

Who are the Four Beasts, and Four and Twenty Elders?

The Four and Twenty Elders.—The question once proposed to John concerning a certain company, has frequently arisen concerning these four and twenty elders: "Who are these? and whence came they?" ***It will be observed*** that they are clothed in white raiment, and have on their heads crowns of gold, which are ***tokens both of a conflict completed and a victory gained***. From this we conclude that they ***were once participants in the Christian warfare***, once trod, in common with all saints, this earthly pilgrimage, ***but have overcome***; and for some good purpose, in advance of the great multitude of the redeemed, are wearing their ***victor crowns*** in the heavenly world. Indeed, they plainly tell us as much as this in the song of praise which they, in connection with the four living beings, ascribe to the Lamb, in the 9th verse of the following chapter: "And they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." ***This song is sung before any of the events in the prophecy of the seven seals transpire***; for it is sung to set forth the worthiness of the Lamb to take the book and to open the seals, on the ground of what he had already accomplished, which was their redemption. ***It is not, therefore, thrown in here by anticipation, having its application in the future; but it expresses an absolute and finished fact in the history of those who sang it. These, then, were a class of redeemed persons,—redeemed from this earth, redeemed as all others must be redeemed, by the precious blood of Christ.*** {1897 UrS, DAR 415.1}

Do we in any other place read of such a class of redeemed ones?—We think Paul refers to the same company when he writes to the Ephesians thus: "Wherefore he saith, When he [Christ] ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." The marginal reading is, he led a "multitude of captives." Eph.4:8. Going back to the events that occurred in connection with the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ, we read: "And the graves were opened: and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many." Matt.27:52,53. Thus the answer to our question comes back, gathered unmistakably from the sacred page. These are some of those who came out of their graves at the resurrection of Christ, and who were numbered with the illustrious multitude which he led up from the captivity of Death's dark domain when he ascended in triumph on high. Matthew records their resurrection, Paul their ascension, and John beholds them in heaven, performing the sacred duties which they were raised up to accomplish. {1897 UrS, DAR 415.2}

In this view we are not alone. Wesley speaks as follows concerning the four and twenty elders: "'Clothed in white raiment.' This, and their golden crowns, show that

they had already finished their course, and taken their places among the citizens of heaven. They are never termed souls, and hence it is probable that they had glorified bodies already. Compare Matt.27:52." {1897 UrS, DAR 416.1}

The particular attention of the reader is asked to the fact that the four and twenty elders are said to be seated on thrones. Our translation, it is true, reads "seats;" but the Greek is , "thrones;" and so the Revised Version reads: "And round about the throne were four and twenty thrones, and upon the thrones I saw four and twenty elders sitting." This passage, consequently, throws light on the expression found in Dan.7:9, "I beheld till the thrones were cast down." These are the same thrones; and, as has been shown in comments upon that passage, the meaning is not that the thrones were overturned, or cast down, in the ordinary sense of that expression, but placed, or established; and the figure is taken from the Eastern custom of casting down, or placing, mats or divans for distinguished guests to sit upon. These four and twenty elders (see on chapter 5) are supposed to be assistants of Christ in his mediatorial work in the sanctuary on high: and when the judgment scene described in Dan.7:9 commenced in the most holy place, their seats, or thrones, would be set, or placed, there, according to the testimony of that passage. {1897 UrS, DAR 416.2}

The Four Beasts.—It is a very unhappy translation which has given us the word beasts in this verse. The greek word denotes properly a living creature. Bloomfield says, "'Four living creatures' (not beasts). So Heinr. renders it. . . . The propriety of this correction is now, I believe, generally agreed upon by commentators. The word is very different from greek word, used to designate the prophetic beasts in the 13th and following chapters. (Scholefield.) It may be added that Bulkeley adduces several examples of to denote, not only creature, but *even a human being*, especially one from Origen, who uses it of our Lord Jesus." {1897 UrS, DAR 417.5}

Similar imagery is used in the first chapter of Ezekiel. The qualities which would seem to be signified by the emblems are strength, perseverance, reason, and swiftness,—strength of affection, perseverance in carrying out the requirements of duty, reason in comprehending the divine will, and swiftness in obeying. These living beings are even more intimately connected with the throne than are the four and twenty elders, being represented as in the midst of it, and round about it. Like the elders, these, in their song to the Lamb, ascribe to him praise for having redeemed them from the earth. ***They therefore belong to the same company***, and represent a part of the great multitude, who, as already described (see remarks on verse 4), ***have been led up on high from the captivity of death***. Concerning the object of their redemption, see remarks on chapter 5:8. {1897 UrS, DAR 418.1}

They Rest Not.—"Oh! happy unrest!" beautifully exclaims John Wesley; and the theme of their constant worship is, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, which

was, and is, and is to come." No sublimer strain ever issued from created lips. And they repeat it "day and night," or continually, these terms only denoting the manner in which time is reckoned here; for there can be no night where the throne of God is. {1897 UrS, DAR 418.2}

We mortals are apt to tire of the repetition of the simple testimony we bear here to the goodness and mercy of God: and we are sometimes tempted to say nothing, because we cannot continually say something new. But may we not learn a profitable lesson from the course of these holy beings above, who never grow weary of the ceaseless repetition of these words, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty;" and to whom these words never grow old, because their hearts ever glow with a sense of his holiness, goodness, and love? Praise does not become to them monotonous; for with every utterance they gain a new view of the attributes of the Almighty; they reach a greater height of comprehension in their vision of his perfections; the horizon expands before them; their hearts enlarge; and the new emotions of adoration, from their new standpoint, draw from them a fresh utterance of their holy salutation, new even to themselves, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" {1897 UrS, DAR 418.3}

So, even with us here, though remarks are often repeated in reference to the goodness, the mercy, and the love of God, the value of his truth, and the attractions of the world to come, these should not grow stale upon the ear; for we should all our lives be rising to new conceptions of the blessing embraced in these glorious themes. {1897 UrS, DAR 419.1}

Concerning the expression, "which was, and is, and is to come," see remarks on chapter 1:4. {1897 UrS, DAR 419.2}

"Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power." How worthy, we never shall be able to realize till, like the holy beings who utter this language, changed to immortality, we are presented faultless before the presence of his glory. Jude24. {1897 UrS, DAR 419.3}

Thou Hast Created All Things.—The works of creation furnish the foundation for the honor, glory, and power ascribed to God. "And for thy pleasure," or through thy will, , they are, and were created. God willed, and all things came into existence; and by the same power they are preserved and sustained. {1897 UrS, DAR 419.4}

Turning from the Father, who sat upon the throne, John saw four and twenty seats round about the throne. These seats were occupied by four and twenty elders, "clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold." These also represent the atoning work of Christ. ***They represent men*** from every kindred, tongue, and people, redeemed by the blood of Christ, clothed with the white raiment of His righteousness, and wearing on their heads the crowns of victory, which are ***promised to every overcomer***. ***They were of that company*** who arose from the grave when Christ came from the tomb, and who are ***spoken of by Paul*** as

a "multitude of captives," offered to the Father as the first fruits from the dead. The work of these four and twenty elders is described in the fifth chapter, and for that reason, they are but mentioned in this connection as sitting near the throne. {1905 SNH, SSP 96.1}

Once more the prophet John was shown the end of the sixth seal. The creatures of God's love were ***gathered from all ages***. An innumerable company of the redeemed were seen standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were clothed with the robes of Christ's righteousness; but throughout eternity, they will remember that both robes and palms are the result of the sacrifice of the Son of God. With one voice the song rings through heaven, "Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." The ***redeemed*** host sing the song of their experience; and the angels who are acquainted with each individual, the four and twenty elders, and the four beasts ***who have had a similar experience***, respond to the mighty chorus. {1905 SNH, SSP 139.1}

Their Work.

Vials Full of Odors.—From this expression we form an idea of the employment of those redeemed ones represented by the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders. They have golden vials, or vessels, full of odors - or, as the margin reads, incense - which are the prayers of saints. This is a work of ministry such as pertains to priests. {1897 UrS, DAR 425.2}

Scott says: "It is indisputably manifest that the four living creatures join in, or rather lead, the worship of the Lamb as having redeemed them to God; and this proves beyond controversy that part of the redeemed church is meant by this emblem, and not angels, whose worship is next described, but in language entirely different." {1897 UrS, DAR 425.3}

A. Barnes, in his notes on this passage, remarks: "The idea here is, therefore, that the representatives of the church in heaven, the elders, spoken of as 'priests,' are described as officiating in the temple above in behalf of the church still below, and as offering incense while the church is engaged in prayer." {1897 UrS, DAR 425.4}

The reader will remember that in the ancient typical service the high priest had many assistants; and when we consider that we are now looking into the sanctuary in heaven, the conclusion at once follows that these redeemed ones are the assistants of our great High Priest above. For this purpose they were doubtless redeemed. And what could be more appropriate than that our Lord, in his priestly work for the human race, should be assisted by noble members of that race, whose holiness of life, and purity of ***character***, had fitted them to be raised up for that purpose? (See remarks on chapter 4:4.) {1897 UrS, DAR 425.5}

We are aware that many entertain a great aversion to the idea of there being

anything real and tangible in heaven: and we can easily anticipate that the views here presented will be altogether too literal for such. To sustain themselves in their position, they dwell much on the fact that the language is highly figurative, and that we cannot suppose there are or were any such things in heaven as John describes. We reply that, though the Revelation deals largely in figures, it does not deal in fictions. There is reality in all the things described; and we gain an understanding of the reality when we get a correct interpretation of the figures. Thus, in this vision we know that the One upon the throne is God. He is really there. We know the Lamb symbolizes Christ. He too is really there. He ascended with a literal, tangible body; and who can say that he does not still retain it? If, then, our great High Priest is a literal being, he must have a literal place in which to minister. And if the four living creatures and the four and twenty elders represent those whom Christ lead up from the captivity of death at the time of his resurrection and ascension, why are they not just as literal beings while there in heaven as they were when they ascended? {1897 UrS, DAR 426.1}

The Song.—It is called "a new song," new, probably, in respect to the occasion and the composition. They were the first that could sing it, being the first that were redeemed. They call themselves kings and priests. In what sense they are priests has already been noticed, they being the assistants of Christ in his priestly work. In the same sense, doubtless, they are also kings; for Christ is set down with his Father on his throne, and doubtless these, as ministers of his, have some part to act in connection with the government of heaven in reference to this world. {1897 UrS, DAR 426.2}

The Anticipation.—"We shall reign on the earth." Thus, notwithstanding they are redeemed, and surround the throne of God, and are in the presence of the Lamb that redeemed them, and are surrounded with the angelic hosts of heaven, where all is glory ineffable, their song contemplates a still higher state, when the great work of redemption shall be completed, and they, with the whole redeemed family of God, of every age, shall reign on the earth, which is the promised inheritance, and is to be the final and eternal residence of the saints. Rom.4:13; Gal.3:29; Ps.37:11; Matt.5:5; 2Pet.3:13; Isa.65:17-25; Rev.21:1-5. {1897 UrS, DAR 426.3}

So when John watched for one to open the book, there appeared, as it were a Lamb slain. That all power was given to the Lamb, that all heaven was poured out in this sacrifice, is shown by its seven horns and its seven eyes. "He came and took the book out of the right hand of Him that sat upon the throne"; for not even Christ could do the work alone. The power came from the Father. Father and Son unite in the work of Redemption. "And when He had taken the book, the four beasts (living Margin creatures) and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and golden vials full of odors (incense), which are the prayers of saints." Here is given *the work of the elders and the living creatures*. As the Lamb ministers constantly before the throne of God, these *who have been*

redeemed to God "out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation," bow before the throne, offering to Him who sits thereon *the prayers which ascend from* the earth. With the prayers, is a cloud of incense. "This holy incense is the merits and intercession of Christ, His perfect righteousness, which, through faith, is imputed to His people, and which alone can make the worship of sinful beings acceptable to God." {1905 SNH, SSP 105.1}

In the tabernacle service on earth, the altar of incense burned continually before the ark of the covenant, where shone the visible presence of God. When the high priest entered on the day of atonement into the Holy of Holies, he made his offering for the people with much incense, a cloud ascended from the censer as long as he remained in Divine Presence. To-day in heaven those who once lived on earth, representatives from every kindred, nation, and people, having passed through every phase of earthly experience, take the prayers offered by penitent sinners, and present them before the Lamb. Repentance is a sweet odor before our God; for it tells of sorrow for sin, and the acceptance of the life of Christ. Since the death of Christ, the lamb is no longer slain; but the morning and evening prayers, when the blood of Christ is presented by faith, touch the heart of God, and from His throne angels speed their way on Margin rapid wings to fulfill the petition. If to prayer there does not seem to come an immediate answer, there is still the assurance that no earnest petition escapes the notice of our Father. They are represented as preserved in vials, in "bottles," as David says; and when the family of the redeemed is at last gathered on that crystal sea with the Lamb and the four and twenty elders, it will be found that every prayer of faith is answered. The lowliest believer, the most burdened sinner, who turns his face heaven ward, can see the rainbow of promise above the throne. For him the Lamb was slain, and in his behalf, *some one in that company of elders, who surround the throne, can plead, "I have passed over this same road and I have been rescued by the Saviour."* Look up, and take heart; for all heaven is working for the redemption of man! {1905 SNH, SSP 106.1}

Purpose of Their Station.

The Levitical priesthood was divided into twenty-four courses. 3 Each course had its chief or governor of the sanctuary. 4 This continued down to the time of Christ. 6 When the Saviour ascended to heaven, He led a multitude of captives; and *when John in vision* was shown the first apartment of the heavenly sanctuary, with its seven lamps of fire burning before the throne of God, he saw four and twenty elders seated upon four and twenty seats, and they worshiped the Lamb, saying, "Thou . . . hast redeemed us to God by Thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; and hast made us unto our God kings and priests." In this we see the antitype of the twenty-four courses of priests. The chiefs, or

elders, of each course have seats of honor, and they are kings and priests after the order of Melchizedek. The remainder of the multitude Christ took into heaven are not mentioned, but it is reasonable to suppose that they constitute the courses of which the four and twenty elders are the chiefs. {1914 SNH, CIS 80.1}

These four living creatures represent four phases of the character of God. The first was like a *lion*, the second like a calf, or an *ox*, as Ezekiel says, the third had the face of a *man*, and the fourth was like a flying *eagle*. This again establishes the fact that when the plan of redemption was laid, all heaven was in unison with the plan. Ezekiel and John, one before Christ's advent, the other after, *describe the same thing*, showing that the New Testament is but the unfolding of the Old. {1905 SNH, SSP 98.1}

Christ in His life upon earth combined these four natures. He is the *Lion* of the tribe of Judah, of whom it was prophesied, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." As lawgiver and governor, Christ represented the *kingly* nature of the Father. When the tribes were given their places about the sanctuary, Judah was located on the east; and as they journeyed, the standard of Judah went before them. In the Gospels, Matthew begins with the genealogy, showing the right of Christ to the throne of David. There was, in the life of Emmanuel, a union of divinity with humanity. Christ was the firstborn in heaven; He was likewise the firstborn of God upon earth, and heir to the Father's throne. Christ, the firstborn, though the Son of God, was clothed in humanity, and was made perfect through suffering. He took the form of *man*, and through eternity, He will remain a *Man*. Every firstborn into human families is a type of the offering made by Christ. Mark, in his life of Christ, gives the *servant* side. The second face was that of the calf, or the *ox*, the servant of men. This represents the priesthood,—the Levites who were chosen for service. Christ is both the slain lamb, and the priest who ministers in the sanctuary on high. He bore the sins of the world in His own body on the cross, and the burden crushed Him to death. The most exalted position, and the most lowly position are here represented,—God in the heavens, and God on the cross. As Levites always accompanied the tabernacle, so Christ ministers constantly to man. Heaven will know no other story till man is redeemed from the earth. Every beast of burden *beneath its load*, every overworked child of God, is a reminder of the Christ who became the servant of men. Although He stepped into the lowliest place, yet He was still the giver of the law, and He is judge of all. The Gospel of Luke describes the man side of the Son, giving that part of His life work, which appeals most forcibly to the mind of man. As God took the form of man, there is, in the gift, a promise that man may have the nature of his God. The *keen eye of the flying eagle* is taken to represent the searching gaze of Him whose eyes, as a flame of fire, "run to and fro throughout the whole earth, strongly to hold with them whose heart is perfect toward Him." Among the different writers, it was John, the beloved disciple, who saw the

character of Christ portrayed as the glorious Word, One equal with the Father in might, power, and glory, and his gospel completes the inspired record of the *Margin* Saviour's life. He portrayed the divine character more fully than any other writer. This is represented by the eagle flying heavenward. {1905 SNH, SSP 98.2}

Num. 2:3-9 on the East side Judah with Issachar and Zebulun, Num. 2:10-17 South side Ruben with Simeon and Gad; Num. 2:18-24 West side Ephraim with Manasseh and Benjamin; Num. 2:25-32 North side Dan with Asher and Naphtali.

Note The history of the sons of Jacob represent Character perfection. See {1914 SNH, CIS 301.2} {1914 SNH, CIS 291.4}

The prophetic words of Moses in his parting blessing on the tribes, indicate that there would be *a decided change from the character* portrayed by Jacob: "Of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between His shoulders." 16 {1914 SNH, CIS 347.5}

Again the prophet sees the work completed; and the four and twenty elders, who have long waited for the redemption of *their fellow beings*, fall before the throne, and worship Him who is crowned King of Kings. These are the beings who, with the host of the redeemed, *will finally have the renewed earth* for their home. A part of their song before the Father is, "Thou hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth," showing that in the midst of heavenly glory, they yet look forward to the restoration of the earth at the end of the thousand years, during which time, the cases of the wicked are tried. {1905 SNH, SSP 205.1}

With the announcement of these words this second time, the man Jesus Christ, with the four living creatures and four and twenty elders, *who for centuries have represented the redeemed*, leave the temple altogether, and enter no more, until Christ returns from earth, bringing with Him the host of the redeemed. Then with the hundred and forty-four thousand, glorified, and reflecting the character of Christ, He enters the temple, and this company minister there. {1905 SNH, SSP 267.2}

Ellen G White on the Cross and its Shadow

On the next Friday, October 16, Ellen White spent some time looking over Elder Haskell's new book, *The Cross and Its Shadow*, a book devoted to the sanctuary truth. He had mailed to her the very first copy from the press. *She expressed her pleasure that he had been spared so long and was able to publish the book.* She

and Crisler prayed together afterward, and she prayed especially for the General Conference brethren and for the men at Madison. (CCC to WCW, October 16, 1914). { 6BIO 408.7 }

See study on Ellen G White statements of the SDA Pioneers.

The Beautiful Picture Marred! Are Angels redeemed?

Note:—With the Facts above in mind, it is to be wondered why Pastors are destroying such beautiful symbols of Christ’s character in us, Gal. 4:19; Col. 1:27, and His redeeming love. Yet they make divisions by their use of the following quote instead of bringing unity and harmony. Why is the following quote made into a mountain, especially when many quotes like the one that follows are available to them?

This roll was written within and without. John says: “I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and to read the book, neither to look thereon” [verse 4]. The vision as presented to John made its impression upon his mind. The destiny of every nation was contained in that book. John was distressed at the utter inability of any human being or angelic intelligence to read the words, or even to look thereon. His soul was wrought up to such a point of agony and suspense that ***one of the strong angels*** had compassion on him, and laying his hand on him assuringly, said, “Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof” [verse 5]. { 12MR 296.4 }

Note: Angels cannot be redeemed because those loyal have never fallen. Those fallen cannot be redeemed—Heb. 6:4.

For what was the great controversy permitted to continue throughout the ages? Why was it that Satan’s existence was not cut short at the outset of his rebellion? It was that the universe might be convinced of God’s justice in His dealing with evil; that sin might receive eternal condemnation. In the plan of redemption there are heights and depths that eternity itself can never exhaust, marvels into which the angels desire to look. ***The redeemed only, of all created beings, have in their own experience known the actual conflict with sin; they have wrought with Christ, and, as even the angels could not do, have entered into the fellowship of His sufferings; will they have no testimony as to the science of redemption—*nothing that will be of worth to unfallen beings?**** { Ed 308.3 }

He did not come to save angels. {7BC 927.2} See Grace not needed or understood by angels—TM 519; 1SM 331.

Not merely in the minds of a few finite creatures in this world, but ***in the minds of all the inhabitants of the heavenly universe***, has the immutability of God's law been established. Satan's course against Christ was heralded ***to every world***. When the issue was finally determined, ***every unfallen being expressed indignation at the rebellion. With one voice they extolled*** God as righteous, merciful, self-denying, just. His law had been vindicated. { ST August 27, 1902, par. 12 }

Every eye in the unfallen universe is bent upon those who profess to be Christ's followers. ***Here, in this atom of a world, an earnest warfare is going on***,—a battle in which Christ, our substitute and surety, has engaged in our behalf, and conquered. Now we, Christ's purchased possession, must become soldiers of his cross, ***and conquer in our own behalf, on our own account, through the power and wisdom given us from above***. The influence of the cross of Calvary is to vanquish every earthly and spiritual evil power; and ***we need to know*** the plan of the battle, ***that we may work in harmony with Christ***. { RH September 29, 1891, par. 1 }

Satan saw that his disguise was torn away. ***His administration was laid open before the unfallen angels and before the heavenly universe***. He had revealed himself as a murderer. By shedding the blood of the Son of God, he had ***uprooted*** himself from the sympathies of the heavenly beings. Henceforth his work was restricted. Whatever attitude he might assume, he could no longer await the angels as they came from the heavenly courts, and before them accuse Christ's brethren of being clothed with the garments of blackness and the defilement of sin. The last link of sympathy between Satan and the heavenly world was broken. { DA 761.2 }

Note: Yes the rebellion started in Heaven, But had been expelled to this earth upon the submission of Adam and Eve. Job 1:7; 2:2. The fallen angels had thus been bound here also at Christ's death. Therefore if those are angels mentioned in Revelation chapters 4:6,8 and 5:6,8,14 they could not have Victors Crowns.

The Fall of Angels that cannot be Redeemed.

The first six verses of this chapter (Rev. 12), as has been seen, take us down to the close of the 1260 years, which marked the end of the papal supremacy in 1798. In the 7th verse it is equally plain that we are carried back into previous ages. How far?—To the time first introduced in the chapter,—the days of the first advent. "And there was war in heaven," the same heaven where the woman and the dragon

were seen at first; but they were actors in scenes that took place here upon the earth; hence we understand this war to be located in the same place. And to what point are we carried back?—Evidently to the commencement of Christ's ministry here upon earth. To prove that Michael is Christ, see Jude 9; 1Thess. 4:16; John 5:28,29; and that this was a special time of warfare between him and Satan need not be argued. {1897 UrS, DAR 513.1}

Another symbol is here introduced, and John hastens to tell us what this symbol represents. It is the devil and Satan. But this is not the same as the dragon of verses 3 and 4. That was a great red dragon, with seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. Though in a sense the dragon represents Satan, since he was the instigator of the work which this dragon did, it would be most grotesque to try to apply this symbol to Satan personally. Satan is not said anywhere in the Bible to be red, and he is not possessed of the number of heads and horns there stated; and while he might, as the god of this world, have one crown, there would be no reason for his having seven. But all these features are very appropriate as applied to pagan Rome. {1897 UrS, DAR 513.2}

When it is desired to set forth Satan by a symbol, no more appropriate one can be chosen than a great dragon, or serpent, unqualified. And why a similar symbol is also employed to represent Rome with some of its peculiar features, is evident. It was because Rome, as a universal empire, was then the only possible general agent to carry out Satan's will in the earth. But there is no occasion to confound the two symbols. {1897 UrS, DAR 514.1}

In reference to the war mentioned, Satan had looked forward to Christ's mission to this earth as his last chance of success in overthrowing the plan of salvation. He came to Christ with specious temptations, in hope of overcoming him; he tried in various ways to destroy him during his ministry; and when he had succeeded in laying him in the tomb, he endeavored, in malignant triumph, to hold him there. But in every encounter the Son of God came off triumphant; and ***he sends back this gracious promise to his faithful followers:*** "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." This shows us that Jesus ***while on earth*** waged a warfare, and obtained the victory. Satan saw his last effort fail, his last scheme miscarry. He had boasted that he would overcome the Son of God in his mission to this world, and thus render the plan of salvation an ignominious failure; and well he knew that if he was foiled in this his last desperate effort to thwart the work of God, his last hope had perished, and all was lost. (See Spiritual Gifts, Vol. I, p.67.) {1897 UrS, DAR 514.2}

But, in the language of verse 8, he "prevailed not;" and hence the song may well be sung, "Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them." {1897 UrS, DAR 514.3}

It is held by some that this war took place when Satan, then an angel of light and glory, rebelled in heaven; and that the "casting out" of which John speaks, was his

expulsion from heaven at that time. But *we are unable to harmonize this view with the testimony* before us. Thus, in verse 13 we read: "And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child." *This shows that* just as soon as the devil saw that he was cast out, he *turned his wrath against* the woman, *the church*, which, not far from that time, fled into the wilderness. When Satan therefore found himself thus overthrown, the man-child had already been brought forth, or, in other words, the first advent of Christ had taken place. Hence this war and defeat of Satan, taking place this side of the Christian era, and not a great length of time before the church went into the wilderness in 538, cannot be his fall from heaven before the creation of the world; though that was a war in heaven. {1897 UrS, DAR 514.4}

Again, there seem to be a number of instances in which Satan is spoken of as defeated, or cast down. One was *his first rejection from heaven; another, when Christ overcame him at his first advent; and there will be another in the future*, when he is cast into the bottomless pit, and shut up for a thousand years. *And on each successive occasion, we behold a regularly increasing limitation of his power*. He falls a degree lower in every succeeding combat. *The first time*, as we may plainly infer from certain scriptures, the contest was between him and God the Father (see 2Pet. 2:4); *the second* time between him and Christ the Son, as in the scripture before us; while *the third* time an angel suffices to accomplish the work of his humiliation. Rev. 20:1,2. *Since his first* contest, he has not been permitted to rise to the dignity of contending with the Father; *since the second*, he has not had the privilege, if such it may be called, of a personal encounter with the Son. The war mentioned in the scripture now before us is between the devil and Michael, Christ. The great effort of the former against the latter, personally, was during his mission here on earth; and Christ's great personal victory over him was in that very contest. {1897 UrS, DAR 515.1}

"Neither was their place found any more in heaven." Heaven, we have seen, does not mean, in this chapter, the place which is the abode of God and his celestial messengers. It here doubtless denotes condition rather than place; and the expression would then signify that they were here humiliated, and never to regain their former position. They had suffered a terrible defeat, which Christ describes by saying, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven." The hope which he had all along cherished, of overcoming the Son of man when he took upon himself our nature, had forever perished. His power was limited. *He could no more aspire to a personal encounter* with the Son of God,—a fact which hitherto had given, in a comparative degree, dignity and prestige to his position. Henceforth the church (the woman) *is the object of his malice*, and he resorts to all those nefarious means *against her* that would naturally characterize a baffled and hopeless rage. (See Spiritual Gifts, Vol. 1, p.79.) {1897 UrS, DAR 515.2}

But hereupon a song is sung in heaven, "Now is come salvation," etc. How is this if these scenes are in the past? Had salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of

God, and the power of his Christ, then come?—Not at all; but this song was sung prospectively. Those things were made sure. The great victory had been won by Christ which put the question of their establishment forever at rest. Just as we read in other scriptures, "We have eternal life," "We have redemption through his blood," etc., as if we were now in actual possession of these blessings; whereas we only have them by faith, and the language is simply an assurance that they are *forever sure to the final overcomers*. {1897 UrS, DAR 516.2}

The prophet then glances rapidly over the working of Satan from that time to the end (verses 11, 12), during which time the faithful "brethren" overcome him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony while his wrath increases as his time grows short. Though working through earthly powers, Satan, personally, is the chief agent from verses 9 to 17. {1897 UrS, DAR 516.3}

Note: How does Satan attack the Church? *Here is Present truth—illustrating the last conflict that we face, Christian verses christian. Matt 24:49, verse 44-25:13. Overcoming Satan in the person of their brethren—fellow human beings. See the Book of Job.* If they'd said our interpretation of EGW is all that matters, if they had said the Pioneers won't be quoted, I'd have known where I should stand. They do say these very thing in actions.

The so-called Christian world is to be the theater of great and decisive actions. Men in authority will enact laws controlling the conscience, after the example of the Papacy. Babylon will make all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. Every nation will be involved. Of this time John the Revelator declares: {1MR 296.5} MATTHEW 24:45-25:13

But the stern tracings of the prophetic pencil reveal a change in this peaceful scene. The beast with lamb-like horns speaks with the voice of a dragon, and "exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him." The spirit of persecution manifested by *paganism and the papacy* is again to be revealed. Prophecy declares that this power will say "to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast." [Revelation 13:14.] The *image* is made to the *first or leopard-like beast*, which is the one brought to view in the *third* angel's message. By this first beast is represented the Roman Church, an ecclesiastical body clothed with civil power, having authority to punish all dissenters. The image to the beast represents *another religious body clothed with similar power*. The formation of this image is the work of that beast whose peaceful rise and mild professions render it so striking a symbol of the United States. *Here* is to be found an *image* of the papacy. *When* the churches of our land, uniting upon such points of faith as are held by them in common, shall influence the State to enforce their decrees and sustain their institutions, *then will Protestant America have formed an image of the Roman hierarchy. Then the true church will be assailed by persecution*, as were God's ancient people. Almost every

century furnishes examples of what bigotry and malice can do under a plea of serving God by protecting the rights of Church and State. ***Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance with worldly powers have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience.*** In the seventeenth century thousands of non-conformist ministers suffered under the rule of the Church of England. ***Persecution always follows religious favoritism on the part of secular governments.*** {4SP 277.2}{4Sp 503.3}{GC 445.1}{GC88 445.1}{D&R 546.3; 518.2-519.3}

The vision that Christ presented to John, presenting the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus, is to be definitely proclaimed to all nations, people, and tongues. ***The churches, represented by Babylon, are represented as having fallen from their spiritual state to become a persecuting power against those who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.*** To John this persecuting power is represented as having horns like a lamb, but as speaking like a dragon. . . . {TM 117.4}

The Protestant churches, having received doctrines that the Word of God condemns, ***will bring these to the front and force them upon the consciences of the people, just as the papal authorities urged their dogmas upon the advocates of truth in Luther's time.*** The same battle is again to be fought, and every soul will be called upon to decide upon to which side of the controversy he or she will be found. {CTr 323.5}

But if the subject of religious legislation is judiciously and intelligently laid before the people, and they see that through Sunday enforcement the Roman apostasy would be re-enacted by the Christian world, and that the tyranny of past ages would be repeated, then whatever comes, we shall have done our duty. {RH, December 24, 1889 par. 4} {RH, March 9, 1911 par. 17}

. . . Now that Satan can no longer keep the world under his control by withholding the Scriptures (during papacy supremacy), he resorts to ***other means*** to accomplish the same object. . . . ***And now, as in former ages, he has worked through the church (protestant) to further his designs. The religious organizations of the day*** (GC 390.2, 389.2; TM 61.3; 7BC 979; PP 124.1) have refused to listen to ***unpopular truths*** plainly brought to view in the Scriptures, and in combating them ***they have adopted interpretations and taken positions*** which have sown broadcast the seeds of skepticism. Clinging to the papal error of natural immortality and man's consciousness in death, they have rejected the only defense against the delusions of spiritualism. The doctrine of eternal torment has led many to disbelieve the Bible. And as the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the people, it is found that the observance of the seventh-day Sabbath is enjoined; and as the only way to free themselves from a duty which they are unwilling to perform, ***many popular teachers declare that the law of God is no longer binding. Thus they cast away the law and the Sabbath together.*** As the work of Sabbath reform extends, this rejection of the divine law to avoid the claims of the fourth commandment will become well-nigh universal. ***The teachings of religious leaders*** have opened the door to infidelity, to spiritualism, and to contempt for God's holy law; and ***upon these leaders rests a fearful responsibility for the iniquity that exists in the Christian world.*** {GC 586.2}{GC 281.3}

{GC 603.2}—{TM 16.1}{4SP 318.2,3}{TM 64.3}{3T 257.1}{RH Extra, Dec. 23, 1890.}.
Parentheses and contents added.

But *today* in the *religious world* there are multitudes who, as *they* believe, *are working for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ as an earthly and temporal dominion. They desire to make our Lord the ruler of the kingdoms of this world, the ruler in its courts and camps, its legislative halls, its palaces and market places. They expect Him to rule through legal enactments, enforced by human authority.* Since Christ is not now here in person, *they themselves will undertake to act in His stead, to execute the laws of His kingdom.* The establishment of such a kingdom is what the Jews desired in the days of Christ. They would have received Jesus, had He been willing to establish a temporal dominion, to enforce what they regarded as the laws of God, and to make them the *expositors* of His will and the agents of His authority. But He said, "My kingdom is not of this world." John 18:36. He would not accept the earthly throne. {DA 509.2} {GC 587.1; 588.3—for a millennium}{5T 712.1; 714-715.1}{GC 603.2} {TM 366.1} {2SP 14.1}

The people see that they have been deluded. They accuse one another of having led them to destruction; but all unite in heaping their bitterest condemnation upon the ministers. Unfaithful pastors have prophesied smooth things; *they have led their hearers to make void the law of God and to persecute those who would keep it holy. Now, in their despair, these teachers confess before the world their work of deception.* The multitudes are filled with fury. "We are lost!" they cry, "and you are the cause of our ruin;" and they turn upon the false shepherds. The very ones that once admired them most will pronounce the most dreadful curses upon them. The very hands that once crowned them with laurels will be raised for their destruction. The swords which were to slay God's people are now employed to destroy their enemies. Everywhere there is strife and bloodshed. { GC 655.4}

"Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," are the words of our Saviour. Errors in doctrine are multiplying and twining themselves with serpentlike subtlety around the affections of the people. There is not a doctrine of the Bible that has not been denied. *The great truths of prophecy, showing our position in the history of the world, have been shorn of their beauty and power by the clergy, who seek to make these all-important truths dark and incomprehensible. In many cases the children are drifting away from the old landmarks.* The Lord commanded His people Israel: "When thy son asketh thee in time to come, saying, What mean the testimonies, and the statutes, and the judgments, which the Lord our God hath commanded you? then thou shalt say unto thy son, We were Pharaoh's

bondmen in Egypt; and the Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand: and the Lord showed signs and wonders, great and sore, upon Egypt, upon Pharaoh, and upon all his household, before our eyes: and He brought us out from thence, that He might bring us in, to give us the land which He sware unto our fathers. And the Lord commanded us to do all these statutes, to fear the Lord our God, for our good always, that He might preserve us alive, as it is at this day. And it shall be our righteousness, if we observe to do all these commandments before the Lord our God, as He hath commanded us." {5T 330.1}

Culminating is the loud cry of Rev. 18:2

“And thunders and lightnings”—another allusion to the judgments of Egypt. (See Exodus 9:23.) The great city is divided into three parts; that is, the ***three grand divisions*** of the ***false and apostate religions*** of the world (the great city), ***Paganism, Catholicism, and relapsed Protestantism***, seem to be set apart each to receive its appropriate doom. The cities of the nations fall; universal desolation spreads over the earth; every island flees away, and the mountains are not found; and great Babylon comes in remembrance before God. Read her judgments, as more fully described in chapter 18. {1897 UrS, DAR 653.3}

Testimonies To Ministers

The Remnant Church Not Babylon
page 61 Paragraph 3

"The fallen denominational churches comprise babylon". also PP124.1

7BC

Revelation 18:1-5
Page 979

"The churches have become as described in the eighteenth chapter of Revelation" also GC 389, 380-390.

The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan

A warning Rejected
Page 389 Paragraph 2

"The ***second angel's message*** of Revelation 14 was first preached in the

summer of 1844, and *it then had a more direct application to the churches of the United States*, where the warning of the judgment had been most widely proclaimed and most generally rejected, and where the declension in the churches had been most rapid. But the message of the second angel did not reach its complete fulfillment in 1844. The churches then experienced a moral fall, in consequence of their refusal of the light of the advent message; but that fall was not complete. As they have continued to reject the special truths for this time they have fallen lower and lower. Not yet, however, can it be said that "Babylon is fallen,... because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication." She has not yet made all nations do this."

The Great Controversy
Between Christ and Satan
A Warning Rejected
Page 390 Paragraph 2

"Notwithstanding the spiritual darkness and alienation from God that exist in the churches which constitute Babylon, the great body of Christ's true followers are still to be found in their communion. There are many of these who have never seen the special truths for this time. Not a few are dissatisfied with their present condition and are longing for clearer light. They look in vain for the image of Christ in the churches with which they are connected."

I saw the Father *rise from the throne*, [SEE PAGE 92.] and in a flaming chariot go into the holy of holies within the veil, and sit down. Then Jesus rose up from the throne, and the most of those who were bowed down arose with Him. I did not see one ray of light pass from Jesus to the careless multitude after He arose, and they were left in perfect darkness. Those who arose when Jesus did, kept their eyes fixed on Him as He left the throne and led them out a little way. Then He raised His right arm, and we heard His lovely voice saying, "Wait here; I am going to My Father to receive the kingdom; keep your garments spotless, and in a little while *I will return from the wedding and receive you to Myself.*" Then a cloudy chariot, with wheels like flaming fire, surrounded by angels, came to where Jesus was. He stepped into the chariot and was borne to the holiest, where the Father sat. There I beheld Jesus, a great High Priest, standing before the Father. On the hem of His garment was a bell and a pomegranate, a bell and a pomegranate. Those who rose up with Jesus would send up their faith to Him in the holiest, and pray, "My Father, give us Thy Spirit." Then Jesus would breathe upon them

the Holy Ghost. In that breath was light, power, and much love, joy, and peace. EW 55.1

I turned to look at the company who were still bowed before the throne; they did not know that Jesus had left it. *Satan appeared to be by the throne, trying* to carry on the work of God. I saw them look up to the throne, and pray, "Father, give us Thy Spirit." Satan would then breathe upon them an unholy influence; in it there was light and much power, but no sweet love, joy, and peace. Satan's object was to keep them deceived and to draw back and deceive God's children. EW 56.1

A warning to all.

Need for Heavenly Wisdom in Combating Error--We see more and greater need of close communion with God and greater need of unity. Let us devote much time to seeking for heavenly wisdom. Let us be much with God in prayer. *We want Bible evidence for every point we advance. We do not want to tide over points as Elder Canright has done with assertions.* {11MR 231.1}

Note: Ministers, in their alternative explanations of Scripture are not able to explain every point of Holy Writ.

We ought to consider ourselves responsible for every conclusion which may logically be drawn from our position.—{HS JH Waggoner pg. 15.2}

God sets no man to pronounce judgment on His word, selecting some things as inspired and discrediting others as uninspired. *The Testimonies have been treated in the same way;* but God is not in this." {1SM 23.1}

How can the Lord bless those who manifest a spirit of "I don't care," a spirit which leads them to walk contrary to the light which the Lord has given them? *But I do not ask you to take my words. Lay Sister White to one side. Do not quote my words again as long as you live until you can obey the Bible. When you make the Bible your food, your meat, and your drink, when you make its principles the elements of your character, you will know better how to receive counsel from God. I exalt the precious Word before you today. Do not repeat what I have said, saying, "Sister White said this," and "Sister White said that." Find out what the Lord God of Israel says, and then do what He commands.*—Manuscript 43, 1901. (From an address to church leaders the night before the opening of the General Conference session of 1901.) {3SM 33.1}