a wife to ascend the throne with Him.

Aside from the preceding, though there are two anointed Kings in relation to the earth today [Christ and Satan], as there were two anointed kings in Israel during the days of David and Saul, *ONLY One* can hold the sceptre at any given time.

In the type, Saul held the sceptre *UNTIL* he was put down and his crown taken and given to David. *ONLY then* did David and his faithful men take the sceptre and reign in Israel [cf. I Sam. 31:1-6; II Sam. 1:4-10; 5:3].

And matters *can only be EXACTLY the same in the antitype*. Satan will hold the sceptre *UNTIL* he is put down and his crown taken and given to Christ. *ONLY then* will Christ and His faithful co-heirs take the sceptre and reign over the earth.)

Then, beyond events of the Tribulation, John was moved even farther forward in time. He was moved through events immediately

following the Tribulation, extending into the Messianic Era itself (ch. 20a). After that, revelation continues with John being shown events which will occur at the end of the Messianic Era relative to Satan, his angels, and his followers among men on earth, along with the judgment of the unsaved dead (ch. 20b).

And that which John was shown doesn't stop with events at the end of the Messianic Era. Rather, John was moved even farther forward in time and shown things having to do with the eternal ages beyond the Messianic Era, when man will hold the sceptre relative to a rule extending beyond this earth, out into the universe itself (chs. 21, 22).

And a person being moved into another time and place and being shown events occurring during this future time, in this place, is not something new in Scripture. Ezekiel, in Babylonian captivity, was moved not only to another location (to Jerusalem) but was moved both back in time and forward in time.

Ezekiel, through visions, was removed from Babylon, placed in Jerusalem, and shown things which had occurred both before the captivity and which were yet to occur (Ezek. 8-11).

The captivity took place in stages, beginning about 605 B.C., but the Glory did not depart until almost twenty years later, in 586 B.C.

Ezekiel had been among the early captives transported to Babylon, and it was around the middle of this period (about 595 B.C.) when the Spirit entered into Ezekiel (Ezek. 2:2), began showing him things (2:3ff), "lifted" him "up between the earth and the heaven," and carried him "in the visions of God to Jerusalem" (8:3).

Ezekiel, at first, was moved *back in time*, allowing him to see the abominations existing among the Jewish people which had resulted in the captivity. Then he was moved *forward in time*, allowing him to see the end result — the Jewish people not only in captivity but the resulting departure of the Glory (chs. 8-11).

"Time," rather than being a constant, is *relative*. Not only is this revealed in Scripture but man has been allowed to discover and see this even in his secular science.

This is part of the theory of relativity which Albert Einstein (a Jew) was allowed to discover and demonstrate through the science of mathematics (showing a small part of that which God

had previously established through His unchangeable laws in physics and mathematics).

And, if God so chooses (which He has done at times), He can take a man, place him in another location, and move him either back in time or forward in time in that location. Man can't operate in this sphere, but the One Who designed and created all of this can.

Then, within the scope of God doing this, *one thing* which guarantees the future occurrence of that seen throughout the Book of Revelation is the fact that, in one respect, all of that seen in this book *has already occurred*. And changes can't take place in that which has already occurred.

Time and Place into Which John Was Taken

John was removed from the Isle of Patmos and was not only transported into the Lord's Day but was moved forward in time as well. John was removed from Man's Day on earth and transported into the Lord's Day in heaven (or, *the Day of the Lord*, as it is referred to numerous other places in Scripture). And he was moved forward in time to the end of the present dispensation, to the time of the removal of the Church preceding the Tribulation.

In relation to the earth, Man's Day will last for 6,000 years — extending from the creation of man to the end of the Tribulation. Then, when Man's Day has been brought to a close, the Lord's Day will begin.

But this has to do with Man's Day and the Lord's Day in relation to *the earth*. Moving outside the earth, a person would move outside the bounds of Man's Day and move into a day which has always existed — *the Lord's Day*.

Christ, for example, while on earth said, "Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and he saw it, and was glad" (John 8:56; cf. Mark 12:27). Abraham, removed from Man's Day on earth, found himself in a place separate from Man's Day. He found himself in *the Lord's Day*.

And *EXACTLY the same thing* is seen concerning the removal of the Church at the end of the present dispensation in both I Thess. 4:13-5:4 and Rev. 1:10-20.

If man is removed from the earth at any time during Man's

Day he finds himself in *the Lord's Day*. This is why Abraham found himself in the Lord's Day in time past, and this is why the Church, once removed from the earth at the time of the rapture, will find itself in *the Lord's Day* as well.

Man's Day and the Lord's Day **CANNOT** run concurrently on earth. Man's Day, in this respect, has to run its course and be brought to a close before the Lord's Day can begin on earth.

(Any thought that the expression, "the Lord's day," in Rev. 1:10 is referencing *a time other than the Day of the Lord* is really not open for discussion. Such a thought is **COMPLETELY** out of line with both the context and related Scripture.

The widely-held teaching that "the Lord's day" in this verse is a reference to the first day of the week, to Sunday, finds **NO** support anywhere in Scripture. "Sunday" is **NEVER** referred to as *the Lord's Day* in Scripture [unless this verse is the exception, which, contextually, it evidently isn't].

As will later be shown, this section of the Book of Revelation parallels I Thess. 4:13-5:4, where the expression "the day of the Lord" is used.

In this same respect, also note Ps. 118:24,

"This is *the day* which the Lord hath made; we will rejoice and be glad in it."

This verse is often quoted out of context and applied to *a day* during the present time, during Man's Day.

This verse though is set within a Messianic passage and has to do with the future Messianic Era when the Lord's Day will replace Man's Day on earth. And any application to present time would have to involve a secondary application of the verse.)

It is commonly taught that either all or part of the coming Tribulation (Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week [Dan. 9:24-27], the last seven years of Man's Day) forms the beginning of the Lord's Day. Such a teaching has Man's Day and the Lord's Day existing *at the SAME time on earth during the last seven years of Man's Day*.

Not only is this **NOT possible**, and not only is this **NOT taught** anywhere in Scripture, but Scripture teaches *just the opposite* relative to the timing of the beginning of the Lord's Day on earth.

In the Book of Joel, following the Day of the Lord being intro-

duced in connection with judgment befalling the nations (1:15; 2:1), the timing of the beginning of the Day of the Lord is seen.

In Joel 2:27-3:21, the beginning of the Day of the Lord on earth is clearly seen to be *FOLLOWING Christ's return to the earth at the end of Daniel's Seventieth Week, AFTER Man's Day has run its course.*

Joel's prophecy, in actuality, *CANNOT be understood after any other fashion.*

(A place where many go seeking to show that the last seven years of Man's Day, Daniel's Seventieth Week, is referred to in Scripture as *the Day of the Lord* is I Thess. 5:2-4. They attempt to make these verses relate to the unsaved remaining on earth following the removal of the Church, seen at the end of the preceding chapter [vv. 13-18].

But, understanding these verses both contextually and in the light of other Scripture [e.g., Joel's prophecy], it is quite evident that *this CANNOT be the case.* These verses, continuing from the previous chapter, have to do with Christians removed from Man's Day and placed in the Lord's Day at the end of the present dispensation.

Also, many seek to do this same thing with Rev. 1:10, saying that John was removed into heaven and shown events of the Tribulation, which they relate to the mention of the Lord's Day in this verse. Such individuals seek to teach that the Lord's Day in chapter one relates to events of the Tribulation, beginning in chapter six.

But exactly the same thing can be said here that was said about the incorrect understanding of I Thess. 5:2-4. Contextually, and in the light of other Scripture [again *ref.* Joel's prophecy], *NEITHER can be understood as they are often taught.*

Revelation 1:10, contextually, has to do with Christians removed from the earth *at the end of the present dispensation and placed in the Lord's Day BEFORE the Tribulation begins on earth*, for this is the scene presented in the verses immediately following [vv. 11-20].

THEN, events of the Tribulation, subsequently seen beginning in chapter six, *DO NOT occur during the Lord's Day. Rather, they occur during the last seven years of Man's Day.*

In this respect, "the Lord's day," seen in connection with John's removal from the earth, *could have NOTHING to do with time during the Tribulation.*

Again, John found himself in the Lords's Day at a time *BEFORE the Tribulation began on earth.*

And, if the Lord's Day is understood correctly, John would have remained in the Lord's Day, in heaven, when moved through time not only preceding but during and following the Tribulation, continuing into the Millennium.

Events seen during the complete time following John being removed from the earth into heaven occur during the Lord's Day.)

That Which John Saw

John being removed from the earth into heaven foreshadows the removal of the Church at the end of the dispensation.

Not only was John removed from Man's Day into the Lord's Day but *a trumpet* is seen connected with this removal in both Rev. 1:10 and Rev. 4:1, where the same scene is repeated (for reasons which are discussed in Chapter IV of this book).

And this is in complete keeping with I Thess. 4:13-5:9, where Christians are removed from the earth in connection with a trumpet (4:16), being removed from Man's Day into the Lord's Day (5:2-4).

John, through his experiences, depicting the Church being removed into heaven at the end of the dispensation, then relates things about the appearance of the Church in Christ's presence in that day.

John sees "seven golden candlesticks," and in the midst of the seven candlesticks he sees *Christ in all His Glory*, described as One Whose "countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength" (v. 16); or, as described by Paul when He saw Christ enswathed in this same covering of Glory, as he traveled from Jerusalem to Damascus, "above the brightness of the ['midday'] sun" (Acts 26:13).

The "seven candlesticks" are stated to be *the seven Churches* (named in v. 11, with details provided about each in chs. 2, 3). The number "seven" is one of five numbers used in Scripture to show *completeness* in one form or another (the others are *three, ten, twelve, and forty*).

The number "seven" shows *the completeness of that which is in view*, and this is a number used particularly concerning the judgments seen occurring throughout a large part of the book beginning in chapter six.

There are *seven seals, seven trumpets, and seven vials*, showing *God's complete judgment upon Israel and the nations during this period*.

This is what it will take (God's complete judgment, occurring in the manner presented in this book) to bring Israel to *the place of repentance*, which will, in turn, allow numerous necessary events to occur prior to the ushering in of the Messianic Era.

All seven Churches seen in Christ's presence at this time depict *the complete Church* being removed from the earth at the time of the rapture. The Church in Philadelphia (which had kept *the word of Christ's patience*) and the Church in Laodicea (which is described as "*wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*") are seen in Christ's presence *TOGETHER following the rapture, BOTH awaiting the same thing — judgment, with a view to the Messianic Era*.

It is widely but erroneously taught that only part of the Church (the faithful) will be removed at the time of the rapture (an event which those teaching along these lines usually see occurring before the Tribulation), with the remaining Christians left behind to go through either part or all of the Tribulation (as to whether it is *part* or *all* depends on who is doing the teaching; this false teaching takes numerous forms).

As any corruption of Biblical doctrine, erroneous teachings concerning the rapture emanate from a failure to begin with the Old Testament types and properly understand these types in the light of their New Testament antitypes.

Beginning with the types and progressing in a correct manner from that point, *it would NOT be possible to teach a selective-type rapture from Scripture*.

And the preceding would be true of ANY Biblical doctrine.

To PROPERLY deal with ANY Biblical doctrine, one MUST begin with the Old Testament types, PROPERLY understand these types, and THEN move on into the New Testament antitypes and see the proper relationship between the types and the antitypes.

IF Christians would do this, there would be FAR more uniformity of interpretation of Scripture throughout Christendom.

God has interwoven types throughout Biblical history for an *EVIDENT* reason. They are there *to help man properly understand the antitypes*.

And any Christian ignoring the types is *NOT* only failing to study Scripture after the manner in which God structured His Word *BUT* he is doing this to his own peril and to the peril of any to whom he might minister.

The importance of correctly studying Scripture after the fashion in which it has been structured CANNOT be overemphasized.

(Note that ignoring the types is actually FAR MORE than simply failing to study the Word after the manner in which it has been structured.

God structured His Word many different ways [Heb. 1:1, 2]; and types have to do with one of those ways, which, apart from, the Word would be *incomplete and could not be properly understood, as God would have man understand His revelation.*

And ANY ONE of the different ways God has structured His Word is NO MORE or NO LESS important than ANY ONE of the other ways that He has structured this Word.

Thus, ignoring the types is simply ignoring a part of God's revealed Word [as would be the case through similarly handling the Word in ANY of the other different ways that it has been structured.

In this instance, it is NOT ignoring what some might consider a minor or even a non-existent part of the Word. Rather, it is ignoring a MAJOR part of the Word, a part which God designed to OPEN other parts of His Word to an individual's understanding.

Then, note something underlying ALL of the preceding:

In ANY and ALL Biblical studies, to lay proper foundations, an individual MUST begin in Genesis, moving forward from there. ALL of the unchangeable foundations can be found in Moses.

And Genesis, as well, is where the types begin, continuing through Moses into books beyond. In this respect, the types are simply an integral part of the unchangeable foundations; and these foundations CANNOT be properly understood apart from viewing Scripture in its COMPLETE, God-designed structure.

And, that which man too often does in the preceding respect, will address the MAJOR reason for the "WHY" of ALL existing confusion in Christian circles today, beginning with the simple message of salvation by grace.)

2

Caught into His Presence (II)

That Seen and Heard in the Heavens

“And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks;

And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.

His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow; and his eyes were as a flame of fire;

And his feet like unto fine brass, as if they burned in a furnace; and his voice as the sound of many waters.

And he had in his right hand seven stars: and out of his mouth went a sharp twoedged sword: and his countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength.

And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last:

I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore. Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.

Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter” (Rev. 1:12-19).

Everything about the revealed identity and description of Christ in Rev. 1:12-18 is both *Messianic* and *judgmental* in nature.

God’s dispensational work relative to the Church is presented as *COMPLETE at this time*. The Spirit will have *completed* His 2,000-year search for a bride for God’s Son; and *the complete Church* (shown by the seven candlesticks) — *ALL Christians, both the resurrected and the ones living at that time* — *will have been removed FROM Man’s Day on earth and placed IN the Lord’s Day in heaven*.

Everything, from this point forward, not only moves beyond the Spirit's work of procuring a bride for the Son but it also moves beyond Christ's work as High Priest on behalf of Christians — works performed SOLELY with and for Christians during the present dispensation.

And since Christ's high priestly work on behalf of Christians CANNOT exist beyond the present dispensation — beyond the time Christians are removed into the heavens (as seen in Revelation chapter one), bringing the dispensation to a close — the popular view which depicts Christ as High Priest in Rev. 1:12-18, rather than Judge, CANNOT possibly be correct.

Rather, matters at this point can ONLY have to do with Christ's future work as JUDGE, which will occur after the dispensation has been completed but preceding the Messianic Era.

And this is EXACTLY how matters are clearly presented in the latter part of this first chapter:

The COMPLETE Church is seen in Christ's presence, awaiting judgment, with a view to the Messianic Era.

The Son of Man

With the Church in Christ's presence, in the Lord's Day, Christ is introduced in Rev. 1:13a by the title, "Son of man." That which follows this introductory title in verses 13b-16 is a description of the "Son of man" as He will appear in that coming day after the Church has been removed from Man's Day on earth and placed in Christ's presence in the Lord's Day in heaven.

"Son of man" is a Messianic title, first seen in Scripture in Ps. 8:4, then in Dan. 7:13. Both of these Old Testament verses are set within Messianic passages and establish, in an unchangeable fashion, EXACTLY how the title MUST be understood throughout the eighty-eight times it appears in the New Testament.

The title MUST be understood in the New Testament after EXACTLY the SAME manner in which it was previously introduced in the Old Testament.

That is to say, after being introduced as a Messianic title in the Old Testament, "Son of man" MUST be understood as a Messianic title throughout its usage in the New Testament.

This is simply one of the many ways in which God has structured His Word, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture.

The title appears *eighty-four times throughout the gospel accounts, where Christ used the title numerous times referring to Himself.*

Then, outside the gospel accounts in the New Testament, the title is only used four times — Acts 7:56 (Stephen, identifying Christ through using this title, infuriated the Jews to the point that they killed him); Heb. 2:6 (a quotation from Ps. 8:4); Rev. 1:13; 14:14.

Christ used the title in Luke 19:10 to describe *His mission* at the time of His first coming — “to seek and to save that which was lost” (a Messianic title associated, contextually, with salvation for the Jewish people in relation to the proffered kingdom).

The title is used in connection with *Christ's betrayal, death, and resurrection* in Matt. 12:40; 20:18; 26:2 (note that salvation provided through Christ's finished work at Calvary is for a purpose; “salvation” *has to do with man ultimately being placed back in the position for which he was created, which will be realized in the Messianic Era*).

It is used pertaining to events surrounding *Christ's second advent* in Matt. 24:27-44; Luke 12:40 (events surrounding Christ's return, with a view to the Messianic Era).

And it is used relative to the Father having committed *all judgment* to the Son in John 5:22-27 (judgment such as that of Christians at Christ's judgment seat, with a view to the Messianic Era).

The oft-use of the title, “Son of man,” throughout Christ's earthly ministry at the time of His first coming would serve to illustrate a little-appreciated fact. *EVERYTHING* surrounding His first coming — His birth, His ministry to Israel, His death, burial, resurrection, and His ascension — had *Messianic ramifications*.

John 1:11 would serve to illustrate the point in one fashion:

“He came unto his own [neuter in Gk. text, *His Own things*], and his own [masculine in Gk. text, *His Own people, the Jewish people*] received him not.”

His Own things had to do with those things associated with the title, “Son of man.”

It had to do with His being born “King of the Jews” (Matt. 2:2).

It had to do with *the message* proclaimed throughout His

earthly ministry, a message to the Jewish people pertaining to *the kingdom* (Matt. 4:17-25; 10:5-8; Luke 10:1ff).

It had to do with the throne of David (Luke 1:31-33; cf. II Sam. 7:12-16; Zech. 6:12, 13).

It had to do with the title placed over His head at the time of His crucifixion (Matt. 27:37; Mark 15:26; Luke 23:38; John 19:19).

And it had to do with the message which He proclaimed following His resurrection, preceding His ascension (Luke 24:25-27, 44; Acts 1:3).

Then note Christ's question and the disciples' response in this same respect in Matt. 16:13-16:

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?

And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets.

He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?

And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."

The reference to "Christ" in Peter's response had to do with acknowledging Jesus as *the Messiah*, the One Who would rule and reign; and the reference to "Son" had to do with *His firstborn status*.

He was God's firstborn Son, the One Who would exercise the rights of primogeniture (kingly, priestly, and double portion rights), all carrying *Messianic ramifications* in complete keeping with the titles "Messiah" and "Son of man."

Peter had acknowledged the Son of Man's true identity — the One Who would rule and reign as the great King-Priest over the double portion of the Father's goods, in both heavenly and earthly spheres of the kingdom.

And Peter's statement prompted Christ to respond by saying:

"...Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven (v. 17b).

In Revelation chapter one, the Spirit moved John to introduce Christ as *JUDGE* through calling attention to His Messianic title.

Then the Spirit moved John to describe the “Son of man” as He will appear in that coming day.

And this is *the person which ALL Christians will one day see, to be introduced by this same Messianic title, Who will be seen EXACTLY as described in the account.*

(Events of that coming day cannot possibly occur after any other fashion than seen in Revelation chapter one, for John, having been moved forward into that future day and time, has already seen these things occur.

And NO change can take place in that which has already occurred.)

And the “Son of man,” as well, is the person Who will subsequently return to the earth at the complete end of Man’s Day in order to bring all things portended by this title to pass, concluded by the ushering in of the Messianic Era (*cf.* Rev. 19b-20a).

1) Manner in Which Clothed

Christ, as “Son of man,” is seen “clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps [‘breasts’] with a golden girdle” (v. 13b).

This garment could describe the type clothing worn by either *a priest or a judge*. And the introductory title, “Son of man,” could easily relate to either, for there is really no realm of Christ’s ministry at any point in time that does not, after some fashion, have for its *GOAL the Messianic Era*.

It matters not whether events during past, present, or future time are being dealt with (future time preceding the Messianic Era), *ALL of God’s work* from the very beginning in Genesis chapter one has *one GOAL in view*.

ALL work (restorative work) throughout the six days in this chapter — which foreshadows *ALL work* (restorative work) throughout the six days, the 6,000 years of Man’s Day — has *one GOAL in view*. *And that is clearly set forth in this opening section of Scripture, establishing a foundation upon which ALL subsequent Scripture rests.*

The seventh day, the Sabbath, a day of rest, followed six days of restorative work in the opening thirty-four verses of Scripture.

And, in that which this opening section of Scripture foreshadows, a seventh day, a seventh 1,000-year period — the Sabbath rest

awaiting the people of God (Heb. 4:4-9), the Messianic Era — will follow six days of restorative work, 6,000 years of restorative work.

Thus, the title “Son of man” could be used of Christ relative to His ministry either as *High Priest* or as *Judge*, allowing this title to be used of Christ relative to work both present and future.

As *High Priest*, performing a work solely for Christians, Christ is providing a present cleansing for the “many sons” whom He is about to bring “unto glory” (Heb. 2:10).

He is providing a cleansing for all Christians who avail themselves of that being provided, which would be seen particularly in matters surrounding His bride, for whom the Spirit is presently searching (*cf.* Gen. 24:1ff; John 13:8-11; I John 1:5-10).

And this is a work which, as all His works preceding the Messianic Era, has *the Messianic Era in view*.

As *JUDGE* in a future day, all Christians will stand in His presence to render an account. And the Spirit’s work during the present dispensation will, exactly as seen in the type in Gen. 24, be shown to have been successful.

The works of Christians will be tried “by [‘in’] fire.” And through decisions and determinations at the judgment seat, numerous Christians will be shown qualified to be among those comprising that part of Christ’s body which will not only be revealed as His bride but complete the Son, allowing Him to reign (*cf.* I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11; Heb. 2:10).

(Exactly as in the type, the second Man, the last Adam will have a bride taken from His body which, when presented back to Him will provide a *completeness* not heretofore existing, allowing Him to ascend the throne — the man and the woman together — as one complete being.)

Though both the title “Son of man” and the description of Christ in “a garment down to the foot” could relate to or describe Christ as either *High Priest* or *Judge*, two things in the text show that *ONLY the latter* can possibly be in view.

First, note the timing of the scene. Events depicted, contextually, can occur *ONLY beyond the present dispensation*. And as previously shown, *Christ’s ministry as High Priest is for Christians at a particular time, during time covered by the present dispensation, NOT beyond.*

Thus, the scene CANNOT possibly have to do with Christ's high priestly work.

Second, the girdle is seen about Christ's breasts, which is the position of the girdle on the dress of a judge, NOT a priest.

A priest wore the girdle about his waist, and would often use the girdle to tuck things into (e.g., a towel, parts of his priestly robe) as he went about his work.

This is the apparent scene when Christ girded himself with a towel and washed His disciples' feet in John chapter thirteen, foreshadowing His future priestly work on behalf of Christians.

(Note in Rev. 15:6 that the seven angels having the seven last plagues [the concluding judgments during the Tribulation] are each clothed in "pure and white linen" and are girded with "golden girdles" about their breasts.

The scene is one of *judgment*, and the girdles are seen in their proper place for this type activity.)

2) Descriptive Characteristics

The description of the One seen in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, following His identifying title ("Son of man") and the description of His dress, begins with a statement which can only refer to both *His longevity and holiness* — "His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow" (v. 14a). The One Who has always existed and always will exist, the One without beginning or ending (John 1:1, 2, 14), the One without sin Who judged sin at Calvary (II Cor. 5:21), is about to judge Christians relative to works (I Cor. 3:11-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11).

It is common in Scripture to introduce a member of the God-head through the means seen here, through stating something characteristic of the person.

Note, for example, how the prayer often referred to as "the Lord's prayer" in Matt. 6:9-13 begins: "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name" (v. 9b). The Father is addressed, and a characterizing statement about the Father follows. Then the subject of the prayer begins: "Thy kingdom come..." (v. 10a).

Or, note how each of the seven letters to the Churches begins in Revelation chapters two and three. Each begins with a descriptive statement concerning Christ, taken either directly from chapter

one or from that portended by the things stated in this chapter. Only then does the subject matter of each epistle begin.

And, as in Matt. 6:9-13, after one statement concerning a member of the Godhead in Rev. 1:14 ("His head and his hairs were white like wool, as white as snow"), the text then goes immediately into the subject matter at hand — *judgment*.

The One in the midst of the seven candlesticks is seen having eyes "as a flame of fire," feet "like unto fine brass," a voice "as the sound of many waters," a sharp two-edged sword coming from "his mouth," and a countenance described "as the sun shining in his strength."

"Fire," "brass," and "a sword" all speak of *different aspects of judgment*. "Fire" and "brass" are seen relative to *a judgment for sin in the tabernacle ministry in Israel*. Fire burned on the altar in the courtyard in connection with sacrifices, and both the altar and the laver (also in the courtyard) were constructed of brass. This is where sin was judged through sacrifices and washings.

Then note the use of "a sword" in *a judgmental scene at the time of Christ's return* in Rev. 19:15.

During Christ's earthly ministry, on one occasion the Pharisees and chief priests sent men to take Him and bring Him into their presence. But the men returned empty-handed, saying, "Never man spake like this man" (John 7:32, 45, 46).

On a subsequent occasion, when Judas led a band of men to take Christ, the men were caused *to fall backward to the ground* at the sound of His voice when He identified Himself by saying, "I am he [*lit.*, 'I Am']" (John 18:3-8).

(The correct translation of Jesus' response in John 18:5, 6, 8 is "I Am," not "I am he," identifying Himself with the God of the O.T. in Ex. 3:14.

And there is a repeated emphasis on the pronoun, "I." Brought over into English, the response would be similar to saying, "I Myself, I Am.")

And Peter experienced Christ's piercing eyes *after he had, three times, denied the One Whom, only a short time earlier, he had emphatically declared that he would NEVER deny* (Matt. 26:35; Luke 22:33).

It is recorded in Luke 22:61, following this triad of denials, "And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter..." And it is evident from the text that *Peter FULLY observed and experienced the Lord's actions*.

The word for “look” in the Greek text is not just the regular word for “look” (*blepo*). Rather, it is an intensified form of this word (*emlepo*). Christ didn’t just look at Peter. He looked into Peter’s eyes in a manner which *penetrated his very being*. And Peter knew it, *he experienced it*, which caused him *to go out and weep bitterly*.

Every Christian in that coming day will stand before Christ as *JUDGE*, with His piercing eyes, “as a flame of fire,” and His voice, “as the sound of many waters.”

And Peter’s reaction to Christ’s piercing and penetrating look in a past day will be the experience of numerous disobedient Christians in a future day, causing them to do *EXACTLY* the same thing which Peter did — *go out and weep bitterly*.

Then, as if that will not be enough, His countenance, *with a body enswathed in a covering of glory*, will be “as the sun shineth in his strength” (v. 16); and judgment meted out will consist of *completely righteous decisions and determinations by the One Who has existed from eternity, identified with the God of the Old Testament*.

Seven Stars, Seven Candlesticks

Christ is seen holding *seven stars* in His right hand as He stands in the midst of *seven candlesticks*. He holds one and walks in the midst of the other.

And that which the metaphors are used to represent is clearly stated in the closing words of chapter one, immediately prior to the seven short epistles to the seven Churches in chapters two and three:

“The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are *the angels of the seven Churches*: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are *the seven Churches*” (v. 20).

The Book of Revelation is filled with angelic activity, and there is *NO reason* to think that *these seven angels* represent anything other than *angels*. They are specifically stated to be *angels of Churches*, and in chapters two and three, each epistle is addressed to *the angel of a particular Church*.

This would be in perfect keeping with the reference to angels in Heb. 1:14:

“Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation [*lit.*, ...‘to minister for the sake of the ones about to inherit salvation’].”

And note something about the seven epistles in chapters two and three. The things in these two chapters form a continuation from chapter one.

And though it is evident that *a history of Christendom* is shown through activity in seven Churches existing in the first century at the time John wrote, the epistles, in their contextual setting, can only show *more particularly things future* — *things about the judgment seat, continuing from chapter one.*

Each epistle is structured *EXACTLY the same way:*

- 1) *I know thy works.*
- 2) *A call to repentance, or to heed the Lord's command.*
- 3) *Then, an overcomer's promise.*

That dealt with at the judgment seat will be 1) *works*, which will show whether those being judged 2) *did or did not repent or obey the Lord's command.* And this will be with 3) *a view to realizing or not realizing the overcomer's promises*, which have to do with realizing or not realizing an inheritance with Christ during the coming kingdom.

Angelic activity seen in Heb. 1:14 is with a view to exactly the same thing seen in Revelation chapters one through three relative to Christians. And an angel occupying an appointed position in relation to each of the seven Churches would be in perfect keeping with this thought.

In this respect, there would be an angel placed over each Church, and there would be other angels ministering to Christians within each Church, with the ministry of all these angels having *one GOAL in view:*

Christians overcoming during Man's Day in order that they might realize an inheritance during the Lord's Day (cf. Heb. 2:5).

(A popular interpretation of the seven angels attempts to identify them as *the pastors* of the seven Churches. This would be somewhat based on the fact that the Greek word translated “angel” [*aggelos*] means “messenger” and is used of men in that respect a few times in Scripture [Matt. 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:24, 27; 9:52; James 2:25].

However, several things would militate against this type understanding of the word *aggelos* in Rev. 2, 3 [one previously discussed (*ref.* p. 22)].

In the Book of Revelation, the word *aggelos* appears sixty-six times beyond chapters one through three, and the word is not used a single time throughout this remaining part of the book referring to men.

Also, to say that the word *aggelos* in chapters one through three refers to the pastors of the seven Churches would be out of line with the manner in which the N.T. presents pastors in the Churches.

In the N.T., when pastors are spoken of in connection with Churches, there is no such thing as a Church with one pastor. Churches in the N.T. are always seen having more than one pastor, or elder [*cf.* Acts 20:17; Titus 1:5; James 5:14].)

Thus, that depicted in Revelation chapters one through three evidently has to do with angelic activity in the Churches, angelic activity among Christians during the present dispensation. And this activity has to do with a ministry among Christians, with a view to Christians overcoming and realizing an inheritance with Christ during the coming age.

A history of the Church throughout the dispensation is presented through the manner in which chapters two and three are structured; but, more particularly and contextually, the two chapters simply present *a continuation from chapter one* and have to do with details surrounding the coming judgment of Christians, with material in the chapters dropping back and including the necessity of present preparation.

Write...

After John had seen the complete Church in heaven, appearing before Christ in judgment, he was told to “Write...” And that which he was told to write provides *a threefold outline of the book*.

“Write the things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter [*lit.*, ‘after these things’]” (v. 19).

“The things which thou hast seen” could only refer to the things in chapter one, preceding verse nineteen, for that is all John had seen thus far.

Then, “the things which are,” will have to be understood two ways, in keeping with the two ways chapters two and three are to be understood:

1) “The things which are” would, first of all, have to be understood as the things which John was witnessing at that time, in the future, in the Lord’s Day (which would be the things which he had seen in the previous verses, *i.e.*, in this respect, “the things which are” would be the same as “the things which thou hast seen”).

John had seen *the complete Church in heaven appearing before Christ in judgment. And this, of necessity, would have to extend into and include that seen in chapters two and three — the seven epistles to the seven Churches.*

2) Then, “the things which are,” as well, would have to do with the secondary manner in which chapters two and three are to be understood — *showing a history of Christendom relative to the proclamation of the Word of the Kingdom during the present dispensation.*

This history would begin with Ephesus, which *had left its first love*, and end with Laodicea, which was “*wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked*” (2:4; 3:17).

In this respect, “the things which are,” from John’s perspective, though at a future time, *would reach back into the present dispensation.*

(Refer to the next two chapters in this book, Chapters III, IV, for additional information on the preceding.)

Then, “the things which shall be hereafter [Gk., *meta tauta*, ‘after these things’]” could only refer to events beginning in chapter four where this expression (*meta tauta*) is used twice in the first verse.

“The things which shall be hereafter [‘after these things’]” would refer to events occurring *after the present dispensation, after subsequent events surrounding the judgment seat (chs. 1-3); and these following events would encompass that seen throughout the remainder of the book (chs. 4-22).*

3

Judged in His Presence

Judgment on the Basis of Faithfulness, Works

“Unto the angel of the Church of Ephesus... Smyrna... Pergamos... Thyatira... Sardis... Philadelphia... Laodicea write... ” (Rev. 2:1a, 8a, 12a, 18a; 3:1a, 7a, 14a).

The seven epistles directed to seven Churches in Asia in Revelation chapters two and three form *a continuation* from introductory, foundational material in the previous chapter, in chapter one.

And IF this connection between chapter one and chapters two and three is NOT understood, the MAIN thrust of that presented in these seven short epistles will be MISSED.

In the first chapter, the seven Churches are seen *IN heaven, IN Christ's presence, IN the Lord's Day, NOT here on earth separated from Christ's presence* (a personal, bodily presence, as seen in this chapter) during Man's Day (v. 10).

And these seven Churches are further seen *IN Christ's presence when He is exercising a position as JUDGE* (a future role which Christ will enter into at the conclusion of the present dispensation), *NOT a position as High Priest* (Christ's office and work throughout the present dispensation in the heavenly sanctuary, on behalf of Christians).

Thus, the entire scene is *not ONLY future and judicial BUT removed from the earth and IN the heavens.*

Since the complete Church, shown by the number of the Churches (“seven,” showing the completeness of that which is in view), is seen IN heaven, this can ONLY have to do with events FOLLOWING the removal of the Church from the earth at the end of the dispensation.

And since the complete Church is seen IN Christ's presence at this time, with Christ occupying a JUDICIAL role, this can ONLY have to do with the future appearance of ALL Christians before the judgment seat of Christ (II Cor. 5:10, 11).

This, in turn, provides *the BASIS for the continuation of the same subject matter in chapters two and three, where specific information is provided relative to each of the seven Churches previously introduced in chapter one.*

And though it is evident that a *history of Christendom* is shown through activity in these seven Churches existing in the first century at the time John penned these two chapters, the epistles, in their contextual setting, *can ONLY show more particularly things future — things surrounding the judgment seat, continuing from chapter one.*

Each epistle, *following a brief, descriptive depiction of the Son, is structured EXACTLY the same way:*

- 1) *Beginning with Christ's statement, "I know thy works."*
- 2) *Then, a call to repentance, or to heed the Lord's command.*
- 3) *Then, an overcomer's promise.*

(Note also in chapters two and three that *Christ speaks to the Churches as JUDGE* [e.g., cf. 1:13-16, 20; 2:1, 12, 18], *a role which He will not occupy until the present dispensation has drawn to a close.*)

And this is in perfect keeping with the judicial scene presented in chapter one, introducing chapters two and three, with chapter one providing *necessary foundational material* which would allow an individual to properly understand Christ's words to the seven Churches within their contextual setting.

That dealt with at the judgment seat will be: 1) *works*, which will show whether those being judged 2) *did or did not repent, or obey the Lord's command.* And this will be with 3) *a view to realizing or not realizing the overcomer's promises*, which have to do with realizing or not realizing an inheritance with Christ during the coming age.

I Know Thy Works

The basis for ALL judgment in Scripture is WORKS.

God judged sin at Calvary *on the basis of His Son's finished work* (John 19:30); Christians will be judged at the end of the present dispensation *on the basis of works* (I Cor. 3:12-15; II Cor. 5:10, 11); Israel will be judged following the future Tribulation *on the basis*

of works (Ezek. 20:34-38; 44:9-16); Gentiles coming out of the Tribulation will be judged *on the basis of works* (Matt. 25:31-46; Rev. 20:4-6); and even the unsaved will be judged following the Millennium *on the basis of works* (Rev. 20:11-15).

Faith though cannot be separated from *works* in the preceding respect (except for the unsaved, who are in no position to exercise faith), for “without faith *it is impossible* to please him [God]” (Heb. 11:6a).

But, in relation to *judgment*, God looks at the final analysis of the matter. *Works emanate out of faith*, with works forming that which *results from faith* (James 2:14-26). And it is *these resulting works* which are at the forefront when *judgment* is in view.

A saved person can either exercise faithfulness or unfaithfulness, with works emanating from both.

In I Cor. 3:12, this is set forth in *the two types of works* presented. *One type* is depicted by the words “gold, silver, precious stones,” and *the other type* is depicted by the words “wood, hay, stubble.”

Works will be tried by *fire* at the judgment seat (v. 13). That depicted by “gold, silver, precious stones,” *emanating out of faithfulness*, will pass through the fire unscathed; but that depicted by “wood, hay, stubble,” *resulting from unfaithfulness*, will be consumed by the fire.

Those individuals shown to have possessed works described by the former (“gold, silver, precious stones”) *will experience the end result of the salvation of their souls, which will allow them to have a part in activities attendant the bride and Christ’s coming reign.*

But those individuals shown to have possessed works described by the latter (“wood, hay, stubble”) *will, instead, “suffer loss” (the loss of their souls), though they themselves will be “saved [their eternal salvation unaffected]; yet so as by [‘through’] fire”* (I Cor. 3:15).

Relative to the unsaved, “faith” is *NOT* in the picture. But, still, even though “faith” is absent, *ALL that can remain to come under judgment are WORKS.*

Thus, the unsaved, as the saved, are judged *on the basis of WORKS, for there is NOTHING else upon which they could be judged.*

The unsaved *CAN’T* be judged on the basis of prior *unbelief* in Christ, *NO MORE SO* than can the saved be judged on the basis of

prior *belief* in Christ. According to John 3:18, the unsaved *have ALREADY been judged* (as the matter pertains to Christ and His finished work at Calvary, for *they have NOT believed*); and *NO judgment CAN AWAIT the saved as well* (also as the matter pertains to Christ and His finished work at Calvary, for they have believed).

This remains true of BOTH the saved and the unsaved because God has already judged sin in the person of His Son.

Thus, this is a completed and closed matter, for God has ALREADY been satisfied. And, resultingly, there can be NO further judgment on this issue:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned [‘is not judged’]: but he that believeth not is condemned already [‘has already been judged’], because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten son of God.”

The second word “condemned [‘judged’]” and the subsequent word “believed” (both used relative to the unsaved) are both in the perfect tense in the Greek text, pointing to action completed in past time with the results of this action existing during present time in a finished state.

Consequently, for the unsaved, *this will NEVER be an issue in future time. It CAN'T be an issue in future time. Such would be impossible.*

Relative to their eternal destiny, the unsaved *have already been judged (past) because of unbelief (past). NOTHING surrounding judgment, as it pertains to this matter, can be carried beyond this point in past time.*

And EXACTLY the same future non-judgmental situation exists for the saved relative to their eternal destiny, for the SAME reason.

The saved, *EXACTLY as the unsaved, have already been judged.* But in their case, *belief*, not *unbelief*, enters into the matter. And, *EXACTLY* as in the case of the unsaved, *NOTHING* surrounding judgment, as it pertains to this entire matter, can be carried beyond this point in past time.

For the saved though, unlike the unsaved, judgment has taken place through a Substitute Who has paid sin's penalty (death) on their behalf. *And EVERYTHING surrounding the matter has been taken care of in past time, by Another, with God being satisfied.*

(In the preceding respect, as seen in John 3:18, *because judgment has taken place for the saved through a Substitute, there can be NO past judgment for the individual per se.*

But, for the unsaved, *since a Substitute is NOT in view, this past judgment would have to pertain to the individual himself.* And this is why this same verse refers to a past judgment for *the unsaved alone.*)

Because the basis for ALL “judgment” in Scripture is *works*, and because *judgment* is centrally in view in Revelation chapters two and three (contextually, continuing from chapter one), Christ’s words in each of the seven epistles begins with the statement, “I know thy works.” With *judgment* centrally in view — NOT judgment relative to their eternal salvation (an impossibility) BUT judgment relative to that which lies out ahead, relative to the Messianic Era — *these epistles could begin NO other way.*

(For additional information on the preceding, refer to the author’s book, *Salvation of the Soul*, Appendix I, “Faith and Works.”)

Repent...Heed the Lord’s Command

God’s Son, described in Revelation chapter one, Whose eyes were as “a flame of fire,” *knew EXACTLY what had been and was presently occurring in each of the seven Churches.*

The Son, with *EXACTLY the same full knowledge (omniscience) possessed by the Father* — for He was, is, and always will be the Father manifested in the flesh — *knew ALL there was to know about everyone and everything in each of the seven Churches.* And after He states to each, “I know thy works,” He makes their works known, dealing with those in each Church *on the BASIS of their works.*

EXACTLY the same thing will occur yet future relative to that which this section of the book deals with.

ALL Christians will stand before Christ in judgment, exactly as the matter is revealed in chapter one. They will stand before the One Whose eyes are as “a flame of fire,” eyes which can and apparently will penetrate into the very soul of each individual (cf. Luke 22:61, 62).

In fact, the material in Revelation chapter one could be made even more specific, for that stated in this chapter concerning the

Church in Christ's presence is not just a statement concerning how things will be in that future day. Rather, *this is the actual scene* surrounding the future appearance of all Christians in Christ's presence, before His judgment seat.

John was moved from the present time into a future time, in the Lord's Day. And in this future time, in the Lord's Day, he was allowed to see different things occurring before they actually occurred.

But that can be turned around, saying, the things which John was allowed to see, yet to occur, *will have to occur for the simple reason that they have already occurred.* And one can no more change these things set in the future (which have already occurred) than he can change things set in the past (which, as well, have already occurred).

(Note: As previously discussed in Chapter I of this book [pp. 4-7], time is *relative*, not a constant. God can *change time, stop time, and move a man into either past or future time.*

As previously seen, God moved Ezekiel back in time and John forward in time [Ezek. 8; Rev. 1]. Ezekiel, having been moved back in time, saw things occur which had already occurred; and John, having been moved forward in time, saw things occur which are yet to occur.

Then God caused time to stand still during Joshua's day [Josh. 10:12-14] and reversed time during Hezekiah's day [II Kings 20:8-11; Isa. 38:7, 8].

And the very fact that the things which John saw have already occurred, alone, guarantees that they will yet occur at a future time.

One simply cannot change history.

Then, note something quite personal about this scene. John saw ALL Christians in Christ's presence at this future time, being judged. In short, John saw YOU and ME there. We have ALREADY been there, which, ALONE, guarantees OUR presence before Christ's judgment seat at a yet future time.

Again, history cannot be changed.)

The first thing which John saw in this respect was Christians appearing before Christ in judgment. In other words, as previously seen, that depicted in the latter part of chapter one *is NOT just something similar to or like that which will occur. Rather, THIS IS THAT WHICH WILL OCCUR!*

And John was shown that which will occur — recording that which will occur, to be made available to *ALL Christians* during the opening years of the present dispensation (directed to “seven Churches,” showing *completeness*) — *in order that ALL Christians throughout the dispensation might have an eye-witness account of that which they will one day experience, leaving them even further without excuse at the judgment seat.*

This introductory material then allows the seven epistles to seven Churches in Asia, which immediately follow, to each be structured after a manner which continues the thought of *judgment* from chapter one.

And not only is this structure seen in each of these seven epistles, but at least two other things can be seen in these epistles as well, which reflect on events during present time, preceding events surrounding the judgment seat:

1) The order in which these epistles appear depicts a history of the Church throughout the dispensation (from Ephesus, which left its “first love,” to Laodicea, described as “wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked”).

2) Dealing with these seven existing Churches in the manner seen not only allowed the Lord to deal directly with all the Churches during the time in which John lived but also to provide vital information for all the Churches which would exist throughout subsequent time during the complete dispensation.

And, as both the text and context clearly show, this would be with a view to *future judgment* and *the Messianic Era*.

EVERYTHING about these epistles — their structure, that stated about each, the order in which they were given, the reason for the call to repent, the reason for the exhortation and commands — points out ahead to *the judgment seat* and then to *the Messianic Era* beyond.

The deterioration seen within the existing Churches and also seen in the order of their arrangement in chapters two and three *necessitates the call to repentance, the exhortations, and the commands.*

Then, this call for repentance, the exhortations, and the commands look ahead to *the judgment seat*; and all of the overcomer's promises are *Messianic* within their scope of fulfillment.

Everything at the end of Scripture remains *in complete keeping* with that seen at the beginning of Scripture — *a seventh day of rest following six days of restorative work*. And there is *NOTHING* within these seven epistles which moves beyond that point within the scope of their fulfillment (*i.e.*, there is *NOTHING* in these epistles which moves beyond the seventh day, the Messianic Era).

There is *NOTHING* in these epistles about eternal life, the ages beyond the Messianic Era, etc. *ALL of the material* in these epistles is about events occurring during time within that foreshadowed by *work* during the six days in Genesis chapter one, progressing to that foreshadowed by *rest* during the seventh day in Genesis chapter two, *NOT* about things which will occur during the eternal ages beyond this time.

(For a correct and proper interpretation throughout Scripture in the preceding respect, *one MUST remain within the time-frame set forth in the first thirty-four verses in Scripture, in Gen. 1:1-2:3* [six and seven days foreshadowing six and seven thousand years]. A septenary structure is set forth in these opening verses, establishing at the very outset a *foundation upon which ALL subsequent Scripture rests*.)

[For information on the septenary structure of Scripture, refer to the author's books, *End of the Days* and *The Study of Scripture* (Chapters I-IV)].

There are a few places in Scripture which deal with events outside the scope of the septenary structure in Gen. 1:1-2:3 [*i.e.*, events both preceding Man's Day and events following the Messianic Era]. But when Scripture does move outside the septenary structure set forth at the beginning [*e.g.*, Ezek. 28:14-19; Rev. 21, 22], it is always quite evident that this is being done.

And this has apparently been done at times so that man can better tie the whole of the matter together, understanding why things existed as they did preceding Man's Day on the one hand, and understanding the goal toward which everything moves following the Messianic Era on the other hand, when the Son delivers the kingdom up to His Father [I Cor. 15:24-28].)

To Him That Overcometh

The manner in which most interpret the seven overcomer's promises, one to each of the seven Churches in chapters two and three, centers around these promises relating to one's eternal salvation. Most erroneously interpret these promises as either:

- 1) A call to unsaved individuals within the seven Churches to be saved and realize these different promises.
- 2) As statements to saved individuals in these Churches, showing that they will realize these different promises simply on the basis of the fact that they have been saved.

And I John 5:1-5 are verses usually referenced in an effort to substantiate the second part of the preceding.

This line of erroneous teaching emanates mainly from man's failure to see anything in Scripture except salvation by grace, *i.e.*, saved-unsaved issues.

Practically everything is made to relate to this one subject. And this type teaching, brought over into the seven epistles in Revelation chapters two and three, results in not only the Church often being viewed from an incorrect perspective (usually seeing the Church comprised of both saved and unsaved individuals) but it also leaves little room for the overcomer's promises to be viewed from a correct perspective.

However, contrariwise, within the New Testament usage of the word "Church," as it is used relating to *the one new man* "in Christ," there is *NO such thing* as a Church comprised of both saved and unsaved individuals.

A person is *EITHER within or without the Church*, depending on his saved or unsaved state. He is either a Jew, a Gentile (both without the Church), or a Christian (within the Church [I Cor. 10:32]).

NOR can unsaved individuals be thought of as professors instead of possessors and find themselves within the Church after the manner in which the word "Church" is used in the New Testament.

Scripture knows NOTHING about professors as opposed to possessors.

Scripture knows ONLY possessors (the saved) and non-possessors (the unsaved).

The overcomer's promises, in the preceding respect, would, thus, relate to *Christians ALONE*.

Further, these promises are worded after a fashion which clearly reveals that Christians can go in either of two directions relative to the promises. They can either *overcome* and realize the promises or they can *be overcome* [by the world, the flesh, and/or the Devil] and fail to realize the promises.

(The word "Church" is a translation of the Greek word *ekklesia*, a compound word which means "called out" [*ek*, meaning "out"; and *klesis*, meaning "to call"]. The word is used 115 times in the N.T., and in all except a few instances it is used of Christians.

It is used of the nation of Israel or those in Israel at least three times [Matt. 18:17; Acts 7:38]; it is used of a gathering of mainly unsaved Gentiles twice [some Jews present (Acts 19:32, 39)]; and during the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel [in Acts], the word could be used of either saved Jews or saved Gentiles [the latter, along with the disciples at Pentecost in Acts 2, forming the beginning of the Church at this time (*ref.* the two paragraphs in brackets at the end of this section)].

And in the few instances where the word is not used of Christians it could be better translated "assembly," understanding that "the assembly" was a *called out group* [Israel *called out* of the nations (Acts 7:38), or individuals *called out* of this nation (Matt. 18:17), or individuals *called out* from a Gentile nation (Acts 19:32, 39)].

The Hebrew text of the O.T. uses a corresponding word, *qahal*, which the Septuagint [Greek version of the O.T.] usually translates by using *ekklesia*. *Qahal* is found 112 times in the O.T., almost an equal number of times that the corresponding word, *ekklesia*, is found in the N.T. *Qahal* is usually translated in the English text as "assembly" [Deut. 9:10; 18:16] or "congregation" [Deut. 23:1-3; I Kings 8:14], and sometimes as "company" [I Sam. 19:20]. The word is used mainly of Israel or those in Israel, though a few times it is used of groups from among Gentile nations [Gen. 35:11; Ezek. 23:46, 47; 26:7; 38:4, 7, 13, 15].

Thus, when the Greek text of the New Testament uses the word *ekklesia*, where Christians are involved, it is dealing with *the saved alone* [the saved of the present dispensation, those comprising *the one new man* "in Christ," which is neither Jew nor Gentile (Gal. 3:26-29; Col. 3:10, 11)].

In this respect, the word "Church" [*ekklesia*] is *NEVER* used in the N.T. referring to an assembly of *BOTH Christians and Jews* [including

saved Jews still comprising a part of the nation during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel] or to an assembly of both Christians and Gentiles [saved and unsaved].

The Church [the *ekklesia*] of the N.T., having to do with Christians alone, is one thing; and the usage of a corresponding word in the O.T. [*qahal* (usually translated *ekklesia* in the Septuagint)], and the usage of *ekklesia* having to do with Israel or those in Israel three times in the N.T., is another thing entirely.

And any type teaching to the contrary is no more or no less than man's flawed ideology brought over into his understanding of Scripture, seeking to interpret, through natural means, that which is spiritually discerned.

Scripture though is to be interpreted *solely* from the spiritual side of matters, *never* from the natural. Scripture is to be interpreted *in the light of Scripture, comparing that which is spiritual with that which is spiritual* [I Cor. 2:10-13], with man's thoughts and ideas on the matter of *no moment whatsoever*.

[Note that Jews believing the message — being saved “from this untoward generation” (Acts 2:40) — during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel (33 A.D. to about 62 A.D.), *were added to the number having previously been saved during the original offer of the kingdom, NOT added to the newly formed Church*.

This was something peculiar to that approximately thirty-year period though. Conditions following this time *could ONLY have been as they exist today*].

For information on this whole overall subject, refer to the author's book, *Message in the Gospels, Acts, Epistles*.)

As previously stated, I John 5:1-5 is often erroneously referenced by those seeking to show that the thought of *overcoming* in Revelation chapters two and three relates to eternal salvation. And the thought of *a bringing forth from above*, used three times in these verses, is the key to show how they should *correctly* be understood.

The expression, “born of God” or “begotten of him,” referring to *a bringing forth from above*, is used ten times in I John (2:29; 3:9 [twice]; 4:7; 5:1 [three times], 4, 18 [twice]).

The expression also appears in three other New Testament books — four times in John's gospel (1:13; 3:3, 5, 7), once in James (1:18), and two times in I Peter (1:3, 23).

And *EVERY time* the expression is used in John, James, I Peter, and I John, both textually and contextually, *the saved, NOT the unsaved, are in view.*

(Refer to the author's book, *Brought Forth from Above*, for a comprehensive treatment of this subject in all four N.T. books.)

I John 5:1-5 is actually a companion passage to John 20:30, 31.

These two verses in John's gospel *have to do SOLELY with Israel during the time of the re-offer of the kingdom to Israel, providing the reason for the eight signs in John's gospel.*

And I John 5:1-5 (apparently written at or about the same time as John's gospel) would seemingly have to do with Israel during this time as well.

But, unlike John 20:30, 31, these verses in I John would also have to do with Christians throughout the dispensation since the epistle was written centrally to Christians and *SIGNS, referenced in John 20:30, 31, are NOT in view in the passage in I John (ref. the author's book, Signs in John's Gospel).*

In this respect, I John 5:1-5 has to do with instructions concerning how Christians can overcome *the world* — "*by faith*" (v. 4), with instructions given elsewhere concerning how Christians can overcome *the flesh by mortification* (Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5) and *the Devil by resistance* (James 4:7; I Peter 5:9).

And, as in all of the other passages pertaining to being *brought forth from above, the unsaved are NOT in view at all in any of these passages having to do with overcoming.*

(For a more comprehensive discussion of the seven Churches in Revelation chapters two and three, refer to the author's book, *Judgment Seat of Christ*, Chapters V-XI.

All sixteen chapters of this book contain supplementary material for Revelation chapters one through four, with a particular emphasis on the seven Churches in chapters two and three.

In this respect, material on these seven Churches, covering seven chapters in the book, is dealt with within a context which covers nine other related chapters.)

4

Crowns Before the Throne

First Event Following the Judgment Seat

“After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven: and the first voice which I heard was as it were of a trumpet talking with me; which said, Come up hither, and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter.

And immediately I was in the spirit: and, behold, a throne was set in heaven, and one sat on the throne.

And he that sat was to look upon like a jasper and a sardine stone: and there was a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald.

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold...

The four and twenty elders fall down before him that sat on the throne, and worship him that liveth forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne...” (Rev. 4:1-4, 10).

Immediately following events seen in chapters two and three, attention is again called to that previously seen in chapter one — John being removed from Man’s Day and placed in the Lord’s Day (cf. 1:10; 4:1, 2a).

Scripture, in its structure, has a way of repeating things at times in order to provide a base for supplying additional details on a subject.

And repeating that seen in chapter one at this later time in the book, in chapter four (following events seen in chs. 1b-3), would have to do with *Scripture providing additional details relating to the Church following events surrounding the judgment seat.*

In chapter one — immediately after John had been removed from Man's Day and placed in the Lord's Day, along with being moved forward in time — he was shown *the complete Church in Christ's presence, with Christ presented in His future JUDICIAL role, not in His present high priestly role.*

And, since this is clearly *a judicial scene following the rapture, that which is dealt with in these verses can ONLY refer to ONE thing.*

These verses in chapter one *can ONLY refer to:*

1) *The complete Church, ALL Christians throughout the dispensation (shown by the number of the Churches [seven, showing the completeness of that which is in view]), being removed from the earth at the end of the dispensation (shown by John's removal).*

2) *The complete Church appearing in Christ's presence to be judged (shown by Christ appearing as JUDGE, with the seven candlesticks [the seven Churches] appearing in His presence).*

Then, simply continuing from chapter one, *the central subject of the subsequent two chapters has been established.* This central subject, continuing into chapters two and three, clearly has to do with *Christians before the judgment seat.*

But the manner in which the Churches are set forth in these two chapters — beginning with *Ephesus* which had left its "first love" (2:4) and ending with *Laodicea* which is described as "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked" (3:17) — it is also evident that a history of the Church throughout the dispensation is shown in these chapters as well.

And, with these things in mind, the Spirit of God leading John to begin chapter four at the same point as seen in chapter one would not only provide a base for additional revelation surrounding Christians following the judgment seat but it would also provide a means for setting forth the same thing clearly taught a number of other places in Scripture — *the removal of the complete Church at the end of the dispensation.*

That is, viewing chapters two and three from *a historical perspective* (depicting a history of the Church throughout the dispensation), chapter four, beginning at the same point as seen in

chapter one, shows *the removal of the complete Church at the end of the dispensation.*

And this is something which can be seen in a clearer respect in chapter four than it can in chapter one because, *from a historical perspective*, the complete dispensation is seen immediately preceding, in chapters two and three.

Then, the removal of the Church at this point in time would also show the removal of the Church before the beginning of the Tribulation (seen beginning in chapter six). And this, as well, would be in complete accord with that seen elsewhere in Scripture.

The Heavenly Scene

Immediately after attention has been called to the same event seen in Rev. 1:10 (in Rev. 4:1, 2a), John, rather than seeing a judicial scene (as in ch. 1), now sees a rainbow encircled throne, with God seated on the throne (vv. 2b, 3). And surrounding this throne, John sees twenty-four other thrones and twenty-four crowned “elders” seated on these thrones (v. 4).

(The significance of attention called to a rainbow encircling God’s throne at this point in the book can be seen in the first mention of a rainbow in Scripture [Gen. 9:13-17].

The rainbow appeared in Genesis following the completion of God’s judgment [the Flood], and the same thing is seen in Rev. 4:3 relative to the completion of the judgment of Christians in chs. 1b-3.)

At this point in the book, events pertaining to the dispensation in which the Spirit spent 2,000 years searching for a bride for God’s Son are complete (*chs. 2, 3, viewed from a historical perspective*).

As well, events surrounding the judgment seat are also complete (*chs. 1b-3, viewed from the manner in which chs. 2, 3 are introduced in ch. 1b, along with the way ch. 4 continues*).

And, because of the reason for the dispensation and the judgment seat, and because of the point toward which all Scripture moves, the logical place where one would expect activity to now be centered at this point in the book would be concerning *bringing about the realization of that stated in Heb. 2:5:*

"For unto the angels hath he not put in subjection the world to come, whereof we speak."

And events having to do with bringing to pass that stated in this verse is *EXACTLY what can be found in Revelation chapters four and five.*

In the latter part of Rev. 4:2, immediately following the repetition from chapter one concerning the removal of the Church (vv. 1, 2a), John begins to describe various things about God's throne, which he both sees and hears — "lightnings," "thunderings," and "voices" coming out of the throne, and "lamps of fire burning before the throne" (v. 5).

And "in the midst of the throne, and round about the throne" John sees four living creatures who "rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come"; and these living creatures "give glory and honor and thanks to him that sat on the throne, who liveth forever and ever" (vv. 6-9).

Then the scene returns to the twenty-four elders, who arise from their thrones, fall down before God, worship Him, relinquish their crowns to the One Who originally placed them in regal positions, and express adoration to the One worthy "to receive glory and honor and power" (vv. 4, 10, 11).

If an *apex* is to be found in the Book of Revelation, aside from the actions of the mighty angel in chapter ten and events surrounding Christ's return in chapter nineteen, the action of these twenty-four elders would have to be considered.

The action of these angels in Revelation chapter four is *significant beyond degree* in relation to the central message of this book.

Crowns, Regality, Government

"Crowns" have to do with *regality*, and *the government of the earth* is in view throughout the Book of Revelation.

At this point in the book, the judgment of Christians, with a view to *regality*, will have just occurred; and, with a view to this same *regality*, Christ, following this, is seen as the One about to

redeem the forfeited inheritance through taking the seven-sealed scroll from God's right hand and breaking the seals (chs. 5ff).

Angels have ruled over the earth since time immemorial — since that time when God established the government of the earth in the beginning.

Angels will still be exercising rulership over the earth at this point in the book, following the judgment of Christians.

And angels will continue ruling *until* Christ and His co-heirs (forming His bride) take the kingdom, following Christ's return to the earth.

Accordingly, neither Christ nor Christians will receive the crowns which they are to wear during the Messianic Era *until after* Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation.

The crown which Christ will wear during the Messianic Era is presently being worn *by Satan, as he continues to exercise power over the earth.*

And the crowns which Christians will wear in that day are presently being worn by *two segments of angels — the angels presently ruling with Satan, and the angels who refused to follow Satan when he sought to exalt his throne.*

When Satan sought to exalt his throne — following his being placed over the earth, with a large contingent of angels ruling the earth with him — only one-third of these ruling angels followed Satan and fell with him, with the other two-thirds refusing to follow him (*cf.* Isa. 14:12-14; Matt. 25:41; Rev. 12:3, 4).

(Note the way Rev. 12:4a is worded: "And his [the dragon's, Satan's] tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven [referring to angels (*cf.* Job. 38:7; Rev. 1:20)] and did cast them to the earth...")

This "third part," after millenniums of time and separation [separation of one-third from the other two-thirds], *is still recognized at this future time as only part of a larger group, only part of all the angels originally ruling with Satan.*)

And though the angels not following Satan didn't continue ruling with him, they *could not* immediately relinquish their appointed positions. Rather, they *had to* retain their positions for a time, remaining crowned.

A principle of Biblical government necessitates that an incumbent ruler retain his crown until the one replacing him is not only on the scene but ready to ascend the throne.

ONLY then can an incumbent ruler relinquish his crown.

(For example, note the account of Saul and David, forming a type of Satan and Christ [*ref.* p. 5, Chapter I, in this book].)

Saul, though disqualified, retained his crown and continued to reign until David was not only present but ready to ascend the throne. Then, Saul's crown was taken, given to David; and David, along with certain faithful men, ascended the throne and reigned in the stead of Saul and those who had ruled with him [I, II Samuel].

And it will be EXACTLY the same in the antitype.

Satan, though disqualified, will retain his crown and continue to reign until Christ is not only present but ready to ascend the throne. Then, Satan's crown will be taken, given to Christ; and Christ, along with certain faithful individuals, will ascend the throne and reign in the stead of Satan and those who had ruled with him, both before and after his fall [Rev. 19:11-20:6.]

This same established principle must prevail relative to both the angels refusing to follow Satan in his attempt to exalt his throne and those who did follow him. This entire contingent of angels (both fallen and unfallen) *MUST retain their crowns until those who are to replace them, those who are to wear these crowns, are NOT ONLY on the scene BUT READY to ascend the throne.*

These relinquished crowns though will be worn *ONLY AFTER* Christ returns to the earth at the end of the Tribulation, overthrows Satan and his angels, and forcibly takes their crowns.

ONLY THEN will Christ be in possession of *ALL the crowns* which He and His bride are destined to wear as they ascend the throne and rule the earth.

This entire scenario of events, as it pertains to the government of the earth, is introduced in Revelation chapter four.

It is introduced immediately following events surrounding the judgment seat when, for the first time in the history of the earth, those who are to ascend the throne with God's Son will have been called out of the larger body of Christians and revealed.

Those shown worthy to take the crowns worn by Satan and his angels up to this point in time will now be on the scene, ready to ascend the throne. *And for the FIRST time in the history of the earth, angels can NOW relinquish their crowns.*

This is the FIRST order of activity seen in the Book of Revelation occurring immediately following issues and determinations at the judgment seat.

And so it should be, for, according to Rom. 8:19-23, the entire creation (as it pertains to the earth, both the material creation and redeemed man) presently groans and travails, awaiting “the manifestation of the sons of God” (a new order of sons — *taken from among redeemed man, NOT from among angels.*)

Revelation chapter four is the point in the book where this manifestation of a new order of sons has its beginning. It begins here by the relinquishment of crowns (for those comprising this new order of sons will have been revealed), making possible a later full manifestation of regal activity by man at the time of Christ’s return.

Thus, with the introduction of crowns cast before God’s throne in Rev. 4:10, 11, *ONLY one group of individuals could possibly be in view* (if one remains within context and keeps in mind the earth’s government in both history and prophecy).

These twenty-four elders *can ONLY represent angelic rulers* (cf. Heb. 2:5). *Angels ALONE* will possess crowns in relation to the government of the earth at this time (as they do during the present time).

(Some Bible students, on the basis of the pronouns used in Rev. 5:9, 10 — “us” and “we” [KJV] — have understood the twenty-four elders to represent redeemed men, not angels. However, the majority of the better Greek manuscripts render the pronouns in v. 10 as “them” and “they” [ref. ASV, NASB, NIV, Wuest, Weymouth], giving rise to the thought that the pronoun “us” in v. 9 is probably a scribal insertion, being spurious [ref. Alford, Lenski].

But the matter is really not left to manuscript evidence alone. That the pronouns “them” and “they” are correct is evident from the context. Note that the song in vv. 9, 10 is apparently sung not only by the “twenty-four elders” but also by the “four beasts [‘living creatures’]” as well. Then, other angels join them in vv. 11ff, with all of the angels together voicing additional, related statements.

Aside from the preceding, it would make absolutely no sense whatsoever to understand these twenty-four elders as referring to a segment of redeemed mankind.

Man COULDN'T possibly be crowned at the time of events in Rev. 4, 5, else he would be crowned before Christ is crowned [note that Christ is to wear the crown which Satan presently wears, which Satan will still be wearing at this time]. Also, man is to wear the crown he receives, not relinquish it before God's throne as seen being done by the twenty-four elders.

Also, note that the word translated "elders" is *presbuteroi* in the Greek text. *Presbuteroi* means "older ones" [thus, the translation, "elders"]. And since the government of the earth is centrally in view [crowns, thrones, subject of the book], *these presbuteroi could ONLY be older ones in relation to this government.*

The word, *presbuteros* [singular form] is used fifty-five times in the N.T. and is *ALWAYS used relative to the position of an individual in relation to the subject at hand* — older in age, position in the family, position in Jewish life, position in the Church, etc. [Matt. 15:2; Acts 2:17; 4:5-8; 20:19; I Tim. 5:1, 2, 17, 19].

And the matter *could be NO different* in relation to the twenty-four crowned elders seated on thrones. Again, *they could ONLY be older ones in relation to that which is in view, the government of the earth.*

In the preceding respect, the name *presbuteroi ALONE* would identify these elders as *angels associated with Satan at some distant time in the past* [the "past" shown by the type crown which they are seen wearing — no longer a monarch's crown, no longer reigning].

And their number [twenty-four], place where they appear in the book [following events at the judgment seat], and action [relinquishing their crowns to the One Who had originally given these crowns to them] *ONLY further confirm their identity.*)

And at this point in the book, through the action of the twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne, the way will be opened for God to transfer the sceptre from the hands of angels into the hands of man.

In this respect, these crowns cast before God's throne *can ONLY have to do with the government of the earth.* And, at this point in the book, crowns can be worn by *angels ALONE.*

The Son will NOT yet have taken the kingdom, though the Father is about to take the sceptre from Satan's hand and place it in His Son's

hand (cf. Dan. 7:13, 14; Luke 19:12, 15; Rev. 11:15; 19:11ff).

These crowns are relinquished *to God* (cast before God's throne) — with a view to man ruling in the kingdom — so that God can appoint those who had previously been shown qualified through decisions and determinations at the judgment seat [chs. 1b-3] to positions of power and authority with His Son; and those whom the Father appoints will wear these crowns in His Son's kingdom.

These crowns are cast before God's throne (cf. 4:1-4; 5:1-7) because *the Father ALONE* is the One Who places and/or removes rulers in His kingdom (Dan. 4:17-37; 5:18-21).

He ALONE is the One Who placed those represented by the twenty-four elders in the positions which they occupied; and *He ALONE* is the One Who will remove those represented by these elders from the positions in which He originally placed them and assign other individuals to positions in the kingdom, in their stead (Matt. 20:20-23).

The transfer of the government of the earth, FROM the hands of angels INTO the hands of man, in reality, is what the first nineteen chapters of the Book of Revelation are about.

And, as well, this is what the whole of Scripture preceding these nineteen chapters is also about.

In this respect, these twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne forms a KEY event which one MUST grasp if he would properly understand the Book of Revelation and Scripture as a whole.

Christ and His wife, in that coming day, will rule the earth in the stead of Satan and his angels. And, in the process of ruling in this manner, *they will wear ALL the crowns worn by Satan and his angels prior to his fall — both angels who did not follow Satan and those who did follow him.*

Action of the Elders

Thus, that which is depicted through the action of the twenty-four elders in Rev. 4:10, 11 is, contextually, self-explanatory.

This has to do with *the government of the earth, it occurs at a time following events surrounding the judgment seat but preceding*

Christ breaking the seals of the seven-sealed scroll, and it occurs at a time when Satan's reign is about to be brought to a close.

After events in Revelation chapters one through three have come to pass, *for the FIRST time in man's history*, the person (the bride) who is to rule with the One to replace Satan (Christ) will have been made known and shown forth.

And events in the fourth chapter reflect that fact.

Only *ONE thing* could possibly be in view at this point in the book, for the bride will not only have been made known but will be in a position for events surrounding the transfer of power to begin.

The twenty-four elders *casting their crowns before God's throne can ONLY depict the angels who did not go along with Satan in his rebellion relinquishing their crowns, with a view to those comprising the bride wearing these crowns during the Messianic Era.*

But the crowns worn by Satan and those angels presently ruling with him are another matter.

These crowns will have to be taken from Satan and his angels *by force* when Christ returns to overthrow Gentile world power at the end of the Tribulation (a power exercised during Man's Day under Satan and his angels [Dan. 10:13-20]).

(The fact that angels represented by the twenty-four elders are not presently ruling with Satan can be shown not only by their present position — in God's presence, in heaven — but also by the Greek word which is used for the type crown which they are seen wearing.

There are two words in the Greek text for "crown" — *stephanos*, and *diadema*. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, with *regality* in view, one major distinction stands out concerning how these two words are used.

Diadema refers to the type crown worn by a monarch, one presently exercising regal power. *Stephanos*, on the other hand, is used in an opposite sense. It is used to show someone crowned but not presently exercising regal power.

For example, the crown seen on Christ's head in Rev. 14:14, preceding His reign, is referred to by the word *stephanos* in the Greek text. A crown on Christ's head at this time could only anticipate His impending reign [a similar thought is set forth by the crown resting on Antichrist's head at the beginning of the Tribulation in Rev. 6:2, referred to through the use of the word *stephanos*].

Then, when Christ returns to the earth to take the kingdom, He will have many crowns upon His head; and the Greek text uses *diadema* rather than *stephanos* to refer to these crowns, for Christ will be returning as “King of kings, and Lord of lords” [Rev. 19:12, 16].

The twenty-four elders in chapter four cast crowns referred to as *stephanos* before the throne, indicating that, though crowned, these elders were not exercising regal power at this time [though the fact that they were seated on thrones and crowned portends *regal power* at some point in time [*in past time, as shown by their present positions and subsequent actions*].

And the many crowns which Christ will have on His head at the time of His return are undoubtedly these same crowns [Rev. 19:12]. But, again, anticipating that day when Christ reigns, the Book of Revelation uses the word *diadema* to refer to these crowns, for *Christ will be exercising regal power at this time, with Satan about to be overthrown.*

The crowns [*diadems*] on Christ’s head in Rev. 19:12 though will not be worn by Christ when He rules the earth, for He is to wear the crown presently worn by Satan [the incumbent ruler] in that day.

Rather, these crowns are undoubtedly reserved for those forming the bride [whom the Father will previously have appointed to various positions of power and authority with His Son]; and the Son will give these crowns to His co-heirs following that time when the remainder of the crowns having to do with the earth’s government are forcibly taken from Satan and his angels.)

Twenty-Four, Thirty-Six

The identity of the *twenty-four elders* is shown not only by *their actions* and *the place* in which this occurs in the book but also by *their number*. Comparing Revelation chapters four and twelve (4:4, 10, 11; 12:3, 4), it appears evident that the original government of the earth — originally established by God prior to Satan’s fall — was representatively shown by *three sets of twelve, thirty-six crowned rulers*. “Three” is the number of *Divine perfection*, and “twelve” is the number of *governmental perfection*.

Those angels who did not follow Satan in his attempt to exalt his throne would be represented by the twenty-four elders — *two sets of twelve, showing two-thirds of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan.*

And the angels who did go along with Satan, presently ruling with him, would be represented by *a third set of twelve, showing the other one-third of the original contingent of angels ruling with Satan* (Rev. 12:3, 4).

In this respect, these three representative sets of twelve would show *Divine perfection in the earth's government*.

And also in this respect, this same perfection in the structure of the earth's government has not existed *since Satan's attempt to exalt his throne*.

But, this structured perfection will one day *AGAIN* exist in the earth's government. When Christ and His wife ascend the throne, crowns worn by those represented by all three sets of twelve will be brought together again.

THEN, Divine perfection will once AGAIN exist in the government of the one province in God's universe where imperfection has existed for millenniums (cf. Col. 1:16-20).

(For additional and other type information on the twenty-four elders in Revelation chapter four, refer to the author's books, *So Great Salvation* [Revised Edition], Chapter II, "Because of the Angels," or, *The Judgment Seat of Christ*, Chapter XII, "Crowned Rulers.")

5

Redemption of the Inheritance

Anticipated Since the Day It Was Forfeited

“And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book [‘a scroll’] written within and on the backside, sealed with seven seals.

And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book [‘the scroll’], and to loose the seals thereof?

And no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book [‘the scroll’], neither to look thereon.

And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book [‘the scroll’], neither to look thereon.

And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book [‘the scroll’], and to loose the seven seals thereof.

And I beheld, and, low, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.

And he came and took the book [‘the scroll’] out of the right hand of him that sat upon the throne” (Rev. 5:1-7).

(All of Revelation chapter five is taken up with events surrounding the introduction of a *seven-sealed scroll*, with the seals of this scroll beginning to be broken in the next chapter.

Properly understanding that which is in view through the introduction of this seven-sealed scroll and the breaking of the seals on the scroll is **ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY** for a proper understanding of *ALL* which has both preceded and follows in the Book of Revelation.

All preceding [chs. 1-4] has built into chapter five. And the judgments seen in succeeding chapters, beginning in chapter six, are the judgments unleashed through the breaking of these seven seals; and these judgments, in turn, are God’s terms for the redemption of the inheritance.)

Attention is often called to the importance of understanding and referencing the Book of Daniel when studying the Book of Revelation, or conversely. And this would be a correct way to view matters, for these are companion books; and both cover the same material, from different perspectives, with one book shedding light upon the other when Scripture is compared with Scripture.

That which is often overlooked though is the fact that the Book of Daniel is only one of a number of books in the Old Testament holding this type connection with the Book of Revelation.

Complete books other than Daniel (e.g., Jonah), or *parts of books*, from the section of Scripture referred to as *the Prophets* (Isaiah through Malachi) would hold this same type connection with the Book of Revelation as well. And in this chapter, particular attention will be called to a section from one of these books, the Book of Jeremiah, which forms *a major key* to properly understanding Revelation chapter five.

Then, beginning in Genesis and continuing to the Prophets, one finds that section of Scripture often referred to as *Historic* (Genesis through Esther), followed by the section referred to as *Poetic* (Job through the Song of Solomon). And the same thing can be said about these two sections of Scripture that was said about *the Prophets*. Numerous parts of both sections reflect on material in the Book of Revelation.

In the first of these two sections, aside from Genesis, note particularly three books where this can be clearly seen — *Exodus*, *Ruth*, and *Esther*. These three books have been singled out because almost the complete contents of each foreshadow that seen in different parts of the Book of Revelation, with a section in one of the books particularly foreshadowing events seen in Revelation chapter five.

Exodus, in this manner (historic events typically foreshadowing future events), deals centrally with *Israel* during the Tribulation, with Christ's return at the end of the Tribulation, with the overthrow of Gentile world power following Christ's return, and with the subsequent establishment of the Messianic Kingdom (paralleling events seen in Rev. 6-20a).

Esther, as well, deals with the same thing as *Exodus* — centrally with *Israel* during and immediately following the Tribulation. And

Esther, through the same means and in the same manner as seen in Exodus, parallels the same part of the Book of Revelation as Exodus, showing other facets of the matter.

Ruth though is different. Rather than dealing with Israel, *Ruth*, through the same means and in the same manner as seen in both Exodus and Esther, foreshadows God's dealings with *the Church*. And the time covered by this book deals with the Church throughout not only the present dispensation but with the Church at the judgment seat, with the Church following the judgment seat, and with Christ and His bride in the Messianic Kingdom.

And, though *Ruth* deals with *the Church* rather than Israel, *Ruth* is the one book among the three mentioned which deals with events foreshadowing that seen in Revelation chapter five. And if one would rightly understand that seen in this chapter, one must first understand that which God revealed to an unknown author some twelve hundred or more years before these things were shown to John. One must let *Scripture interpret Scripture, allowing God Himself to explain the matter through other revelation which He has provided on the subject.*

With all of the preceding in mind, two sections of Scripture from two Old Testament books will comprise most of the material in this chapter.

The first will be a section from the Book of Jeremiah (from chs. 30-33, but particularly from ch. 32), which, through an Old Testament account of circumstances and events of a similar nature to that seen in Revelation chapter five, shows exactly what is transpiring in this chapter in the Book of Revelation.

And *the second* will be a section from the Book of Ruth (from all four chapters of the book, but particularly from ch. 4), which, as seen in Jeremiah, will illustrate the working out of that introduced in Revelation chapter five, showing different but corresponding facets of the matter.

There are *two aspects* to that which occurs through the breaking of the seals on the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation chapter five — *redemption of land*, and *a corresponding marriage*. Jeremiah, in his book, seemingly only deals with one aspect (redemption of land), but the other aspect (marriage) is clearly seen in the

context. And the writer of Ruth deals with both aspects together, at the same time.

Then, beginning in Revelation chapter five and viewing that seen in this book in the light of that seen in both of these Old Testament books, the whole of the matter is opened up and dealt with in this closing book of Scripture.

And this is exactly as interpretation in the Book of Revelation, or anywhere else in Scripture, *MUST* exist. *Scripture MUST be interpreted in the light of Scripture* — the New Testament in the light of the Old Testament, the Old Testament in the light of the New Testament, parts of the Old Testament in the light of other parts of the Old Testament, parts of the New Testament in the light of other parts of the New Testament.

(Note that a division of the Old Testament into three parts — *Historic, Poetic, and the Prophets* — refers to *form*, not to *content*. Prophecy, via typology, is dealt with throughout the Historic section, with other means, along with typology, used in the Poetic section and in the Prophets. And this is why Christ, in Luke 24:25-27, 44 could refer to Moses, the Psalms, and the Prophets together, in the sense that *different things surrounding the same Subject are dealt with throughout*.

ALL wrote about *Christ*, His first coming, His second coming — Moses through one means, the writers of the Psalms through another means, and the Prophets through yet another means [*cf.* Heb. 1:1, 2].)

As evident from Ruth chapter four (in the light of the larger context, chs. 1-3), along with comparing that seen in Jeremiah chapter thirty-two (in the light of the larger context, chs. 30-33), the seven-sealed scroll which the Son took from His Father's right hand in Revelation chapter five (the N.T. parallel) *could ONLY be identified as ONE thing and could ONLY have to do with ONE thing*.

As will be shown, this scroll *could ONLY be identified as the title deed to the earth, and it could ONLY contain the redemptive terms for the earth* — the inheritance awaiting the Sons of God (Christ, Israel, and the Church [following the adoption]).

Beyond the preceding, this redemption of the inheritance is inseparably tied to *marriage* — the marriage of Christ to His bride, and the remarriage of God to Israel. There can be *NO* future reign

of Christ over the earth *apart from the Son first taking a wife, and apart from God again taking Israel as His wife as well. And BOTH are inseparably tied to the breaking of the seals on this scroll.*

John's apparent knowledge of these things, as they pertained to that which the Father held in His right hand in Rev. 5:1, would account for his actions in verse four — *much weeping* — when no one “in heaven, nor in [‘upon’] earth, nor under the earth” (v. 3) was found worthy to break the seals on the scroll.

John evidently knew *EXACTLY* what this scroll had to do with, along with the implications of the seals either being broken or not being broken — which could only have come from his familiarity with the Old Testament and the corresponding Mosaic Economy.

(To illustrate that this scroll contains *the redemptive terms of the earth*, before seeing this from two Old Testament books, note Rev. 10:2. In this verse, an angel is seen holding the scroll from chapter five *after ALL of the seals had been broken, leaving the scroll OPEN*; and, in a display of power, filled with symbolism — with “his right foot upon the sea [the nations], and his left foot on the earth [‘the land’]” — this angel claims *the redeemed inheritance, the earth, with its inhabitants [Ps. 2:8]*, for the One Whose right it is to rule.

For more information on the preceding, refer to Chapter VIII, “The Opened Scroll,” in the author's book, *The Rapture and Beyond.*)

The earth in a forfeited and unredeemed state was the same earth which, in the distant past, preceding man's creation, had been reduced to a ruin because of Satan's attempt to exalt his throne above that of his God-appointed position over the earth; this was the earth which, 6,000 years ago, had been restored for man, whom God created to replace the incumbent ruler; and this was the earth which had been reduced to a ruined state once again because of man's subsequent fall (*cf. Gen. 3:6, 7, 17, 18*).

And Revelation chapter five takes one to the point where the inheritance (the earth) is about to be redeemed (*cf. Ps. 2:8*), allowing the earth to be “delivered from the bondage of corruption,” with a *new order of Sons THEN holding the sceptre* (Rom. 8:18-23).

Not only *MUST man be redeemed*, but *the earth MUST be redeemed as well*. That which God requires for both *man and the earth MUST be brought to pass in each instance*.

Man's redemption is wrought through Christ's finished work at Calvary, continuing through His present work as High Priest.

And the earth's redemption is wrought through subsequent actions of the only One qualified to act in the realm of redemption (cf. Acts 3:21; Col. 1:16, 20), through His breaking the seals of the seven-sealed scroll which He is seen taking from His Father's right hand in Rev. 5:7 (Rev. 6:1ff).

The Books of Jeremiah and Revelation

(The accounts in the Books of Ruth and Jeremiah form the only two places in the Old Testament where the matter seen in Revelation chapter five is dealt with in the sense of being carried out, showing exactly what is in view in this closing book of Scripture.

The account from Jeremiah will be dealt with first, for this account provides details concerning how matters were handled as they pertained to the scroll itself. Then, the account in Ruth provides other details not seen in Jeremiah. And both together, within their contextual settings, provide the necessary Old Testament word picture to properly understand that seen in Revelation chapter five.)

In the Old Testament, redemption (a purchasing, a buying back) existed for both *individuals* and *sections of land*.

In this respect, other than redemption necessary for all mankind through death and shed blood, because of Adam's sin, other forms of redemption were dealt with in the Mosaic Economy.

Provision of this nature existed for the redemption of *two types of individuals* — for a wife who had lost her husband, and for a person who found himself in a position of servitude or slavery. Then, provision existed for the redemption of *sections of land* which had been sold. And there were laws governing both the redemption of individuals and land (Lev. 25:1-55; 27:16-25; Deut. 25:5-9).

A scroll (or two scrolls) was prepared for the redemption of *land*, but there is no indication that scrolls were used for the redemption of individuals (something which, of course, would be completely out of place for the redemption of a wife).

Scrolls of this nature had to do with *title deeds to sections of land* and contained *the redemptive terms for these sections*, which could be quite different in each case. And there is a classic example of

how this was carried out in Jeremiah chapter thirty-two through events occurring in Jeremiah's life shortly before the final part of the Babylonian captivity in 586 B.C.

Zedekiah, the king of Judah at this time, had imprisoned Jeremiah because of his prophecies concerning the Babylonian captivity.

Jeremiah had prophesied that the city of Jerusalem, along with the Jewish king (Zedekiah), would be given "into the hand of the king of Babylon" (Nebuchadnezzar). This didn't set well with Zedekiah; and, as a result, he imprisoned Jeremiah (vv. 1-5).

Then, while imprisoned, the Word of the Lord came to Jeremiah, relating that his cousin would approach him about redeeming a piece of property which had been sold to someone else; and the Lord instructed Jeremiah, who possessed "the right of redemption" (*a blood relative*) to redeem the property, to act in this capacity (vv. 7, 8).

This act would leave Jeremiah owning the property (possessing "the right of inheritance" [v. 8]) — someone who knew that the property would shortly be in enemy hands, rendering it worthless. But Jeremiah had prophesied that the Babylonian captivity would only last *seventy years* (Jer. 25:11, 12); and following these seventy years there would be a return to the land, something which he had also previously prophesied (Jer. 29:10-14; chs. 30-33 [though a return of all the Jewish people was later revealed to be *seven times longer, 490 years*, in Dan. 9:24-27; cf. Dan. 9:2; see Chapter XII in the Author's book, *The Time of the End*, for a discussion of Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy]).

Then, aside from the property being in enemy hands for the next seventy years, a year of Jubilee (Lev. 25:8ff) — which occurred every fiftieth year — would occur while the Jewish people were in Babylonian captivity. And, during this year, unredeemed property would automatically revert back to its original owner, apart from any redemptive action. In this respect, it would seem almost out of place for Jeremiah to redeem the property before the captivity.

But God had *a reason* for instructing Jeremiah to redeem the property before the captivity (though it would have reverted back to its original owner during the time of the captivity anyway).

Note that this account appears in the midst of a section in Jeremiah which, though Gentile captivity was at hand, has to do with the Jewish people one day being restored to their land, along with the things which God would do for His people in that day (*ref.* chs. 30-33). And God, through having Jeremiah redeem this section of land, *was using another means to make this fact known to His people.*

The preceding is made clear through that which God stated at the completion of Jeremiah's purchase. His purchase is seen in Jer. 32:9-14. Then note what the Lord stated in verse fifteen, immediately following this purchase:

"For thus saith the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel; Houses and fields and vineyards shall be possessed again in this land."

This same thing — *a promise, through this means, concerning a future restoration of the Jewish people* — is reiterated again in verses forty-two through forty-four in this same chapter (*cf.* Jer. 33:7-17):

"For thus saith the Lord; Like as I have brought all this great evil upon this people, so will I bring upon them all the good that I have promised them.

And fields shall be bought in this land, whereof ye say, It is desolate without man or beast; it is given into the hand of the Chaldeans.

Men shall buy fields for money, and subscribe evidences, and seal them, and take witnesses in the land of Benjamin, and in the places about Jerusalem, and in the cities of Judah, and in the cities of the mountains, and in the cities of the valley, and in the cities of the south: for I will cause their captivity to return, saith the Lord."

(As well, contextually, Jeremiah's purchase of a field moves beyond God reiterating, through another means, His promise concerning a restoration of the Jewish people. The larger picture seen in Jeremiah — in chs. 30-33 — has to do with *God remarrying Israel and a restoration of the kingdom, with God taking Israel as His wife once again in a restored theocracy.*

For additional details on the preceding, refer to Chapter VI, "Redemption, Marriage, Regality," in the author's book, *The Rapture and Beyond.*)

In the account of the transaction during Jeremiah's day, two

pieces of paper were brought out, one sealed and the other remaining open (both having to do with *the unredeemed title deed to the property*). Both pieces of paper contained the same thing — *the redemptive terms for the section of land in question*. The redemptive terms could be read on the open piece of paper. Then, once the redemptive terms had been met, the sealed piece of paper (forming a sealed scroll) could be opened.

Jeremiah purchased the field, allowing him to open the sealed scroll. He then either made notations on this scroll or a new piece of paper, along with the unsealed scroll or a new piece of paper. In turn, one of these was rolled up and sealed, with the other left open (both having to do with *the redeemed title deed to the property*). Then both scrolls (with notations on both, indicating Jeremiah's purchase), for preservation purposes, were placed in "an earthen vessel [clay jar], that they may continue many days [which could only have been with a view, at that time, to the seventy years of the Babylonian captivity]" (vv. 7-14).

In later years, only one piece of paper was used for redemptive scrolls (titles to property) of this nature, with the redemptive terms appearing on both sides. One side, forming the inside of the scroll, would be hidden from view once the scroll had been rolled up and sealed. And the other side, forming the outside of the scroll, would have the redemptive terms written in a place where they could be read without unsealing the scroll.

With all of the preceding in mind, note the seven-sealed scroll in Revelation chapter five.

First, in Jeremiah, there were two scrolls — one sealed, the other remaining open. In the Book of Revelation, in keeping with this practice seen in later Jewish history, the redemptive terms of the scroll are seen *written on both sides of one scroll* (5:1). One side was *sealed*, and the other side was *open* where the redemptive terms could be read.

And the Father handing the scroll to His Son *CLEARLY IMPLIES a recognition and an acknowledgement of the Son's FULL qualification to act in this capacity — as Redeemer — having previously paid the price to take the scroll, break the seals, and*

redeem the inheritance (5:5ff).

Second, this scroll in the Book of Revelation *CAN ONLY* have to do with *land and land rights*, for, as previously seen, within the realm of redemption, scrolls were *NOT* used for individuals (a widowed woman, or a servant or slave). They were used for the *ONLY* other thing which could be redeemed — *land*.

Third, in the account in Jeremiah, *a field* was being redeemed (vv. 7-9). In the account in the Book of Revelation, it is the same — *a field*, with *the field* being “the world” (Matt. 13:38).

And that seen in the Book of Revelation — *redemption in relation to the title deed to the earth* — will form the outworking of that foreshadowed in Jeremiah when the Jewish people return from their dispersion among the Gentiles, not at the end of Jeremiah's seventy-year prophecy but at the end of Daniel's four-hundred-ninety-year prophecy (cf. Jer. 33:7-26).

The Books of Ruth and Revelation

The Book of Ruth begins with a Jewish family in Moab, driven from their own land because of a famine in the land (1:1). And the reason for this famine and the departure of this Jewish family from their land is given in verses such as Lev. 26:14, 15, 32, 33 and Deut. 28:15, 64-67.

This book though, rather than having to do with God's dealings with Israel, foreshadows, through typical means, His future dealings with *the Church*. And God's dealings with the Church after this fashion begin specifically in verse four of the first chapter, where two Moabite women become members of this Jewish family in Moab, brought to pass through their marriage to the two sons in the family (cf. Rom. 11:15-25). Then, from this point forward, events in the book foreshadow God's dealings with the Church during a time which would not even begin until well over a millennium later.

(Note that events such as those which occurred in the Book of Ruth took place under God's sovereign direction and control of all things. And events as we have them in this book were later recorded by an unknown author as he was borne along by the Holy Spirit [II Peter

1:21], allowing the same Spirit to have these events to draw upon at later points in time in order to lead Christians into an understanding of the deep things of God [cf. Isa. 40:21; Acts 15:18].)

Ruth chapter one, in that foreshadowed by events seen in this chapter, deals with *two types of Christians* — *one faithful, the other unfaithful (typified by the actions of Ruth and Orpah)*. And these two women, *alone*, portray *all Christians*, for there is no third class of Christians. A Christian is either *faithful* or *unfaithful*, never partly one or the other. *There is no middle ground between the two*. Scripture is clear that if a person is not for Christ he is against Christ; if he does not gather with Christ, he scatters abroad (Matt. 12:30; Luke 11:23; Rom. 14:23).

A separation is made in chapter one (Orpah who turns back, and Ruth who goes on). And the remainder of the book deals with Ruth alone, showing not only the manner in which *faithful Christians* conduct themselves during the dispensation but, as well, that which awaits *faithful Christians* following the dispensation.

Chapter two deals with *faithful Christians* during the present dispensation, laboring in the field; chapters three and four then deal with *faithful Christians* beyond the present dispensation.

Chapter three has to do with *prepared Christians* appearing before Christ at His judgment seat, seen in Revelation chapters one through three (though Rev. 1-3 presents matters surrounding unprepared Christians as well).

Then, the first part of Ruth chapter four has to do with the subject at hand in Revelation chapter five. And both of these sections in the Books of Ruth and Revelation have to do with that seen in Revelation chapters six through nineteen.

Then, the latter part of Ruth chapter four has to do with that seen in the first part of Revelation chapter twenty — *with Christ's 1,000-year reign, as the Son of David, during the long awaited Messianic Era*.

On the Threshing Floor

Events surrounding Ruth's appearance before Boaz, on his

threshing floor in Ruth chapter three move beyond events surrounding a separation of the wheat from the chaff. And these subsequent events have to do with three things: *redemption, marriage, and regality.*

Once on the threshing floor at this time, Ruth, through her words and actions, made known A DUAL REQUEST — a request for both the redemption of a forfeited inheritance and marriage (cf. Deut. 25:5, 6; 27:20; Ruth 3:8-13; Ezek. 16:8). And, as seen at the end of the Book of Ruth, with the lineage of Boaz and Ruth traced to King David (their great grandson), *regality* is brought into the picture (Ruth 4:13-22).

Boaz was to redeem the forfeited inheritance and, in the process, take Ruth as his wife. And, because of Ruth's prior actions (proper preparation, allowing her to now be in a position to make this request), Boaz, in keeping with laws governing the Jewish people, was *REQUIRED* to honor Ruth's request.

In the type, *ONCE the prepared bride was revealed on the threshing floor and the request was made, Boaz was seen honoring the request.*

And *EXACTLY the same thing is seen in the antitype in the Book of Revelation*, with the antitype providing more detail and covering a broader scope of events than this one type covers (though without understanding the type, it is *next to impossible* to properly understand this in the antitype).

(Note that Orpah [typifying unfaithful Christians] is not seen beyond the first chapter in the book, for she could have *NO PART* in that awaiting Ruth [typifying faithful Christians] — which had to do with *the redeemed inheritance, marriage, and regality.*)

The antitype begins with events surrounding “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” as introduced in Rev. 1:1-8, with this revelation occurring during time covering *numerous events within a period lasting slightly over seven years.* And, as seen in this book, events surrounding “the revelation of Jesus Christ” *begin* with the removal of all Christians from the earth to appear before Christ in judgment (1:10ff) and *end* at least seven years later with Christ's return to the earth and subsequent events connected with His

return, leading into the Messianic Kingdom (19:11ff).

The type in the Book of Ruth doesn't deal with the removal of Christians from the earth, with the unfaithful at the judgment seat, or with an actual judgment per se (though reference is made to judgment through a separation of the wheat from the chaff, along with the time when Ruth appeared [midnight]); nor does the type deal with that seen in Revelation chapter four (the twenty-four elders arising from their thrones and casting their crowns before God's throne).

(For a discussion of the significance of that seen through the twenty-four elders arising from their thrones and casting their crowns before God's throne, refer back to Chapter IV in this book.)

Rather than dealing with all of the things seen in the antitype in the opening chapters of the Book of Revelation, the type in the Book of Ruth deals only with the things emanating out of findings and determinations at the judgment seat, as these things have to do with *faithful Christians*. The type deals with *prepared Christians* at the judgment seat (which necessitates their prior removal from the earth) and that which will result from the dual request which they, following the separation of the wheat from the chaff, will make in Christ's presence — *a prepared bride, through her presence, requesting both a redemption of the inheritance (lost through Adam's fall, resulting in his death) and marriage* (seen in Rev. 5-19).

And, beyond this dual request being made, the type, in this same respect, deals only with that which Christ will do in that coming day when this request is made (based on *His death and shed blood* [Rev. 5:6, 9, 12, 13]) — *HONOR THE REQUEST by redeeming the inheritance and by taking the revealed bride as His wife*.

Christ will HONOR this dual request in that coming day, in fulfillment of that foreshadowed by the type, for exactly the same reasons as seen in the type.

A prepared, revealed bride will be present; and, the Son, to remain true to His Word and fulfill the many promises in this Word to the bride (e.g., the overcomer's promises in Rev. 2, 3), WILL ACT ACCORDINGLY.

Thus, the redemption of the inheritance in Ruth chapter four has

to do with *EXACTLY* the same thing introduced in Revelation chapter five. Matters begin in chapter five, are worked out in chapters six through nineteen (through judgment), and chapter twenty brings events to *EXACTLY* the same regal place events in the Book of Ruth are brought following the redemption of the inheritance in the type (ref. Ruth 4:13-22).

(Many things in the preceding will become more evident later in this chapter.

For a more detailed discussion, refer to the author's book, *Ruth*.)

1) *Redemption of the Inheritance*

Comparing the type and the antitype, the order of events, beginning with the rapture, can clearly be seen.

The rapture immediately *follows* the time of the harvest (present dispensation, seen in Ruth ch. 2), has to do with the removal of all Christians from the earth to appear before the judgment seat (Rev. 1:10ff), and *continues* with the revelation of the bride following this judgment (seen in Ruth ch. 3).

And this revelation of the bride *MUST PRECEDE* the redemption of the inheritance (seen in Ruth ch. 4), for it is the bride who, by her presence, requests *BOTH* a redemption of the inheritance and marriage.

Ruth chapters three and four center on the revelation of the bride and the redemption of the inheritance, with the bride becoming *the wife* of the redeemer through this redemptive process. And the first nineteen chapters of the Book of Revelation are seen centering on exactly the same thing, with everything occurring within the scope of time covered by "the revelation of Jesus Christ."

In the Book of Revelation, an entire chapter is given over to presenting Christ as the One both able and willing to redeem the inheritance and, in the process, take the previously revealed bride as His wife.

Following events surrounding the judgment seat (chs. 1-3) and the casting of crowns before God's throne (ch. 4), the search is conducted for one "worthy" to redeem the inheritance (ch. 5).

And, *the only One found throughout the whole of God's creation* — "in heaven...in ['upon'] earth...under the earth" (v. 3) — was "the Lion

of the tribe of Judah,” though revealed in relation to the redemptive process about to occur as “the Lamb that was slain” (vv. 4-12).

(Within the course of the subject matter of the Book of Revelation — “the revelation of Jesus Christ” — two things are seen at the forefront: *judgment*, and *redemption*. In connection with the first [*judgment*], Christ is seen as “the Lion of the tribe of Judah”; and, in connection with the second [*redemption*], Christ is seen as “the Lamb that was slain.”

This is why Christ is referred to in this two-fold manner in chapter five, for *the redemption of the inheritance will occur through judgment*. And the One Who breaks the seals of the scroll must be seen acting in both capacities — in a *judicial* capacity [as *the Lion*], but also in a *redemptive* capacity [as *the Lamb*].

However, within Christ’s work at this time, the emphasis, by far, is on *the redemptive* rather than *the judicial* nature of the events. Revelation 5:5 is the only place in the entire book where Christ is referred to as *the Lion*, but He is referred to twenty-eight times in this book as *the Lamb*. Thus, the emphasis in the book is not on judgment per se, but on *REDEMPTION emanating out of JUDGMENT*.)

The future marriage of Christ and His bride will occur *EXACTLY in accord with the type set forth in Ruth chapter four*, *NOT* in accord with the way things are done in the modern world, whether in the East or in the West.

As Boaz purchased Ruth through the process of redeeming a forfeited inheritance, so will Christ purchase His bride through the process of redeeming a forfeited inheritance (forfeited by the first Adam in Genesis chapter three [*cf. Rom. 8:20-22*]).

And, as Ruth became Boaz’s wife through this redemptive process, so will it be with Christ and His bride. The bride (having previously been revealed at the judgment seat) will become Christ’s wife through His redemption of the forfeited inheritance.

The redemption of the forfeited inheritance is seen occurring in Revelation chapters five through nineteen. The seven-sealed scroll in Revelation chapter five contains the redemptive terms of the forfeited inheritance (the earth), and chapters six through nineteen reveal judgments and events during the time when the seals are being broken and these terms are being carried out.

Then, near the end of this time, the wedding festivities of the Lamb are seen occurring (Rev. 19:7-9), with a view to the redeemed bride becoming Christ's wife once the work surrounding the redemption of the inheritance has been completed (Rev. 19:11-21).

(That the redemption of the inheritance *CANNOT* be completed until Christ returns and *OVERTHROWS* Gentile world power [Rev. 19:11-21] is made plain from judgments seen when the seventh seal is opened. Some of these judgments have to do with events surrounding the overthrow of Gentile world power following Christ's return. This matter is dealt with in Chapters XVI-XVIII in the author's book, *The Time of the End*.

Thus, since the bride becoming Christ's wife [or God's remarriage to Israel] is part and parcel with the redemption of the inheritance, *the bride CANNOT appear as Christ's wife until FOLLOWING His return and the DESTRUCTION of Gentile world power, as seen at the end of Revelation chapter nineteen.*)

Thus, though God completes His dealings with Israel within the scope of time covered by and immediately following Daniel's Seventy-Week prophecy in Revelation chapters six through the first part of chapter nineteen, *judgmental matters on earth at this time also pertain to the Church as well, though the Church will be in heaven.*

This book begins with the Church removed into heaven and judged, followed by the twenty-four elders casting their crowns before God's throne (chs. 1-4). Then this book continues with the search for One worthy to loose the seals of the seven-sealed scroll — containing the redemptive terms of the forfeited inheritance (ch. 5).

And, in succeeding chapters, covering Daniel's unfulfilled Seventieth Week, the book deals with *the redemption of the inheritance and with the bride being revealed as Christ's wife once this redemptive process has been completed.*

The redemption of the inheritance in Revelation chapters six through nineteen has to do with *the domain over which Christ and His wife, His consort queen (ch. 19), will rule during the succeeding Messianic Era (ch. 20).* And it is in the preceding respect that events in these chapters have to do with the Church as well as with Israel, though the Church will be in heaven when these events unfold on earth.

Also note that when Scripture deals with the “marriage” of Christ and His bride, as in Rev. 19:7-9, the reference is always to *the festivities surrounding the marriage, NOT to the marriage itself.*

As well, there will be NO marriage ceremony per se, as we think of marriage in our modern-day culture. There WASN'T one in the type, and there WON'T be one in the antitype either. And this is an easy matter to see in both the type (Ruth 4) and the antitype (Rev. 5-19).

The wedding festivities surrounding the marriage of God's Son — which portend, and in this case necessitate, a marriage — will occur in heaven *very near the end of the redemption of the forfeited inheritance.* But, as previously seen, *the ENTIRE redemptive process MUST be carried out BEFORE the bride can become Christ's wife.*

In this passage (Rev. 19:7-9), the marriage festivities are seen occurring *immediately preceding the completion of the redemption of the forfeited inheritance* (chs. 6-19). Christ's return and the subsequent overthrow of Gentile world power, as seen in Rev. 19:11-21, *completes the redemption of the inheritance;* and this will be followed by the long-awaited Messianic Era, during which time Christ will reign as King and His wife as consort queen (20:1ff).

(Note that when the type in the Book of Ruth and the antitype in the Book of Revelation are viewed together, the chronology of events in connection with the rapture and beyond is easy to follow.

The rapture, the removal of Christians from Man's Day into the Lord's Day, from earth into heaven, occurs first.

[The timing of the rapture, as it relates to the Tribulation, has, over the years, come under question by some Bible students. Suffice it to say, a person simply *CANNOT* take the complete word picture in the Old Testament (seen through viewing all of the various types on the subject together), set it alongside the New Testament antitype, and come to any conclusion other than *seeing the complete Church (all Christians) being removed PRECEDING the Tribulation.*

A person *MUST* understand that the rapture is *the FIRST* of the revealed events in “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” else he will fail to properly understand numerous things about the succeeding revealed events. If one goes wrong with the timing of this beginning event in “the revelation of Jesus Christ” — the rapture, in relation to the Tribulation (which has to do with *the redemption of the*

inheritance and marriage, necessitating a PRIOR removal of the Church from the earth and a revelation of the bride at the judgment seat) — he will find himself being forced into other erroneous interpretations numerous places throughout the events which follow].

The rapture is followed by *the judgment of Christians [ALL Christians (II Cor. 5:10; cf. Rev. 1:10-20)], the revelation of the bride at the judgment seat [with resulting events (e.g., crowns cast before God's throne)], the redemption of the inheritance [being concluded and brought into full realization at the time of Christ's return and the destruction of Gentile world power], and the bride becoming Christ's wife [with marriage part and parcel with the redemption of the inheritance].*

Then the Messianic Era can be ushered in, with God's firstborn Sons — Christ, Israel, and the Church [which will have been adopted into a firstborn status at this time] — occupying their proper regal positions on and over the earth.)

2) Result of the Redemption

The result of the redemption of the inheritance — type or antitype — is *REGAL in nature*.

In the type, Ruth became Boaz's wife, and Boaz's lineage is traced to King David (Ruth 4:13-22).

In the antitype, the bride will become the wife of the Lamb, Who, with His consort queen, will reign as the greater Son of David (II Sam. 7:12, 13; cf. Matt. 9:27; 12:23; Luke 1:31-33).

The result of the redemption of the inheritance, as seen in the antitype, will be *reverential awe and excitement in heaven, undoubtedly of a nature NOT heretofore seen.*

John first heard “a great voice of much people in heaven, saying, *Alleluia; salvation, and glory, and honor, and power, unto the Lord our God; For true and righteous are his judgments [judgments also resulting in Israel's redemption]...*” (Rev. 19:1-3).

Then John saw the twenty-four elders, along with the four living creatures, as they “fell down and worshipped God that sat on the throne, saying, *Amen; Alleluia*” (v. 4).

John then heard a voice coming out of the throne which said, “*Praise our God, all ye his servants, and ye that fear him, both small and great*” (v. 5).

This was then followed by John hearing a voice which he described as that of “a great multitude... many waters... mighty thunderings, saying, *Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth*” (v. 6).

Then, for the first time since the inheritance began to be deemed, the bride comes back into view. And the one previously seen as the bride is now seen as *the one ABOUT TO become the wife of the Lamb — the one ABOUT TO become the wife of the One Who will shortly complete the redemption of the inheritance, the One Who through a completion of the judgments contained in the seven-sealed scroll at the time of His return will take the bride as His wife.*

Note how all of this is anticipated in Rev. 19:7-9:

“Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honor to him: for the marriage [‘marriage festivities’] of the Lamb is come, and his wife [Gk., *gune*, meaning ‘woman,’ (marital status unknown through the use of this word); but here, contextually, still Christ’s bride, not yet His wife (*ref. NASB, NIV*)], hath made herself ready.

And to her was granted that she should be arrayed [*lit.*, ‘array herself’] in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints [*lit.*, ‘righteousnesses of the saints,’ or ‘righteous acts of the saints’].

And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper [or ‘marriage banquet, festivities’] of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.”

And John, having previously been shown all the various things surrounding “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” beginning with the removal of Christians from the earth, now finds himself *at this climactic point.*

The completion of the redemption of the inheritance is about to occur, the previously revealed bride is about to become the Lamb’s wife, and the marriage festivities (with a view to ensuing events) can at last begin. And John, having been shown these things and finding himself at this climactic point, could do no more than fall at the feet of the one who revealed these things to him (v. 10).

Thus, the entire sequence of unfolding events in the Book of

Revelation — foreshadowed by unfolding events in the Book of Ruth — can only be seen as *REGAL* in nature, in complete keeping with the way man was introduced at the time of his creation.

God's first statement relative to man — an entirely new creation in God's universe, one created in His Own "image" and "likeness" — was, "let them [the man and the woman together] have dominion [Heb., *radah*, 'rule']" (Gen. 1:26). *The first man, the first Adam, was to reign as king, with his wife reigning at his side as consort queen.* And, though the fall ensued before man had taken the sceptre, with the domain remaining under Satan's rule, God's purpose for man's creation in the beginning remained unchanged.

And this purpose is seen being brought to fruition 6,000 years later in the Book of Revelation. Following events seen in the first nineteen chapters of this book, *the second Man, the last Adam, will reign as King, with His wife reigning at His side as consort queen* (ch. 20a).

The Spirit is in the world today searching for a bride for God's Son. Once the bride has been procured, all Christians will be removed from the earth. And the bride will then be singled out and revealed at the judgment seat (Rev. 1-3). Crowns will then be relinquished by one group of angels, with a view to man, after 6,000 years of sin and death, at last finding himself in a position to realize the purpose for his creation in the beginning (Rev. 4).

The inheritance will have been redeemed — the domain over which Satan and his angels presently rule, but the domain over which Christ and His consort queen will be about to rule (Rev. 5-19).

Then, once the inheritance has been redeemed, the bride will be revealed as *Christ's wife*. And ensuing events (which will include crowns forcibly taken from Satan and his angels at the time of their overthrow) will lead into the Messianic Era, when *the King with His consort queen, AT LONG LAST, hold the sceptre* (Rev. 20a).

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