

Heralds of "The King" Ministries

The Book of Revelation

Adult Sabbath School Study Guide; 1st Quarter 2019



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The Book of Revelation

Commentary on the Adult Sabbath School Lessons

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Special guidelines for reading:

Quarterly’s Note: If there is a point of emphasis, clarification or correction needed in the quarterly, it will be flagged here. This will be left blank if there are no special points of significance for that day’s lesson.

QOD: This means “question of the day.” At the end of each day’s study is a thought question, and it will appear with supporting answer here.

Introduction and background:

For well over 100 years we Seventh-day Adventists have governed our understandings of the book of Revelation largely on the basis of Elder Uriah Smith’s *Thoughts*, which he officially compiled in the early 1880’s into a best-selling book, *Thoughts on Daniel and the Revelation*, later edited and resold in the more familiar student’s reference text, *Daniel and The Revelation*.

In this review of the Adult Sabbath School Study Guide, we will highlight areas where more illumination has been provided by the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, and encourage the reader into a deeper

walk with God, a clearer understanding of His Word, and a Christ-centered approach to understanding “the revelation of Jesus Christ,” Y’shuah the Messiah.

A correct understanding of Revelation requires a working knowledge of the earthly sanctuary and its services, for the ministrations in the heavenly are shadowy reflections of the earthly. Therefore, any interpretation of this book that militates against the High Priestly ministry of Christ will be lacking in truth, content and clarity.

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LESSON 1 December 29-January 4;

The Gospel *From* Patmos

Sabbath Afternoon

Memory Text: “Blessed *is* he that readeth, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein: for the time *is* at hand.” Rev. 1: 3

This book was written principally to “reveal” Jesus Christ and is sealed with a “blessing” upon all who heed “the words of this prophecy, and keep those things” which are committed to the people of the saints of the Most High YHWH.

SUNDAY [↑] December 30

The Title of the Book

The title of this book, “Revelation,” means to reveal, hence this is a book intent on “revealing” the truth of Messiah, the truth of things that were, are, and are to come. Writing about 96 AD, Christ told John that this book contains “the things which are, and the *things which shall be hereafter;*” (Rev. 1: 19), and again he emphasized, “I will shew thee *things which must be hereafter.*” (Rev. 4: 1).

While John saw many things pertaining to the “hereafter,” it must not escape our attention that he saw things which transacted in eternity past, as well as the present times during which he lived. The One of whom this book speaks is declared to be the “I am *Alpha* and *Omega*, the *beginning* and the *ending*, saith the Lord, which *is*, and which *was*, and which *is to come*, the Almighty.” (Rev. 1: 8).

Clearly then, since Jesus Christ is the One who speaks, and it is His revelation, then it is only logical that the book treats on things spanning His existence, things that “are,” “were,” and “are to come.”

“When we as a people understand what this book means to us, there will be seen among us *a great revival*. We do not understand fully the lessons that it teaches, notwithstanding the injunction given us to search and study it. {TM 113.2}

“In the past teachers have declared Daniel and the Revelation to be sealed books, and the people have turned from them. The veil whose apparent mystery has kept many from lifting it, God's own hand has withdrawn from these portions of His word. The very name “Revelation” contradicts the statement that it is a sealed book. “*Revelation*” means that *something of importance is revealed*. The truths of this book are addressed to those living in these last days. We are standing with the veil removed in the holy place of sacred things. We are not to stand without. We are to enter, not with careless, irreverent thoughts, not with impetuous footsteps, but with reverence and godly fear.” {TM 113.3}

“When the books of Daniel and Revelation are *better understood*, believers will have an *entirely different religious experience*. They will be given such glimpses of the open gates of heaven that heart and mind will be impressed with *the character that all must develop* in order to realize the blessedness which is to be the reward of the pure in heart.” {TM 114.3}

Quarterly’s Note:

Quarterly’s Question/Discussion: More than Christ’s building for us many mansions over the nearly 2,000 years since His departure to the “far country,” is His mediatorial work of High Priest on our behalf, in the Heavenly Sanctuary. The promise of John 14: 1-3 will only be realized by those who have met the conditions for admission to those mansions: “21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with *a true heart* in full assurance of faith, having our *hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience*, and our bodies *washed with pure water*. 23 Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised).” Heb. 10: 21-23.

MONDAY [↑] *December 31*

The Purpose of the Book

The book of Revelation is not an independent book from the rest of the Bible, but is the culmination of all the prophecies, and as such embodies the whole Bible. Here, all the books of the Bible come to focus, for in it is the climaxing of the great conflict of the ages—the great controversy between Christ and Satan. “In the Revelation all the books of the Bible meet and end.” {AA 585.1}.

To gain the benefit of this climaxing book of the ages, one must give place to the rest of the story—the previous 65 books of the Bible. This will become especially true when we treat the subjects of the Seals, Trumpets, Beasts, and Plagues, for merely relying on the interpretative commentaries of Theologians such as Keith, Barnes, Gibbons, et.al., will prove futile attempts in unlocking Revelation’s secrets. The Bible was written by “holy men of God who spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost,” (2 Pet. 1: 21), and cannot, therefore, be interpreted by academicians. Seminaries have their place, but a seminarian is no more an authority in *accurately* disclosing the Truth of the sealed prophecies, than can a non-nocturnal bird find its nest in the blackness of midnight. In other words, the same Divine “Key” which wrote the Scriptures must also interpret them, for the Scriptures were revealed not by the “might” of man’s intellect nor by the “power” of his understanding, but by God’s Holy Spirit of Prophecy, (Zech. 4: 6), and as such, can only be rightly interpreted by the *same* Spirit of Prophecy.

The primary purpose of Bible prophecy, then, is to act as “a light that shineth in a dark place,” (2 Pet. 1: 19), guiding the feet of God’s children through each stage of the great conflict of the ages, with Divine assurance that He is with us always, “even unto the end of the world.” (Matt. 28: 20). In the language of David it reads, “Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.” (Ps. 23: 4).

God's "Rod" and "Staff" are His holy words that bring "comfort" to us travelers, even when we enter in the dark places of this world's history. It gives us the confidence that we know how the conflict ends, we've seen the script, and we know who are the winners and the losers. It gives us assurance that the winners are not necessarily those who temporarily walk away with their lives, but many times are those who "loved not their lives unto the death," (Rev. 12: 11), for their witness of Jesus Christ.

QOD: Read [John 14:29](#). What crucially important principle for the purpose of prophecy can we find here in this verse?

Attesting to the correctness of prophecy, Ezekiel wrote, "And when this cometh to pass, (lo, *it will come*,) then shall they know that *a prophet* hath been *among them*." Ezek. 33:33. Read also John 14: 29, Ezek. 2: 5, and Jer. 28:9.

Quarterly's Note:

TUESDAY ↑ *January 1*

The Symbolic Language of Revelation

Immediately upon opening the Book of Revelation, symbols of various sorts confront the reader. It might well be called a book of *Symbolic Codes*, for the truth of the book is hidden in symbols, and a correct interpretation of the symbols is among Inspiration's keys of unlocking Revelation's secrets. As in other instances, whether by prophecy or parables, God uses symbols to drive home the lesson more clearly, yet mysteriously, so that those who are the children of the light will comprehend, having had access to the Divinely-inspired interpretative "key."

"10 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables [symbolic codes]? 11 He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matt. 13: 10, 11); [added].

From this, we can see that one of the purposes behind codifying the Scriptures in symbolic languages is to "hide" the truth from those who would take it to do harm to the citizens of the kingdom of God, while "revealing" it to those who are heirs thereof! What a wise and understanding Saviour, He hides His Truth in plain sight of the enemy, so as to simultaneously save His sheep while exposing the enemy's plots!

Quarterly's Note: "In trying to determine the meaning of the symbols used in the book, we must be careful not to impose on the text a meaning that comes out of *human imagination* or the current meanings of those symbols in our culture. Instead, we must *go to the Bible and to the symbols found in its pages* in order to understand the symbols in the book of Revelation." [Tue, Jan. 1, Paragraph 3](#).

This is a truthful and very accurate statement, and will be used to test some of our more traditional denominational teachings on the Seals, Trumpets, Beasts, and plagues among others, to ascertain Biblical authority.

QOD: *What is the one thing that all these visions have in common?*

They all speak of various beasts and creatures, including “man,” some savage, and others not.

WEDNESDAY ↑ *January 2*

The Godhead

It is most delightful that the Lesson stressed “the Godhead” (Col. 2: 9), and not the Roman Catholic equivalent, “the Trinity.” We are safe when we use terms derived in the Scriptures, for then we are on the platform of Truth, but when we begin to “mix” the Sacred with the profane, we will soon be left on a reef our own moorings. This point is being stressed now, in preparation for what is to follow, because we will soon discover that there are some Roman Catholic terminologies what we need to weed from our vocabulary, or grant special definitions for, and I salute the author for exercising this degree of care. Some words such as “Millennium,” “Christendom,” and “Ceremonial Law,” are used by Christians without regard for their genesis, and it would be helpful to understand the doctrinal basis of these words without repeating them out of mere tradition.

Having said the above, it is an undisputed fact that there are “three that bear record in heaven,” (1 John 5: 7), yet, to avoid this conclusion, some have suggested that these parts of the Bible are not in the earliest copies of the original, and must be expunged! Whenever you are called upon to “add unto” or “take away from” the Scriptures, (Rev. 22: 18, 19), in order to sustain your doctrine, this is a very dangerous course, for the *self-correcting nature* of the Bible affords us the freedom in “rightly dividing the word of Truth,” (2 Tim. 2: 15), “in the mouth of two or three witnesses.” (2 Cor. 13: 1).

Whenever you have a conflict with any part of Scripture, be sure to check it by the weight of evidence, “in the mouth of the other witnesses” among the prophets in the Scriptures. But when your doctrine needs the support of “Researchers,” and “Theologians” in order to obtain “legs” on which to stand, Beware! This principle is true, not just for dealing with the three-persons who make up the Godhead, but it holds for doctrines such as “the Lunar Sabbath,” “Day begins at Dawn,” “antitypical king David,” “the Feast days,” “the Female Holy Spirit,” “Circumcision,” “Christmas,” “New Year’s day,” “Easter,” and “the Sabbath,” to mention a few.

It will be noticed that the doctrine which disparages the existence of three persons in the Godhead, also diminishes the work and office of Jesus Christ (Y’shuah) as God, and makes Him out to be *less than* God, and as such suggest that He is *not* deserving of our worship, for even He as the *emptied* One (Phil. 2: 7), testified that “My Father is greater than I!” (John 14: 28). Such doctrines are not inspired by the Holy Spirit of Prophecy, but by the unholy Spirit of Error, and are calculated to denigrate the only

Mediator between God and man—the man Christ Jesus, and deny Him of His divinity! This has been Satan’s aim from the earliest of times, one which has led to his rebellion in Heaven for seeking, by force of arms, the adoration and worship that given to the Son might be placed upon himself! His enmity has not abated, but intensified as the controversy climaxes; therefore, we ought to be on the lookout for such doctrines whose aims are designed to *replace* the work and ministry of Jesus Christ by some inventive methods spawned by the prince of darkness.

Quarterly’s Note: “The seven Spirits’ means the Holy Spirit is active in all seven churches. This image refers to the omnipresence of the Holy Spirit and His constant work among God’s people through history, enabling them to fulfill their calling.”— [Paragraph 4](#).

When searching the Scriptures, we ought to avoid the temptation of “group think,” and “gut feelings,” as was done in this lesson in the following remark: “God the Father is identified as the One ‘who is and who was and who is to come’ (see [Rev. 1:8](#), [Rev. 4:8](#), [NKJV](#)). This designation refers to the divine name Yahweh, ‘I AM WHO I AM’ ([Exod. 3:14](#), [NKJV](#)) referring to God’s eternal existence.” [Paragraph 3](#).

QOD: Rev. 1:4, 5:

From the context of this chapter, it is entirely incorrect to attribute Rev. 1: 8 solely to the Father, even though He also wears this title “the first and the last.” As for v. 4, however, the context *does allow* for the Father to be personally identified as “Him which is, and which was, and which is to come,” for it associates Him with “the seven Spirits which are **before** His throne.” Hence, it discretely identifies the Father as the one on the throne (Rev. 5:1), and simultaneously shows the Son, as “a Lamb as it had been slain,” (Rev. 5: 6), positioned not on the throne but “before” (Dan. 7: 13) Him, given that “he **came** and took the book out of the right hand of **him** that sat **upon the throne.**” (Rev. 5: 7). And in the act of the Son’s frontally *coming* to the father and taking the book from His right hand, is illustrated the truth that He is not the Father, and the fact too, that greetings were given “from the seven Spirits which are **before** his [the Father’s] throne,” further solidifies the truth that the “seven Spirits”—the Holy Spirit, is a third entity in this Divine trio. Hence, the Godhead is clearly identified in this salutation as three separate individual persons.

“What a Saviour we have! *It was he that revealed himself to John* on the Isle of Patmos, and proclaimed, “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty.” None but just such an ever-living, mighty God, could pay the ransom to save sinners from going down into the pit of death.” {RH, February 18, 1896 par. 5}

What might that mean, and how do we presently enjoy this glorious status in Christ as “kings and priests” ([Rev. 1:6](#), [NKJV](#)) while still in this sin-cursed world?

At the creation man (Adam and Eve) was made “king” over God’s creation (Ps. 8: 4-8), and in the “restitution of all things,” (Acts. 3: 20), his kingly rule over the lower orders of creation will be restored, for the whole creation groans till now, for the liberation of the sons and daughters of God into His glorious Kingdom of peace! The title “kings and priests” is afforded us today as a down payment for

our future reward; today we are in His training school, and upon graduation, we will be awarded our official titles—“kings and priests” of the Most High, YHWH.

THURSDAY [↑] January 3

The Keynote of Revelation

QOD: While the Second Advent of Christ to our world is the consummation of the ages, with the liberation of the church of God from this sin-cursed earth, it is important that we do not unjustly attribute Scriptures which have a different termination point than the Second Coming with those pertaining to it. For example, in Zech. 12: 10 the Lesson unjustly attributed it to the Second Coming, but the context does not allow this. Let’s examine this passage more closely at this point:

“And I will pour upon *the house of David*, and upon the *inhabitants of Jerusalem*, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and *they shall look upon me whom they have pierced*, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.” (Zech. 12: 10).

Clearly, this passage meets its fulfillment after the cross, hence sometime later in the Christian dispensation, it will be fulfilled, for His wounds having been healed, “the inhabitants of Jerusalem...will look upon [Him] whom they have pierced,” and will be in bitterness for him. When will this be? The context of the chapter testifies that it occurs at the time of refreshing (Acts 3: 19-21), when the Lord “pours” out His Holy Spirit in Pentecostal power upon the waiting church of God! This event is what opens the Loud Cry of the Third Angel’s message, an event that transacted during probationary time—the time when people can be saved by accepting Jesus Christ as Saviour, Lord and King.

“6 In *that day* will I make the governors of Judah like an hearth of fire among the wood, and like a torch of fire in a sheaf; and they shall devour all the people round about, on the right hand and on the left: and *Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem*. 7 The LORD also shall **save** the tents of Judah first, that the glory of the house of David and the glory of the inhabitants of Jerusalem do not magnify themselves against Judah.” Zech. 12: 6, 7.

We see here that when this Scripture is fulfilled “*Jerusalem shall be inhabited again in her own place, even in Jerusalem*,” and salvation will be available to all, for people will be “saved,” none of which can *ever occur* after the close of probation and up to the Second Coming of Christ. Hence, these verses will receive a pre-advent fulfillment, during probationary time! This view is not accepted within Seventh-day Adventism, though it is taught by the mouth of all the Holy prophets of God, from Moses thru Malachi. More will be said on this topic, when we explore Rev. 11, but from here, we should observe that the Jerusalem that is “inhabited again” could not be the New Jerusalem, for it was never so occupied by earthlings before!

The word “again,” testifies to a repetition, and that the first inhabitants were destroyed, and it had to be re-inhabited by a new set of Holy Spirit-filled people, sometime in the latter days, after a global war is fought there: “2 Behold, I will make Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about, when they shall be in the siege both against Judah and against Jerusalem. 3 And in that day will I make Jerusalem a burdensome stone for all people: all that burden themselves with it shall be cut in pieces, though **all the people of the earth** be gathered together against it.” (Zech. 12: 2, 3).

A war that involves “all the people of the earth,” is one in which all the major militaries of earth will be engaged, and even now, as we look on the political horizon, we can see that the Middle East becoming a tinder box for the next World War, not Armageddon, but World War 3! The truth of this conflict is accurately described in Zech. 14, and demonstrates that during the time of the enforcement of the Mark of the Beast System—the Sunday Law—God will have a city of refuge for His church in these last days.

When all the nations of earth shall, at the pain of death, restrict our ability to survive, (no buying no selling without enrolling in the Mark of the Beast System), God will have an ark of safety for His people today, and a holding place for the saved, during the Loud Cry of the Third Angel, a place where the effects of the seven last plagues will not be realized. Even now we can see the fingerprint of this coming Sunday Law under the guise of “The Paris Climate Change Agreement.” Most Adventists are not aware that the “Climate Change Agreement” bounding like a Trojan horse on which the much feared Sunday-law is riding, and many church leaders are clueless as to its outcome, even enrolling the Denomination to lobby the nations in securing environmental laws that will reverse the negative effects of “climate change.”

To learn more about the prophetic nature of the new Climate Change agenda being pushed by the international community of nations and the Roman Catholic Church, which has already been accepted by all Churches and Nations, though recently rejected by US President Donald Trump, watch our YouTube video “[And He Causeth The Earth To Worship.](#)”

Quarterly’s Note:

FRIDAY ↑ *January 4*

Further Thought:

God's Spirit has illuminated every page of Holy Writ, but there are those upon whom it makes little impression, because it is imperfectly understood. When the shaking comes, by the introduction of false theories, these surface readers, anchored nowhere, are like shifting sand. They slide into any position to suit the tenor of their feelings of bitterness. . . . Daniel and Revelation must be studied, as well as

the other prophecies of the Old and New Testaments. Let there be light, yes, light, in your dwellings. For this we need to pray. The Holy Spirit, shining upon the sacred page, will open our understanding, that we may know what is truth. . . {TM 112.1}

There is need of a much closer study of the word of God; especially should Daniel and the Revelation have attention as never before in the history of our work. We may have less to say in some lines, in regard to the Roman power and the papacy; but we should call attention to what the prophets and apostles have written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit of God. The Holy Spirit has so shaped matters, both in the giving of the prophecy and in the events portrayed, as to teach that the human agent is to be kept out of sight, hid in Christ, and that the Lord God of heaven and His law are to be exalted. Read the book of Daniel. Call up, point by point, the history of the kingdoms there represented. Behold statesmen, councils, powerful armies, and see how God wrought to abase the pride of men, and lay human glory in the dust. . . . {TM 112.2}

The light that Daniel received from God was given especially for these last days. The visions he saw by the banks of the Ulai and the Hiddekel, the great rivers of Shinar, are now in process of fulfillment, and all the events foretold will soon come to pass. {TM 112.3}

Quarterly's Note:

LESSON 2 *January 5-11*

Among *the* Lampstands

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Memory Text: “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches,” (*Revelation 2:7, KJV*).

Among other things, this verse shows that it is the Holy Spirit that is speaking to the churches, therefore, when Christ Speaks, the Spirit is also speaking, not that the Son and the Spirit are the same person, but that they carry the same message, and in this respect they are one. So, while the Son of man was He who stood among the candlesticks, the His *Testimony* came courtesy of the Holy Spirit of Prophecy. Being in the midst of the seven churches, while simultaneously He is in heaven, introduces the truth that Christ, after His glorification on Pentecost has regained His Omnipresence.

This is an area that many Christians are not aware of, that Christ is no longer limited as at the death of Lazarus, but can more freely attend to his work in the Heavenly Sanctuary, while simultaneously managing the affairs of the unfallen worlds, and the affairs of His church on this fallen earth! Just think that while we know that the Father has omnipresence, that Christ is sharing the eternal throne with Him while at the same time they are both in the Sanctuary, where Christ is “before” Him, and only the Father is seated on the Sanctuary throne. They could not both pull this off in synchronous schedules, were they not both omnipresent!

As for His ministration in the heavenly sanctuary, the Psalmist sang, “Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary: who is so great a God as our God?” [Ps 77:13](#). Hence, the way to find God is to search for Him in the Holy of Holies, to enter into His Sanctuary.

SUNDAY [↑] *January 6*

On Patmos

Read [Revelation 1:9](#). *What does John tell us of the circumstances in which he received the visions of Revelation?*

Though left alone to die on Patmos, this isolated place became a sanctuary of praise, a place where God would speak to His servant the final stories of earth’s history. More importantly to us today, though, is the fact that no matter the circumstance in which we are placed, we still have access to the throne room of Heaven! John’s crimes are stated in the verse. He was banished “for **the word of God**, and for **the testimony of Jesus Christ**.” This is what the Apostle Peter stated, and gave broad encouragement that should we suffer in such manner, “happy are ye.” ([1 Peter 4: 12-15](#)).

These are our calling cards, (a) “the Word of God,” and (b) “the testimony of Jesus Christ.” Here Christians are being called to have singular faithfulness and dependence on “the Word of God,” for it is our Textbook for

salvation! More than ever, Christians in general, and Adventists in particular need to have a personal encounter with the Word of God. Once were known as “the people of the book,” but that title has long vanished away, and a new secularism has largely replaced Bible-based Truth. Secondly, we are called to “testify” of the Saviour, hence, a life of witnessing is our mission. May we realize that to bear the testimony of Jesus Christ, it means that we must choose to “follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth” (Rev. 14: 4), follow Him in truth and in sanctification, follow Him in prayer and in holiness, follow Him on earth below and in His Sanctuary above! ([Ps. 77:13](#)).

MONDAY ↑ January 7

On the Lord's Day

The lesson did a scholarly work on this topic, and is worthy of no additional commentary in defense of the Bible Sabbath.

It is beneficial to know, however, that when we engage with the broader Christian community, that this becomes a point of contention, for they hold that “the Lord's day” is the first day of the week—Sunday! “The day and time when he had this vision was *the Lord's day*, the Christian sabbath, *the first day of the week*, observed in remembrance of the resurrection of Christ. Let us who call him Our Lord, honour him on his own day.” [Matthew Henry Commentary](#).

From such erroneous scholarship, most of the Christian world is still blinded to the truth of the fourth commandment, the truth of true Sabbath rest. This truth is becoming more contested in these closing days of earth's history, and will be punishable on pain of death, for non-compliance, in a few short years! See. [Rev. 13: 11-16](#).

It cannot be overstated here that the current *International Climate Change Agreement* in the *Paris Accords* is engendered to lead the world into accepting a false day of worship, a false Sabbath, under the pretense of helping the planet to heal from the negative impact of *anthropogenic* (human caused), climate change. They have already spoken in this regard:

- “**Enforceable international agreements are urgently needed**, since local authorities are not always capable of effective intervention... **Global regulatory norms** are needed to **impose obligations** and prevent unacceptable actions...” Pope Francis, 2015, *Laudato-Si*, § 173.
- “**On Sunday**, our participation in the Eucharist has special importance. Sunday, like the Jewish Sabbath, is meant to be a day which heals our relationships with God, with ourselves, with others and with the world... **The law of weekly rest forbade work on the seventh day**... And so **the day of rest**, centred on the Eucharist, sheds it light on the whole week, and **motivates us to greater concern for nature** and the poor.” Pope Francis, 2015, *Laudato-Si*, § 237.
- “*Most religious communities* have released statements on Climate Change and the need to care for Creation. The following list ... demonstrates the **unity within the religious community** on these important issues.” [Interfaith Power & Light](#)

- “A Polish law banning **almost all trade on Sundays** has taken effect... The new law at first bans trade on **two Sundays** per month, rising to **three Sundays** a month from **2019** and finally **all Sundays from 2020**, except for **seven exceptions** before the **Easter** and **Christmas** holidays.”— [The Guardian](#), March 11, 2018.
- “Men in responsible positions will not only ignore and despise the Sabbath themselves, but from the sacred desk, will urge upon the people the observance of the first day of the week, pleading tradition and custom in behalf of this **man-made institution**. They will point to **calamities on land and sea**—to the **storms of wind**, the **floods**, the **earthquakes**, the destruction by **fire**—[*Climate Change*], as **judgments indicating God's displeasure because Sunday is not sacredly observed**.—EGW, *Signs of the Times*, January 17, 1884; [added].
- “Plans of serious import to the people of God are advancing in an **underhand manner** among the **clergymen of various denominations**, and the object of this *covert maneuvering* is to win popular favor for **the enforcement of Sunday sacredness**.” {*The Paulson Collection of EGWC 333.1*}

To learn more about how Pope Francis’ Encyclical, [Laudato-Si](#), on the negative environmental impact of Climate Change will affect the lives of “every person on the planet”—“our common home,” and how it will impose a Sunday-Sabbath legislation upon earth’s inhabitants, please check out these two *YouTube* Videos, [And he Exerciseth all the Power of the First Beast Before Him](#), and [And He Causeth The Earth To Worship](#).

QOD: While God’s Sabbaths provide reflection that God is our Creator and Redeemer, we learn through Ezekiel that they are a mark of our sanctification: “Moreover also I gave them *my sabbaths*, to be a *sign* between me and them, that they might know that I am the LORD that *sanctify them*.” Ezek. 20: 12.

TUESDAY ↑ *January 8*

John’s Vision of Christ on Patmos

The man in “linen” garments is pervasive through the prophecies of Ezekiel, Daniel, and Revelation, and He is not always noticed for who He really is—the Son of God. When we pause to realize that the Priests/High Priests wore “linen” garments, then it will make sense that our “great High Priest” in the Heavenly Sanctuary is also attired in His priestly garments, indicating that He is Saviour, Redeemer, and Mediator supreme, and for as long as probation lasts, He will retain rights to that title, and will be outfitted in His Priestly garment. This same view of the Saviour is further described in [Dan. 12: 6-8](#), and in [Ezek. 9:2](#).

The reader will be greatly rewarded to conduct a word search in the Scriptures to see the instances wherein “linen” is mentioned in reference to Jesus Christ, or those impacting His priestly ministry.

QOD: “I know thy works.” This phrase has been employed by the Saviour for each of the seven churches, indicating that He is the searcher of hearts and the all-knowing One; our lives are as an opened book, bare before Him.

In His opening address to each of the seven churches, Christ never fails to say, “I know thy works,” because He has “seven eyes” [Rev. 5: 6](#), which are the “seven Spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” When addressing the seven churches then, we are brought in close scrutiny of the Divine Intelligence of the King of the universe.

We are told that, “Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but *all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.*” [Heb. 4: 13](#). Again, we are reminded that “God shall bring every work into judgement, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.” [Eccl. 12: 14](#). Clearly then, the messages to the seven churches, are a reflection of how God sees his people at the present time, and not willing that any should perish, but that all should repent and have everlasting life, He mercifully tells us of our spiritual standing with Him, and what must be done to make it right in His sight. What a loving and merciful High Priest we serve!

WEDNESDAY [↑] January 9

Christ’s Messages for Then and Now

From the days of the Apostles till now, whenever God has a message for His people on earth He sends it first to his church, and being His agency for the salvation of men, the church then takes that message to the world. This is a very consistent theme throughout Revelation, and the messages to the seven churches are quite indicative of this fact: “What thou seest, write in a book, and send *it* unto the seven churches which are in Asia.” [Rev. 1: 11](#). The modern church works under the premise that God speaks to her through a different mode—the ministry of today, but this rather contrary to the model presented in Revelation, for there the messages are directed to the “angel”—ministry of each church! In other words, God uses his inspired messenger, in this case John, to deliver a message from Himself—his testimony—unto the leadership (ministry) of each of the seven churches. Their response to those messages would determine the eternal state of such recipients, or intended recipients. It is for this reason above all that He counsels seven times in these letters, “I know they works.”

- “The names of the seven churches are symbolic of *the church in different periods of the Christian Era*. The number 7 indicates completeness, and is symbolic of the fact that *the messages extend to the end of time*, while the symbols used reveal the *condition of the church at different periods* in the history of the world.” {AA 585.3}

An important thought question: If God has a message for His church today, how will He send it? Does He still reserve the right to raise up an inspired servant, as with John, to deliver a message of encouragement, warning, or reproof, to His remnant church today? Certainly! And this is why we are admonished to “20 *Despise not prophesyings*. 21 Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” [1 Thess. 5: 20, 21](#). The Spirit of Prophecy will be ever-active in the true church till the close of time, and so God reserves the right to send us messages at His will. In order to ward off against the deceptions of “false prophets,” we are further counseled to “try the spirits,” ([1 John 4: 1](#)), and test their messages against “the *law and the testimony*,” ([Isa. 8: 20](#)), to ascertain that there is “light,” and not just heat in them!

QOD: “Suppose the Lord were to write a letter today to your local church...” That letter has already been written, and is most accurately described in [Rev. 3:14-21](#)—the message to the church of the Laodiceans. This Laodicean message is also strengthened by the Elijah Message ([Mal. 4: 4-6](#)), which is designed “to *make ready a people prepared for the Lord.*” [Luke 1:17](#).

- Prophecy must be fulfilled. The Lord says: “Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the Lord.” *Somebody is to come in the spirit and power of Elijah*, and when he appears, men may say: “You are too earnest, you do not interpret the Scriptures in the proper way. Let me tell you how to teach your message.” {TM 475.3}.

Message to the Church in Ephesus

The church of Ephesus was established in the midst of a people who were idol worshippers. It was in Ephesus that the “temple of the great goddess Diana” [Acts 19: 27-28](#), was erected. Here in Ephesus were so many converted demon worshippers to the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, that we are told, “Many of them also which used curious arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men....So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.” [Acts. 19: 19, 20](#). For this reason therefore, among others, Christ declared, I know “how thou **canst not bear them which are evil**: and thou hast **tried** them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast *found them* liars.” Rev. 2: 2.

Being the first of the seven churches, the enemy of souls tried from the very beginning to corrupt the doctrine of this church, because, he knew that if he can successfully *control the doctrines*, and the manner of worship of the believers, then he will have full control of the church. The Ephesian church was wide awake in the spirit though, and his many incursions were rebuffed by a clear “thus saith the Lord.

The “apostles” of whom the Lord speaks are characterized as “*false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ.*” [2 Cor. 11: 3-4, 13-15](#).

The first love from which they had fallen, is that which Paul had previously warned, “for that day shall not come, except there come *a falling away first*, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition.” [2 Thess. 2: 1-3, 10-12](#). This creeping compromise was hastened on by “the man of sin”—the Roman Papacy! It was the demise of the first church, and as we will discover throughout all these seven letters, it has been the great danger to the existence of the true church, ever since the early apostles closed their eyes. Let us be on the lookout for that corrupting system today! Wide awake should we be, for in the Laodicean church, he now reigns!

“It is the rejection of Bible truth which makes men approach to infidelity. It is *a backsliding church* that *lessens the distance* between itself and the Papacy.” {ST, February 19, 1894 par. 4}

As Seventh-day Adventists, we should ask ourselves individually the question, how *far* are today from the Papacy, or the reverse, [how close are we today to the Roman Papacy?](#)

The *Nicolaitans*:

- In spite of their spiritual “fall” however, the Lord commended the church of Ephesus “that **thou hatest the deeds [doctrine] of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.**” Rev. 2: 6; [added]. Who are these *Nicolaitans*? “The Word ‘Nico-laitanes’ comes from the two words *nikao* and *laos*: *nikao* means ‘to conquer,’ to get ‘the upper hand,’ to have ‘the ascendancy, in all relations’; and *laos* —‘the people at large’ as distinguished from ‘the clergy.’”
- “The word then signifies that conquering or conquest of ‘the people’ of the churches by that mischievous insect of the *kleros* or ‘clergy’ in the Christian beehive: That persistent spirit of *the principdom of the Gentiles that must exercise among Christians dominion and authority.*” —*Lessons From The Reformation*, A.T. Jones, p. 221.

It is from the Nicolaitans that the system of the Papacy arose, and this is what was being condemned by Christ from the earliest of times! *“Thus the people, wherever the Babylonian system spread, were bound neck and heel to the priests. The priests were the only depositories of religious knowledge; they only had the true tradition, by which the writs and symbols of the public religion could be interpreted; and without blind and implicit submission to them, what was necessary for salvation could not be known.”*—*The Two Babylons*, Alexander Hislop, p. 7.

Jesus Christ, the *Faithful and True Witness*, “hates” the doctrines of the Nicolaitans, and so should we, if we are wise! In short then, the spirit and doctrine of the Nicolaitans is one which bears supremacy over the heritage of Christ. This is the spirit that gave rise to the Kings in Israel, for the appointment of a King was not God’s idea, it was a Satanic inspiration that deceived the elders of Israel into believing that “kingly powers” are the best form of church government! It is one of class distinction within the church of Christ, a system which he totally despises, and repeatedly rebuked, declaring, **“it shall not be so among you.”** [Matt. 20: 25-27](#). See also [1 Peter 5: 3-4](#).

Have you ever wondered why Jesus characterized his followers as sheep, while the heathen are characterized as wolves? The truth of the matter is that, unlike wolves, sheep have no hierarchical governmental structure in their flocks; they are simply lead by a shepherd. And so Jesus declared Himself to be that “one Shepherd” and “one King,” the “Good Shepherd,” and ranks all other overlords as viscous impostors. There ought to be no Pope or “kingly power” in the Church of God! “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.” [Rev. 2: 7](#).

FRIDAY ↑ *January 11*

Further Thought: **Read Ellen G. White and A.T. Jones...**

- “What was the origin of the great apostasy? How did the church first depart from the simplicity of the gospel? **By conforming to the practices of paganism, to facilitate the acceptance of Christianity by the heathen.** The apostle Paul declared, even in his day, ‘The mystery of iniquity doth already work.’ 2 Thess. 2: 7. During the lives of the apostles the church remained comparatively pure. But ‘toward the latter end of the second century most of the churches assumed a new form; the first simplicity disappeared, and insensibly, as the old disciples retired to their graves, their children along with new converts,...came forward and new-modeled the cause.’...To secure converts, the exalted standard of the Christian faith was lowered, and as the result ‘a pagan flood, flowing into the church, carried with it its customs, practices, and idols.’...As the Christian religion secured the favor and support of secular rulers, it was nominally accepted by multitudes; but while in appearance Christians, many ‘remained in substance pagans, especially worshipping in secret their idols.’” —G.C. pp. 384-385.
- “The next step was for certain bishops to assert authority over other bishops; and the plea upon which this was claimed as a right, was that the bishops of those churches which had been established by the apostles were of right to be considered as superior to all others. Furthermore it was claimed that in those churches the true doctrine of Christ had been

preserved in the greatest purity. As the bishops of those churches claimed to be the repositories of the true doctrine, whenever any question arose upon any matter of doctrine or interpretation of the scripture, appeal was made to the bishop of the nearest apostolic church. As Rome was the capital of the empire, and as the church there claimed direct descent not only from one but from *two* apostles, it soon came to pass that the church of Rome claimed to be the source of true doctrine, and the bishop of that church to be supreme over all other bishops." *The Two Republics*, A.T. Jones, pp. 232, 233.

LESSON 3*January 12-18

Jesus' Messages *to the Seven Churches*

Sabbath Afternoon

Memory Text: “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.” ([Revelation 3:21](#)).

There are seven churches to whom Christ's “Testimony” through John was sent, and in each instance the opening message was declared in varying forms, from Jesus Christ, and consistently closed with the epithet, “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.”

Apology: It is unfortunate that the study of this concluding book of the Bible is afforded only 13 weeks, for the depth and scope it covers—the whole Bible. There are details that will be purposefully left untouched, in order to provide content, but there are some areas that must be explored, such as we've done in Lesson 2 (last Thursday's lesson, p. 10), discussing the *Nicolaitans*, a topic not mentioned in Lesson 2, and given merely a passing comment in Lesson 3. We will encounter these omissions from time to time throughout the Lesson, and it is our duty to provide illumination on these areas for the benefit of the reader and the edification of “the church,” of God today. Our apology is to ask for the reader's patience in extra reading material what will be called upon to bring forth the messages in the remaining six churches. Just the message to the church of Laodicea alone, would be sufficient to occupy our attention for a week, let alone the additional five Churches, but we pray that the Holy Spirit will make this point as clear as possible, and in as condensed a format as possible.

SUNDAY ↑ *January 13*

Christ's Messages to Smyrna and Pergamum

Jesus Christ, “the first and the last,” calls the Smyrnan Christians “rich” in spite of their obvious “poverty,” unlike the Laodiceans whom he condemned for their boast of being “rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing,” while completely ignorant of their true condition, “*wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.*” [Rev. 3: 17](#). The church at Smyrna is *the only ones* to whom Christ declared “thou art rich,” even while they professed “poverty,” for He saw that they had appropriated all the revealed truths of God's Word up to that time! Hence, their “wealth” was not one in material goods, but in spiritual truths—their seeking first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Christ recognized their “poverty” as a virtue for His kingdom. See [Matt. 5: 3](#).

The Church at Smyrna is proverbial for two prominent historical characters, Victor, bishop of Rome, and Polycarp, **the disciple of John**, who at one time was the **bishop of Smyrna**. So, in a real sense, John was directly writing to St. Polycarp, the “angel” (Leader) of the Church in Smyrna, one whom he brought to the Faith, and with whom he was personally acquainted. It was at Smyrna that the first act of tampering with the Law of God was given official notice, for here the *Nicolaitans* created a controversy with the early Christians as to the proper time to observe the Passover (incorrectly called Easter in some history books). This is a rather eye-opening segment of church history, for as the Quarterly rightly stated, the Smyrnan church period extends from shortly after A.D. 100 “Until A.D. 313.” What is significant about this period is, the church was nearly 300 years *beyond the Cross*, and the practice of the Passover was *still a common practice* by all the true followers of Messiah! The

reader is encouraged to read about this controversy in [the 1910 Edition of the Encyclopedia Britannica, pp. 828-829](#).

This is how that history began, “Generally speaking, the Western churches kept Easter [Passover] on the first day of the week, while the Eastern churches followed the Jewish rule, and kept Easter [Passover] on *the fourteenth day*. St Polycarp, **the disciple of St John** the Evangelist and **bishop of Smyrna**, visited Rome in 159 to confer with Anicetus, the bishop of that see, on the subject; and urged **the tradition, which he had received from the apostle**, of observing the fourteenth day... Victor proceeded to excommunicate Polycrates and the Christians who continued the Eastern usage... A final settlement of the dispute was one among the other reasons which led Constantine to summon the council of Nicaea in 325...

*“The decision of the council was unanimous that Easter [Passover] was to be kept on Sunday, and on the same Sunday throughout the world, and " that none should hereafter follow the blindness of the Jews " (Socrates, H.E. i. g)... The few who afterwards separated themselves from the unity of the church, and continued to keep the fourteenth day, were named *Quartodecimani* [an early name given the Waldenses], and the dispute itself is known as the *Quarto-deciman* controversy.” [The Encyclopedia Britannica](#), (1910-1911, 11th ed.) pp. 828-829; [brackets, italics, and emphases, supplied].*

That controversy now brings to focus Christ’s affirmation, “*I know the blasphemy of them which say they are Jews, and are not, but are the synagogue of Satan.*” ([Rev. 2: 9](#)). This hails back to the church at Ephesus, when Christ also recognized them for having “*tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*” ([Rev. 2: 2](#)).

The theological conflict over the proper timing and observance of Passover reached its apotheosis and fomented over in wrath, when in A.D. 197 Polycrates was issued the ultimatum: recant or be burnt at the stake! That sad history has been preserved in the *SDA Bible Commentary*. Feeling the heat of the flames before him, Polycrates preached his last sermon, in defense of Passover thusly,

“And I also, Polycrates, the least of you all, live according to the tradition of my kinsmen, and some of them have I followed. For **seven** of my family were **bishops** and I am the eighth, and my kinsmen *ever kept the day when the people put away the leaven*, therefore brethren, I who have lived sixty-five years in the Lord and conversed with brethren from every country, and have studied all holy Scripture am **not afraid of threats**, for they have said, who were greater than I, ‘It is better to obey God rather than men’...And I could mention **the bishops** who are present whom you required me to summon, and I did not. If I should write their names they would be **many multitudes**; and they knowing my feeble humanity, agreed with the letter, knowing that not in vain is my head grey, but that I have ever lived in Christ Jesus.” *Seventh- Day Adventist Bible Commentary* Vol. 9, p. 362; italics and emphases, added.

So, nearly 170 years after the Cross, this Patriarch of the Faith lost his life over his determination “to obey God rather than men” in observing the Passover as directed by all the Apostles! The greater truth that this uncovers is that Passover and the other so-called “Jewish feasts,” was *never* eliminated at the Cross, as is traditionally taught today, but was practiced by “many multitudes” for hundreds of years thereafter.

Offering \$1,000 to anyone who can prove the so-called “Jewish feasts” were abolished by the Apostles, Roman Catholic, Cardinal Enright, has challenged the Christian world to produce their Biblical support, and his challenge still stands!

“We keep Sunday in obedience to the law of the Catholic Church. The Church made this law long after the Bible was written; hence the law is not in the Bible. The Catholic Church *abolished not only the Sabbath*, but all the Jewish Festivals. Those who deny the authority of the Catholic Church and obey only the Bible must *answer*

correctly the following... In Lev 23 you find 7 holy days binding as strictly as the Sabbath. Where does the Bible say that they are abolished? ... *Here also you obey the Catholic Church and not the Bible.*" T. Enright CSSR. The Mission Church of the Most Holy Redeemer, Detroit, Michigan, *Letter*, April 26, 1902.

This knowledge should today open the relevant discussion as to why the modern church no longer observes such Bible-based solemnities, in the face of Rome's Challenge!

With the backdrop of Polycarp's martyrdom, provided comfort and encouragement, "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast *some* of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and *ye shall have tribulation* ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." ([Rev. 2: 10](#)). "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Read [Rom. 8: 31-39](#).

Pergamum

On the heels of the savagery experienced at Smyrna, the "tribulation" did not cease, but was extended unto Pergamus, "where Satan's seat is." This "seat," is again seen in Chapter 13, where the Bible says of the leopard-like (Papal) beast, "and **the dragon** gave him his power, and **his seat**, and great authority." ([Rev. 13: 2](#)). Clearly, Pergamus has brought us to the time when the Roman Catholic Papacy was subversively installed to bear rule, as the *Nicolaitans*, over the Church of God!

Who was Antipas? "Antipas was my *faithful martyr*, who was *slain* among you, where Satan dwelleth." ([Rev. 2: 13](#)). The word Antipas is a compounded Greek work from "anti"—to be against, and "pas" the plural of "pa"—Father. Together then, the name "Anti-Pas" means "anti-fathers," or "anti-papas," more familiarly stated as "anti-Papacy!" Rather than being representative of *one* person, *Antipas* is a code name (prophetic title) for all the true worshipers of Christ who also opposed the system of the "papas" (Fathers)—the Papal institution, and for this they were slain as faithful martyrs! Read *Lessons From The Reformation*, A.T. Jones, p. 222.

"In the sixth century the papacy had become firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be *the head over the entire church*. Paganism had given place to the papacy. The dragon had given to the beast 'his power, and his seat, and great authority.' Revelation 13:2. And now began the 1260 years of papal oppression foretold in the prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation. Daniel 7:25; Revelation 13:5-7. Christians were forced to choose either to yield their integrity and accept the papal ceremonies and worship, or to wear away their lives in dungeons or *suffer death by the rack, the fagot, or the headsman's ax.*" {GC 54.2}.

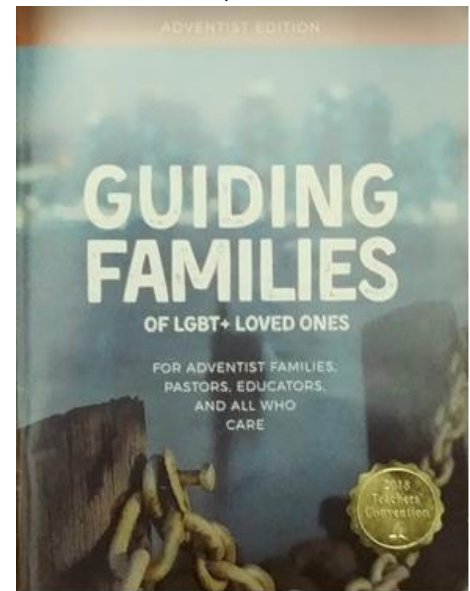
"But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there, them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to *eat things sacrificed unto idols*, and to commit *fornication.*" [Rev 2:14](#).

Christ praised Ephesus church saying, "thou hatest the *deeds* of the Nicolaitans, which **I also hate.**" [Rev. 2: 6](#). It is important to see that the early church had no liking for the deeds of the domineering power-hungry Nicolaitans, whose policies were to lord it over God's heritage, and to promote "another godpel"! Two churches later, however, the spirit of apostasy had gained sufficient traction in Pergamus that, unlike Ephesus, they tenaciously *held* to the doctrine of Balaam, and accepted into fellowship "them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans," ([Rev 2:15](#)); this is a doctrine that God Himself also "hates!"

Application: In recent years, Seventh-day Adventists have accepted into church fellowship some “doctrines” and “deeds” that God “hates!” And, at least in North America, the Adventist Church has opened itself to [accepting members from the LGBTQ+ community into church membership](#), and has published a working policy manual, *Guiding Families of LGBT+ Loved Ones*, on how to be inclusive in our schools and churches, to church members professing this abominable lifestyle! While “love” is the badge of Christians under all circumstances, *Posture Shift* is taking this farther, and in their own words they declare, “We **have never** — and **will never** — practice reparative or conversion therapy. *Our only objective* in spiritual care is to offer safety, *acceptance*, protection and a place for people to share their story and grow in their faith without judgment.” — [Lead Them Home](#), “What We Offer,” web page.

Now, this LGBTQ+ ideation (doctrine of the Nicolaitians) is getting even more traction from the local Conference levels, as shown below:

“The two day meeting, titled ‘Loving Well’ is by invitation to Oregon conference **educators** and **pastors** and some **student leaders**... One of the presenters is Bill Henson—author and **non-Adventist speaker** of ‘Guiding Families of LGBT+ Loved Ones’ (*GFLGBT+LO*). He is *giving this advice to Adventist educators, pastors, and family members* through his [NAD-endorsed book](#).” — [Fulcrum, Jan. 8, 2019](#).



Isn't it interesting that Christ should denounce those who *held* Balaam's doctrine—an attitude of sexual indiscretion, in the face of our modern church taking on a “shift” in how it addresses these sins? We need to understand that wrong “doctrines” lead to wrong behaviors, and nowhere is it more evident than in the modern attitude of Christians towards the question of human sexuality. Jesus did not verbally assault the woman of Samaria ([John 4: 39](#)), but loved her unto salvation—a *changed life*! So, while Christians are not called to “condemn” sinners, neither are we called to “condone” sin, but to lovingly point sinners to the Saviour, to His statutes, judgments and commandments, and allow Him to bring in the conviction, and *the changed life*. This is what Jesus taught and practiced in His earthly ministry, “go thy way and *sin no more*,” and this is His commission to us also. But to totally abandon our duty of “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you” (Matt. 28: 18), is to teach and practice that which Christ will not accept into the Holy City! Read [1 Cor. 6: 9-11](#).

The Doctrine of Balaam: In [Num. 25: 1-5](#), Balaam's doctrine of *sexual immorality* and *sun worship* is recorded for our benefit. Sexual immorality includes bestiality, pornography, polygamy, pedophilia, incest, necrophilia, and LGBTQ+ practices, to mention a few, while *Sun worship* includes Christmas, Easter, Valentine's day, and Halloween, parents' day, among others. All of these sins have been roundly condemned in the holy Statutes that guard the Ten Commandments. That these statutes have not lost their efficacy, Jesus here brings them to focus, and the Holy Spirit directed the early church to call them “necessary things,” ([Acts 15: 28-29](#)). In a very fulsome way, therefore, Christ was teaching that the now prevalent “doctrine” that the so-called “ceremonial laws” are Nailed to the cross, is among Balaam's errors!

Quarterly's Note: “Though the Jerusalem Council had forbidden “things offered to idols” and “sexual immorality” ([Acts 15:29, NKJV](#)), *the doctrine of Balaam taught church members to reject this decision.*” — [Jan. 14](#), paragraph 6.

QOD: In our Denomination's expositions of [Col. 2: 14](#), [Eph. 2: 14-16](#), and other NT passages, we incorrectly hold that the so-called “ceremonial law” has been abolished at the Cross, yet in His letter to Pergamus we find Christ

rebuking them for *not conforming* to those very doctrines that were supposedly “nailed to His Cross!” How can we reconcile our SDA “nailed” stance against the strikingly opposite teachings of Christ?

Answer: The fact that “*the doctrine of Balaam taught church members to reject*”—the gospel of Jesus Christ as revealed in the divine Statutes (Lev. 17-18), excluding the sacrificial offerings, things that are broadly rejected by most Christians today, (see our discussion above concerning SDAs welcoming the LGBTQ+ community into church membership), it is clear proof that this “doctrine” has only gained momentum within Christianity since the days of Pergamos. Today, it manifests itself in the many shades of sexual indiscretion in our midst, all of which are violations of the sacred statutes given by God to guard the Ten Commandments. Well would be for the people of God at the present time to open a genuine Bible-centered, Holy Spirit-directed study into the sacred statutes of our God. As a primer on these Statutes, here is an article we published a few years ago, [Rediscovering Passover in the Christian Church](#).

The Nicolaitans Revisited: “So hast thou also them that **hold the doctrine** of the Nicolaitans, which **thing I hate**.” [Rev. 2: 15](#). In the first church (Ephesus), we saw that the church “hated” ([Rev. 2: 6](#)) the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, and by the time of the third church (Pergamus), their “hate” had turned to love, and now the church welcomed “them that hold” such doctrines. Again, I appeal to the reader to reflect on the “posture shift” attitude of our beloved SDA church on the sexual and moral challenges of our times. Like the church at Pergamus, today’s Adventism “holds” in high esteem those that promote such antichristian and unbiblical doctrines! May we learn the valuable lesson of repentance before it’s forever too late, is my prayer. In His address to the seven churches, one of the brightest commendations from Christ is to Smyrna, because they “hated” that which He also “hated,” and loved that which He loved, even in the face of certain death!

MONDAY ↑ January 14

Christ’s Message to Thyatira

In Pergamos, we discovered the wholesale acceptance of sun-worship among Christians, in the “doctrine of Balaam,” and just one church later, in Thyatira, another blatant heathen rite is accepted as true worship. This bespeaks the success of the Nicolaitans in reshaping the “doctrines” of the primitive church, from the earliest times.

“Thou hast there them that hold *the doctrine of Balaam*, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, **to eat things sacrificed unto idols**, and to **commit fornication**.” [Rev. 2: 14](#). “Thou sufferest *that woman Jezebel*, which calleth herself a prophetess, to *teach* and to *seduce* my servants to **commit fornication**, and to **eat things sacrificed unto idols**.” [Rev. 2: 20](#).

From the above comparison, one can readily see that both systems carry the same finality on the people of God, it leads them “to commit fornication” (spiritual and physical), as well as causing them “to eat things sacrificed unto idols”—imbibing unholy foods and unholy doctrines!

That Woman Jezebel: “She would make her religion to be *the religion of the kingdom and of every soul* in the kingdom. She brought with her eight hundred and fifty ‘prophets’ of her religion. She was the personal patron of them all. They all ‘ate at Jezebel’s table.’ 1 Kings 18: 19. She deliberately set herself to abolish all the religion and all the worship of God, and to *establish solely her own in all the kingdom*. She systematically broke down all the altars of the worship of God in the land. She *compelled all to conform to her form of sun-worship*. 1 Kings 19: 10,

14. And whosoever would not do this in some way – by sacrificing, by bowing the knee in a genuflexion, or by kissing the hand to throw a kiss to Baal – was *outlawed* and had to find refuge in dens and holes and caves of the earth. 1 Kings 18: 4, 13.”—[Lessons From The Reformation](#), A.T. Jones, p. 265; italics added.

This “woman Jezebel,” is the apostate church, who under various disguises sought to gain the ascendancy over the true people of God. She first showed up as “false apostles,” then as “the Nicolaitans,” and later as “that woman Jezebel!” she is today the queen of Churches in the Christian religion, the Roman Catholic Church and all her surrogates comprising the kingdom of apostate Protestantism—Babylon!

Anciently, “That woman Jezebel” usurped the authority of her husband, and ruled the kingdom with rigor, and today we can see the inspiration of her methods in the radical acts of “Posture Shift,” and “Women Ordination,” all of which are tending to a genderless society through “doctrines” of devils! Many today claim that “doctrines” are unnecessary, and only our faith in Christ matters, but that’s not what He says: “as many as have not **this doctrine**, and which have not known the depths of Satan, as they speak [teach]...” (Rev. 2: 24), upon such He will ask no higher duty of holiness. Our doctrines shape our morals, and our morals shape our characters, and our characters determine our destinies—the Holy City or the Holy Flames!

It is because the church has not rejected the illicit practices of this Jezebel-like religion that will peel forth the Divine sentence, “I will *kill her children with death*; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts.” [Rev. 2: 23](#).

This verse manifestly shows that this death decree from God, a slaughter, if you will, is not decreed upon all the churches, but is meant to be an object lesson to “all the churches,” that the great God of heaven abhors sun-worship and sexual perversions in all their forms. This slaying is the same one envisioned in Ezekiel chapter nine, wherein those who shall commit these abominations today, will fall under the figure of the five men each having a slaughter weapon in his hand. Read [Ezek. 9](#); “Study the ninth chapter of Ezekiel. *These words will be literally fulfilled*; yet the time is passing, and the people are asleep.” {18MR 236.2}

“Many, I saw, were flattering themselves that they were good Christians, who have not a single ray of light from Jesus... And I saw that *the Lord was whetting His sword* in heaven to **cut them down**. Oh, that every lukewarm professor could realize *the clean work* that God is about to make among His professed people!” {1T 189.2}.

At a time when Christianity is dispensing with primitive godliness, Christ has counseled, “that which ye have already **hold fast** till I come.” ([Rev. 2: 25](#)). While “new light” will come, it must not cause us to give up, that we’ve previously had, but to cause to advance in holiness.

To the “overcomers,” Jesus promises, “to him will I give power over the nations: And he shall rule them with a rod of iron; **as the vessels of a potter shall they be broken to shivers**; even as I received of my Father.” [Rev. 2: 26-27](#).

The language of these verses clearly describes the work of the “stone”—the Kingdom—in [Daniel chapter 2, verses 34, 35, 44, 45](#). Again, the phrase “unto the end,” shows that the message to Thyatira reaches down to our days and beyond, to the very close of probation for the church. For clarity on Christ’s kingdom being the “potter’s vessel,” read [Ps. 2: 4-9](#).

“‘He that overcometh’ being the one who is to ‘rule’ ‘the nations’ ‘with a rod of iron,’ and the need and the work of overcoming being not His but His followers’, the truth is obvious that the Lord will have a victorious nation -- a kingdom through which He will manifest His great power, and which shall be A Kingdom of Peace.”—V.T. Houteff, *Mt. Sion At The Eleventh Hour*, pp. 64-65.

Christ's Message to Sardis

The Sardis Christians, like the Laodiceans, are a boastful set; they believe themselves to be something which Heaven says they are not. "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and *art dead*." [Rev. 3: 1](#). This class believes it is in an exalted spiritual standing with Christ, nevertheless He rebukes them as being "dead." Truly, no greater deception can beset a people than a confidence that they are all right when they're all wrong, that they are alive when they are dead, and are ready to be spewed from His mouth! The Lord has further exposed their self-righteousness, declaring, "I have not found thy works perfect before God." [Rev. 3: 2](#). In verse one, Sardis boasted that she "lives," yet in verse two Christ chastened that she is "ready to die"—fit for a funeral!

When we do "the works of Him that sent" us, it will be mixed with faith, and we will be declared righteous in Heaven's eyes—such was the case of Abraham, the father of Faith, and so must it be with us today. The Sardis Christians are those who attempt to attain heaven with good works *alone*, devoid of faith in the blood of the Lamb, thus their works, as "filthy rags," ([Isa 64:6](#)), are rejected by God.

"Remember therefore how thou hast received [the Truth] and heard [the everlasting gospel], and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not **watch**, I **will come on thee as a thief**, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." [Rev. 3: 3](#); [added].

For a long while now, many present-truth believers held that *only* the message to the church of the Laodiceans applies to us today, but we are now seeing that the message to Thyatira, and Sardis, respectively, also apply with peculiar distinctiveness to us who are living in these last days, the days in which Christ will suddenly "come as a thief" to his church. Thus, it behooves us to heed His solemn warnings, lest we be surprised at our unholy feast!

Watch: After the resurrection, upon leaving His church for the "far country," Christ left on "watch" duty both his servants (ministers) and the Porter (the Holy Spirit)—His personal ambassador; see [Mark 13: 34-37](#).

It should not be difficult to see that "the Son of" man taking the "far journey" is Jesus Christ himself; and "his servants" are the Apostles whom he left behind. Realizing that "the porter" (singular) was left on duty *at the same time* with the Apostles, and since they are already identified as the Servants (plural), it is impossible to select one of them to now become "the porter," as that would be the equivalent to Him installing the system of the Nicolaitans, a thing he hates! What then? The only personage that fits the function of "the Porter" is God's Holy Spirit. When Christ returns to "reckon with his servants" He *never* reckons with the Porter, for the Porter is above reproach—He is a member of the Godhead.

"Thou hast a **few** names ... which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." [Rev. 3: 4](#). We must determine in our hearts, that by God's grace, we will be among the faithful "few" who have not defiled their garments with heathenism—not "bowed the knee to Baal," so that our names shall be retained in the Lamb's "Book of Life."

"Their one desire was to be like Christ. Ever they kept the standard of righteousness uplifted. To them is given an eternal weight of glory, because on the earth they walked with God, keeping themselves unspotted from the world, revealing to their fellow beings the righteousness of Christ."—{*In Heavenly Places*, p. 294.5}.

Christ's Message to Philadelphia

As with believers in the third church, Pergamum, the brethren in the sixth, Philadelphia, have been given the cleanest record among Christians, “for” said Christ, “thou hast *a little strength*, and hast *kept my word*, and hast *not denied my name*.” [Rev. 3: 8](#). The qualifications for success are their “little strength,” faithfulness to the “Word,” and honoring Christ’s “name” with holy living. Their “strength” was in their being obedient to all the truths revealed to them up to that time, and to access Him through the “opened door” of truth and salvation.

“We need not think that because our fathers did a certain way and died happy, we may follow in their footsteps and be accepted in rendering the same service and *doing the same* works that they did. We have *more light than they* had in their day; and if we would be accepted of God, we must be as faithful in obeying the light and walking in it as they were in receiving and obeying the light that God sent to them. We must accept and *improve the light that shines upon our pathway* as faithfully as they accepted and improved the light that fell upon their pathway in their generation. We shall be judged according to the light that shines into the soul-temple in our day; and if we follow the light, we shall be free men and women in Christ Jesus.” {FW 122.3}.

The Key-Man and the Opened Door: Earlier, we briefly discussed “the Porter,” and here His office function comes up again as the door-keeper—He who holds the keys. Christ is “he that hath the key of David, he that openeth” the sheepfold by Himself, and in His absence, His ambassador—the Holy Spirit, opens the door of salvation to each repenting sinner, (read [John 10: 2-3](#)). As the only One with rights to the throne of David, ([Isaiah 22:20-25](#)), only Jesus has the keys, and as such, He *alone, as* antitypical David, will be the next king to sit on David’s throne. Here is a throne reserved to none other, no not even to a redeemed human being, for God never intended that man should rule as king over other men (doctrine of the Nicolatians)! It was not so in the beginning, and neither shall it be so in “the restoration of all things.”

“The True Witness declares: ‘Behold, I have set before thee an open door.’ Let us thank God with heart and soul and voice; and let us learn to *approach unto him as through an open door*, believing that we may come freely with our petitions, and that he will hear and answer. It is by a living faith in his power to help, that we shall receive strength to fight the battles of the Lord with the confident assurance of victory.” {RH, July 9, 1908 par. 7}.

The Key-Man and the Shut Door: While today the door of salvations remains open, it will not forever remain ajar. As in the days of Noah, Lot, and Nineveh, there is a limit to God’s forbearance, and at his own choosing, our God shall put a “shut to the door,” ([Luke 13: 25](#) & [Matt. 25: 10](#)), and there shall be “wailing and gnashing of teeth,” ([Matt. 13: 42](#)). May we hasten our steps and enter in through His open door today!

As in Smyrna the false teachers were exposed as of “the synagogue of Satan,” ([Rev. 2: 9](#)), likewise also these nefarious teachers have hung around even till Philadelphia, seeking to gain the preeminence. But to those who are true to His promises, Christ declared, “thou hast *a little strength*, and hast *kept my word*, and hast *not denied my name*.” ([Rev. 3: 8](#)). To such ones He also promises, the wicked shall loath “to come and *worship before thy feet*, and to know that I have loved thee.” ([Rev. 3: 9](#)). Read [Jer. 31: 3](#).

Further study: [Isa 49:23](#), [Isa 60:14](#); [2 Cor. 11:13-15](#); [Rev. 3: 10](#), [Mal. 3: 1-3](#); [Heb. 12:1-3](#), [Matt. 24:42-51](#).

Christians in Laodicea

Christ's message to the church at Laodicea is one intermixed with rebuke and restoration), hope and redemption, ([Rev. 3: 14-22](#).) Of all the seven churches, none has been more sharply chastised than is Laodicea—she bears the blackest record! Yet, God's grace abounds with a gentleman's knock at the closed door to this church. Only in Laodicea do we find this entrenched system of spiritual degeneracy, resulting in Christ's being left on the outside knocking and pleading to enter within!

Who is Laodicea, Today? "The name Laodicea is compounded from the two Greek words *lao* and *decia*, which mean the people declare judgment. The church, therefore, which declares, 'Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come' (Rev. 14:7), is evidently the one called Laodicea. And it is almost as well known outside ... as within it, that the Seventh-day Adventist church is endeavoring to carry the judgment message of Revelation 14:7, and is therefore unchallenged ... to the title of Laodicea."— V.T. Houteff, *The Symbolic Code*, Vol. 9 No. 1-12, p. 2.

The Amen: Among the many names of titles given to the Son of God, is "the Amen." This is a Hebrew word which means the "the God of truth," or the "the Truth and very Truth," or "the Truth in verity!" Hence "the Amen" is *certain* and *sure* of all His declarations—"so let it be," for He speaks the Truth in verity—the Truth and *only* truth resides in Him, He is the God who *cannot lie*! In the beginning, "the Amen" declared the earth and creation into being—"For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." ([Ps. 33: 9](#))! "For all the promises of God in Him are **yea**, and in him **Amen**." [2 Cor. 1: 20](#).

The faithful and true witness: The word "witness" is the Greek word "martos" from which we get the English word martyr—someone who has been slain for the Truth. Hence, Jesus Christ is the king of martyrs—He was "martyred" for our salvation, wounded for our iniquities, and with His stripes we are healed. (Read [Isa. 53: 3-10](#)).

The Beginning of the Creation of YHWH: This means that he is the initiator of creation—creation began with Him, in that he set creation in motion, the Leader of creation, and *not* that he is a created being, but the sovereign Creator. Read [Col. 1: 13-17](#), and [John 1: 1-3](#).

Christ's Message to Laodicea: The True Witness declares that Laodicea is as a cold, lifeless, Christless church, having Him on the outside pleading to enter in! The work of the Nicolaitians had been so greatly perfected in the ministry of the preceding six churches, that by the time of this seventh, it had been glorified to the point where they have replaced "the very Truth" of God's word with "doctrines" of devils, and righteousness with formalities.

I will spue thee out of my mouth: The verb "spue" (spew) means: to vomit, to throw up—In other words total abhorrence and rejection of this lukewarm church (people)!

Rich, and increased with goods: This class is self-sufficient and independent of God, feeling they have attained all there is in spiritual knowledge—not in need of anymore enlightenment on the Word of God, no more truth, and therefore devolves into spiritual impotency.

Wretched, Miserable, Poor, Blind, and Naked: "With a ministry wretched, miserable, poor blind, and naked, what church (candlestick) could possibly stay lighted? And with her light thus gone out or but flickering dimly, how could she lighten the world as God has set her to do? Through the eyes of the True Witness, therefore, the tragedy of Laodicea is starkly seen—"sleeping preachers preaching to a sleeping people" (Testimonies, Vol. 2, p. 337) while a sin-benighted world plunges on hell-bent in its darkness! O what a piteous plight! And yet it is so utterly overlooked!"—V.T. Houteff, *The Answerer*, Book 1, pp. 12, 13.

Repentance and Restoration: In this command, Christ is calling the church back to primitive godliness, to the place of Revival and Reformation—the most urgent and necessary of all her spiritual needs. Heaven’s cure for Laodicea today is the loud peal of an awakening call ([Isa. 58: 1](#), [Joel 2: 1](#), [Micah 6: 9](#)), stirring her from the demonic slumber to righteous wakefulness, from self-deceived ignorance to the dawning light of present-truth. Having found the angel (ministry) asleep and complacent in its blindness to the desperate spiritual condition, Christ is now appealing to each church member, knocking at our heart’s door, “if *any man* hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me.” ([Rev. 3: 21](#)).

To think that this message of repentance will come from a blind and self-deceived ministry, is equivalent to our ingesting sleeping pills after being suddenly awakened! The days of thinking that the leadership will effect this revival and reformation are past, and God is now raising up laymen across the world field, pleading with the denomination to repent!

“That these men (leaders) should stand in a sacred place, to be as the voice of God to the people, as we once believed the General Conference to be, that is past. - General Conference Bulletin 1901 page 25 {PC 422.5}; (in original).

The end result of reformation is complete restoration to the state of our “first love,” and from thence to grow up unto perfection in Christ Jesus our Lord.

FRIDAY ↑ *January 18*

Further Thought: Read Ellen G. White, [“The Revelation”, pp. 578-592, in *The Acts of the Apostles*](#).

LESSON 4*January 19-25

Worthy Is *the* Lamb

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Memory Text: “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, and to loose the seven seals thereof.” ([Revelation 5:5, KJV](#)).

A correct understanding of Revelation demands a correct understanding of the Sanctuary, for most of its contents emanates from this place, wherein the forerunner of our faith is gone, presiding first as Priest, and later High Priest, in the Tabernacle pitched by God and not by men.

Additionally, we will notice that the remainder of Revelation has largely to do with the results of the judgment proceedings in the heavenly Sanctuary. When surveying these subjects, care should be taken to realize that they are pronouncements from the great Trial of the Ages, beginning with God’s cure for the Universes’ sin problem, beginning with the “battle for His throne,” ([Rev. 12: 7](#)), and culminating with the deposing of the Evil One, ([Rev. 20: 15](#)), with whom the great conflict of the ages first began, and finally the restoration of Eden and humans repopulating the renewed earth ([Rev. 21: 1-5](#)).

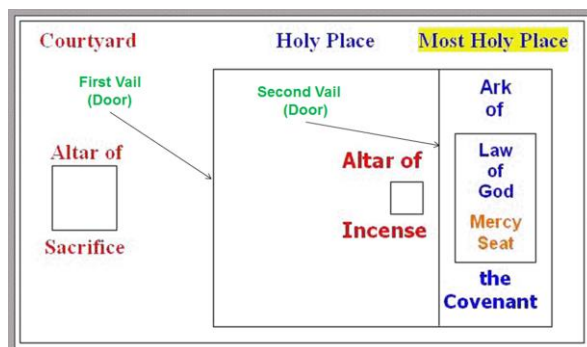
SUNDAY [↑] January 20

In the Heavenly Throne Room & The Opened Door

Quarterly’s Note: “Starting in [Revelation 4:1](#), Jesus invites John to come up to heaven to be shown a panoramic survey of history **from his time until Christ’s return.**”

It is a defeating approach to suggest that John saw only those things “**from his time until Christ’s return,**” for it sets us up to dismiss the truth of the Seven Seals, and the Seven Trumpets, both of which are pronouncements from the great Judgment proceedings. We will follow this understanding closely, as it has been one of the great areas in which Adventism departs from the Scriptures to pursue cunningly devised fables.

The Open Door: Because this throne room scenery is in the Heavenly Sanctuary, immediately we see that the door is now “open” because it was first shut! From the earthly sanctuary services, during the course of the year, save for the Day of Atonement (DOA), the first vail to the Sanctuary—the Holy Place, is opened, while the second or “inner vail” remains closed. On the DOA this role is changed, and the first vail (to the Holy Place) remains shut while the second one is opened by the High Priest, who alone presides in that



space. Significantly too, (follow diagram), only on the DOA was the entire sanctuary seen as one compartment, instead of two—the Holy place and the Most Holy place became one grand space—The Heavenly Throne Room! It is important to develop this understanding for what is to follow, and having not ventured to make this clarification, the quarterly has lost this central theme in the proclamation of the Three Angel’s messages.

After This: In Lesson 3 we learnt about the seven churches, and ended with Laodicea—the judgment declaring people (church). It stands to reason, then, that the message of the last church—the judgment, will absorb the rest of the book, and so it should! Hence, “after this” discourse on Laodicea, we are brought face-to-face in the judicial chambers of the Eternal One.

Things hereafter: The Judgment is what would convene “hereafter,” sometime after 96 A.D., and would cover things that occurred from the beginning of the Conflict of the Ages to its close, and this is easily sustained by reading [Rev. 12: 1-9](#), the woman (truth) in conflict with the dragon (Satan) from eternity past to the end of sin.

“A throne was set in heaven”: Since this throne was “set” and the great judge “sat” on it, it is clear that this throne scenery was not always there, and it is a temporary arrangement “in heaven” to accommodate the judgment. This is similar to [Dan. 7: 9-13](#). This shows that “the judgment” would convene sometime after the 2nd Century, AD, and sometime after the career of the “little horn” power had oppressed the true people of God.

The rainbow of promise: This represents God’s *Covenant promises*, His Law, ([Gen. 9:13-16](#); [Isa. 54:9-10](#)).

Furniture: As stated before, on the DOA the entire sanctuary becomes one grand Judgment chamber, and as such, looking therein, one sees all the furniture in both compartments at a glance—God’s Judgment Chamber! This is why we see the Throne of God, which in the earthly sanctuary, is replaced the Mercy Seat, above the ark of the covenant, the “seven lamps of fire” (seven-branched candle stick), along with the table of showbread and the altar of incense. The heavenly has the realities of those objects foreshadowed in the earthly; whereas the earthly had curtains with Cherubims (angels) embroidered on them, ([Ex. 26: 1](#)), in the Heavenly these are replaced with myriads of real (actual) angels.

The sea of glass: In the earthly sanctuary there was a water pot, the laver, whose function is replaced in the heavenly by the sea of glass—the final washing place for all whose sins are blotted out.

Order or Events: It is important to acknowledge the distinct order of the cataclysmic events marking the transition between the Judgments: Dead vs. the Living. It will be noticed, from the accompanying table, that the events are in reverse order, showing that when God judges the dead the process is in direct reverse from the Living. For example, the dead are judged after they’ve suffered under the First death, whereas the Living are judged while yet alive!

Event No.	Judgment for the Dead (Rev. 4: 5; 6: 12)	Judgment for the Living (Rev. 8: 5)	Judgment in Seven Last Plagues (Rev. 16: 18)
1	Earthquake	Voices	Voices
2	Lightenings	Thunderings	Thunderings
3	Thunderings	Lightenings	Lightenings
4	Voices	Earthquake	Earthquake

Six wings: The four living creatures, or beasts, are similar in description to the ones cited in [Ezekiel 1:5-14](#), each had six wings. Wings, as in other prophecies, are used to denote time periods, rather than brute “speed,” as is erroneously taught by some, and the easiest way realize that “time flies” as do eagle’s wings, ([Job 9: 25-26](#)), is to examine the prophecy of Daniel 8. There it says, “an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth, and touched not the ground: and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes.” ([Dan. 8: 5](#)). The lightning speed of Alexander the Great’s victory against the Medio-Persian Empire is here represented, and shows that “he touched not the ground,” to denote the rapidity of his military victories, yet that goat had no wings to support the notion of *swiftness* and *speed*! Similarly, the Medio-Persian Empire defeated Babylon in one night, in a near bloodless coup—the shortest war in history, yet, the beast describing that Kingdom—“a

bear,” ([Dan. 7: 5](#)), had no wings, instead, there were “three ribs” in its mouth! Above all beasts, this one deserved to have had wings, were wings indicative of speed! The truth of the “six wings,” therefore, shows that the heavenly judgment was called to session during the “sixth” time period—the sixth seal. More will be said on this when we study the seven seals in Lesson 5.

MONDAY ↑ *January 21*

The Heavenly Assembly in the Throne Room

The Judge: YHWH is declared the “judge of the earth,” ([Ps. 94: 2](#), [Ps. 50: 6](#)), and presides as such in the court of Heaven.

The 4 Beasts and 24 Elders: These “elders” are clearly descriptive of redeemed human beings, and the Quarterly is correct in its description of this group. The compelling reason for their redemptive humanity is seen in the song they sang, thou “hast redeemed us to God *by thy blood.*” ([Rev. 5: 9](#)). Only a redeemed blood-bought possession of Christ can *truthfully* sing such a song, which bears evidence that not only are the 24 elders humans, but so too are the four living creatures (beasts)! They are representations “of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” This means that the “elders” and “creatures” are earth’s inhabitants—representations of those being judged,

“The beasts by nature also represent *the four periods of the church*. The first beast is like a lion. ‘Lion’ is the king of beasts, and is intended to point out the first period of the church before the ceremonial section, with which the judgment began...The second beast being ‘like a calf,’ it is evident that he represents the sacrificial, or typical section. Thus the beast with the ‘face of a man’ must represent the anti-typical period after the crucifixion. And the fourth beast was like a ‘flying eagle.’ He represents the period in the time of the harvest. The last period is symbolized by the flying eagle to denote the church that shall be translated. A ‘flying eagle’ is king of birds, as the lion is king of beasts, which is a sign of victory, thus making a perfect symbol. As the judgment of the dead began with the beast like a lion, -- king of beasts, -- just so the judgment of the living begins with the beast like an eagle, -- king of birds.”—V.T. Houteff, 2 SR, p. 196.

“Before the throne are the ‘seven lamps burning’ and the ‘Lamb as it had been slain,’ showing that the throne was ‘set’ there to serve *in time of probation*. The light from the candlestick represents the light of truth in the church while the blood of the Lamb is *atoning for sinful beings*. On the other hand, upon the throne sits the Ancient of days, the Judge, surrounded by *the jury of twenty-four elders* plus the *angelic witnesses*, ‘ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands’ of them, plus *the four beasts* (who, being ‘redeemed’ ‘out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation’ -- Rev. 5:8, 9, -- are therefore *symbolical of the saints*,-- all those whose sins will be blotted from the books of records, -- just as the beasts of Daniel 7 are symbolical of all the kingdoms which will perish in their sins), with *the Lamb, our Advocate*, in the midst. All this shows a combined mediatorial-judicial work.”—V.T. Houteff, *The Judgment and The Harvest*, p. 15.

Note: The Quarterly is accurate in its identification of the ‘elders,’ but *incorrect* on the ‘four living creatures,’ as ‘seraphim’—guardians of God’s throne.

The four Faces: The very fact that these beasts have been redeemed by the blood of Christ and shall reign upon earth shows that they are symbolical of the saints, even as the beasts of Daniel are symbolical of the nations. Necessarily, then, the faces of the cherubim, just as with the faces of the beasts standing before the Judgment throne, are figurative of the saints in time of Judgment. Their faces being descriptive of the “standard” (flag) of

the four cardinal points of the compass, occupied by specific tribes in Israel, it speaks to the fact that these are all the saved! While there are “twelve gates” to the Holy City, earmarked with “the names of the twelve tribes of the children of Israel,” (Rev. 21: 12), there is clearly not a 13th gate for Gentiles! This means that everyone who shall be saved will be saved as “an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!” (John 1: 47).

The Holy City had three gates in each cardinal direction, and there being four such points of the compass, we can easily see that 3x4 =12, again reinforcing the truth that all the saved must be of Abraham’s seed, and “heirs according to the promise,” (Gal. 3: 29). We are not saved as Gentiles, but as Israelites indeed, those from father Adam down to the last repentant sinner who accepts Christ as Saviour from sin!

1. **Lion** —The king of beasts, represents those who first lived on the earth, from whom modern humans stem—from Adam’s generation. **East:** Judah’s standard was a **lion’s** head, (Gen. 49: 9, 10, Num. 2: 3), from whence came the Lawgiver, the King of Israel.
2. **Ox** —symbol of the Temple and its sacrificial system, thus representing those people who lived under the Levitical system. **West:** Ephraim’s standard was a **calf’s** (ox’s) head, (Num. 2: 18, Deut. 33: 17), from whence came the Kings of the 10-northern Tribes of Israel.
3. **Man** —The period of salvation by man, even by the sacrifice of the man Christ Jesus, (Y’shuah). **South:** Reuben’s standard was a **man’s** head, (Gen. 30: 14, Num. 2: 10), he was the first born of Israel (Jacob).
4. **Eagle** —The King of birds, represents those who shall live in the latter days, the time when the church shall “mount up with wings” and “fly” as an eagle—thus representing that body of saints that shall be translation from earth to glory. **North:** Dan, standard of a **serpent** and later **an eagle**, (Gen 49: 17, Num. 2: 25), represents traitor and also “Judge” of Israel, (Gen. 49: 16).



“The standard of the tribe was of white and red, and the crest upon it **an eagle**, the great foe to serpents, which had been chosen by the leader instead of the serpent, because Jacob had compared Dan to a serpent. Ahiezer substituted **the eagle**, the destroyer of serpents, as he shrank from carrying an adder upon his flag.”—Merrill F. Unger, *Unger’s Bible Dictionary*, Moody Press, Chicago, 1966, pp.235-236.

“This "ravenous bird" is a symbol of those nations whom God employs and sends forth to do a work of destruction, sweeping away whatever is decaying and putrescent ([Matthew 24:28](#) ; [Isaiah 46:11](#) ; [Ezekiel 39:4](#) ; [Deuteronomy 28:49](#) ; [Jeremiah 4:13](#) ; [48:40](#)).” *Easton’s Bible Dictionary*, Eagle.

Hence, the eagle is a fitting symbol of God’s judgments upon the transgressors of His holy Law, bespeaking the role of “judge” that Dan was to play among his brethren! Thought absent from the enumeration of the 144,000 (Rev. 7: 5-8), the tribe of Dan is identified among the inhabitants of restored Kingdom of glory, (Ezek. 48: 1- 2), and is positioned towards **the north**, the direction locating the throne of God, (Isa. 14: 13; Ps. 48: 1-2)—the “great Judge” of the earth.

The layout of these tribes, along the four cardinal points of the compass, very clearly describes the outline of the cross!

Quarterly's Note: "The four living creatures *symbolize the exalted beings who serve God as His agents and the guardians of His throne (Ps. 99:1)*. Their wings point symbolically to their *swiftness...*" Monday's Lesson, Jan. 21, par. 6.

This conclusion from the Quarterly is biblically incorrect, for reasons already stated. Too, these "creatures" each had one head, not four, as in the case of the Cherubims in Ezekiel 1.

TUESDAY  *January 22*

The Sealed Scroll

This sealed scroll is said to contain 'every nation, kindred, tongue, and people,' reinforcing the truth that it is the Lamb's book, for only He was worthy, in the entire universe, to open and read its contents. 'In symbolic language was contained in that roll the influence of **every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close**.' - Ellen G. White, [Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, p. 7](#).

Being presented in the judgment, this statement solidifies the truth already established that the Seals comprehend the entire history of the world under sinners, "from the beginning of earth's history," and as such must open with those who've died since the days of Adam, and closing with the living. Hence the judgment is broadly divided into two segments, (a) those from Adam's days till the opening judgment under the 6th Seal in 1844, and (b) those who have lived and died since 1844 to the general close of human probation in the latter days.

A Book Written Within and on the Backside: "The book was 'written within and on the backside' -- 'written within' is the prophetic word of God; 'and on the backside,' is the historical fulfillment of the prophecies. 'And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.' (Rev. 13:8.) 'Who hath wrought and done it, **Calling the generation from the beginning?**' (Isa. 41:4.)"—V.T. Houteff, 2 SR, p. 201.

"The book sealed with seven seals, in the right hand of the Great Judge, must contain the names of those whose sins are to be blotted out. Inasmuch as this is the only book that 'no man in heaven nor in earth... was able to open, neither to look thereon,' save the Lamb which was before the throne (See chapter 5:1-9), it is unquestionably clear that the book with the seven seals is the one called 'The Lamb's book of Life.' And with it the judgment opened. The same is repeated in Revelation 20:12, 'And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.' (See 'The Great Controversy,' page 480.)"—Ibid., p. 192.

QOD: Christ was the only one "worthy" for He was the only one who lived a sinless life as a human being, and thereafter died as our "Sacrifice" to save sinners from the second death.

"This scripture [Rev. 5:2-8.] reveals that there is not another in the vast universe of God that is worthy, or that can open the book, for 'the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Root of David, has prevailed.' Christ acquired the above title by His birth, and *by His victory on the cross* for those who would believe in Him as the Saviour of the world. He has *prevailed by shedding His blood on Calvary*; thus none other can open the book for He alone has died for

the human race. This ‘book’ contains the names of the saints, and the ‘seven seals’ comprise, prophetically, the world's history, during which time the saints are sealed. These seven periods of unfulfilled history sealed the book, and the only one that could open it -- see into the future -- was the ‘Lamb.’”—V.T. Houteff, 2 SR, pp. 200-201.

WEDNESDAY  January 23

Worthy Is the Lamb

Jesus Christ as Advocate, is here presented “before” the throne, rather than at the Father’s “right hand,” (Luke 22: 69, Rev. 22: 1), showing that his pleading work in the heavenly Sanctuary is different from His administrative work as coregent on the eternal throne, conjointly governing the entire unfallen universe. He is our kinsman Redeemer, and as such is familiar with our cases, and is *the only lawyer* that qualifies to plead as the sinner’s defense lawyer!

The Lamb is Michael Our Prince: It is important to see the truth of the Lamb through His office as Michael our prince.

“And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great **prince**⁸²⁶⁹ which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation [even] to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in **the book.**” Dan. 12:1.

Observe that Michael delivers only those written “in the book,” evidently this Book of Michael’s is also the one known as “the Lamb’s book of life.” Rev. 21:27. Hence Michael is a synonymous term for the Lamb—Jesus Christ (John 1: 29), who Himself was the only one “worthy” to open and read the book of records displayed in the Father’s hand.

In Joshua 5, the being who confronted him with his drawn sword was described as “the **captain** of the LORD’S host.” Josh. 5: 15. The word “captain,” means, among other lofty titles, “Prince.” *Strong’s Concordance* says the word *Captain* –Sar–[H8269], means “prince, ruler, leader, chief, chieftain, official, captain.” In a nutshell, then, Michael as “prince” is a synonymous term for the Lamb, our sovereign “Ruler,” our King, and being the Only One to “read” the book, then it follows as a logical sequence that the only sealed-book reader is Michael our Prince (King), AKA the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Lamb.

Christ was declared “worthy” in the backdrop of a “strong” commanding angel confessing his inability, declaring that “no man [one]” (Rev. 5: 3) was capable to open and read the book, but only the conquering Lion of Judah, the One who breaks every chain, giving us the victory again, and again!

THURSDAY  January 24

The Significance of Pentecost

Quarterly's Note: "In the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, [Acts 2:1-4](#) confirms one of the most decisive events in the history of the plan of salvation: the inauguration of Christ into His post-Calvary ministry as High Priest and King in the heavenly sanctuary."—Paragraph-1.

I greatly applaud the authors for inserting this perspective on Pentecost, for it is most sublime, as it presents another view of *the annual feasts* which is quite often overlooked by the modern church. It is, therefore, worthy for us to dwell on this topic for a bit. In Ex. 40: 12-15, we read that "Aaron and his sons" were to be anointed with the holy oil of consecration, and on such occasions the holy Oil (Holy Spirit) flowed down in copious amounts, reaching down to the High Priest's (Aaron's) beard, flowing down to the skirts of his ephod (Ps. 133: 1-3), for the plentitude of oil bestowed! This ceremony was what established the High Priest in his mediatorial role as Israel's intercessor. Christ, therefore, being the only "mediator between God and men," (1 Tim. 2: 5), He necessarily had to have been equally anointed, but with a better oil of consecration, for in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily.

"In the heavenly courts, Christ, with the angels who had accompanied him to heaven, had been received. All the heavenly intelligences joined in *this coronation service of their Lord*. The pentecostal outpouring upon the disciples was heaven's communication to them that *his inauguration was complete*." {RH, April 30, 1908 par. 6}

When we realize that Pentecost is a demonstration of "unity"—"one accord" between God and man, it becomes most solemn to internalize what David, in Spirit, said of Aaron's consecration, "1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in **unity**! 2 It is like the precious **ointment** upon the head, that **ran down upon the beard**, even Aaron's beard: that **went down to the skirts of his garments**; 3 As the **dew** of Hermon, and as **the dew** that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the LORD commanded **the blessing**, even life for evermore." Ps. 133: 1-3.

Having been coronated at Pentecost, the heavenly outpouring reached down to the skirts of Christ's garments—His Church on earth! Thus the Psalmist further declared, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever: **the sceptre of thy kingdom** is a right sceptre... thy God, hath **anointed** thee with **the oil of gladness above** thy fellows. 8 All *thy garments smell of myrrh*, and aloes, and cassia, out of the ivory palaces, whereby they have made thee glad. 9 *Kings' daughters were among thy honourable women*: upon thy right hand did stand **the queen** in gold of Ophir." Ps. 45: 6-8.

Clearly, the Oil of coronation that was poured upon Christ in heaven, at His coronation as High Priest and King, was overflowed upon His waiting disciples on earth. This was the former rain of power being appropriated upon the early disciples, but prophecy has declared that the former rain was given moderately (Joel 2: 22), and the latter rain will be given abundantly, therefore, there remains a Pentecost for the people of God! As verily as the Pentecost to open the gospel dispensation occurred when the "day of Pentecost was fully come," (Acts 2: 1), similarly, at its close, God will electrify His people with greater power when Christ shall again be coronated as King of His forthcoming Kingdom of Glory (Luke 19: 15).

"The great work of the gospel is *not to close with less manifestation* of the power of God than marked its opening. The prophecies which were fulfilled in the outpouring of the former rain at the opening of the gospel are *again to be fulfilled in the latter rain at its close*. Here are 'the times of refreshing' to which the apostle Peter looked forward when he said: 'Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; and He shall send Jesus.'" Acts 3:19, 20." {GC 611.3-612}.

Get ready for Pentecost part-two, my friends, and the surest way to be ready, is to today realize that these annual appointments (Lev. 23) are to serve as “dress rehearsals” as it were, for the real event. On the Passover in Egypt, Israel was liberated! On the last Passover with the disciples, sinners were liberated! On the very day called Pentecost, in the first century church, the Spirit was poured out in unwonted power! On the very day called Pentecost, the last century church, the Spirit will again be poured out in unwonted power! In all these examples, and many more not cited here, God has been faithful in keeping all His calendar appointments, will he change course in the latter-day church, upon whom the ends of the world are come? God forbid!

Solemn questions to ponder: Why were the disciples gathered together in the upper room? What were they observing (celebrating)? Why was it important? Who commanded them to be there? Since the prophecies of the first Pentecost were fulfilled on the very day of Pentecost, will the prophecies of the latter Pentecost be fulfilled on a *different* calendric schedule? To gain an appreciation for God’s holy times, read our ground-breaking article, [Rediscovering Passover In The Christian Church](#).

FRIDAY ↑ *January 25*

Further Thought:

Because the book sealed with seven seals, will be pivotal in our understanding of the Seven Seals, and Trumpets, respectively, it is worthy to note that it contains more than the records of the church since the cross, but that it predates Calvary and stretches back to the gates of Eden, where we find the victims of the fall, shut out of their Home and given a life of *anguish* in their pilgrimage back to our Father’s Home.

"Thus the Jewish leaders made their choice. Their decision was registered in the book which John saw in the hand of Him that sat upon the throne, the book which no man could open. In all its vindictiveness this decision will appear before them *in the day when this book is unsealed* by the Lion of the Tribe of Judah." -- "Christ's Object Lessons," p. 294.

Here as in her other work, Sister White, in agreement with the Scriptures, teach that the sealed book contains the character records of those who will be reviewed in the Judgment. Names will be accepted, and names will be rejected. Let’s pray, and earnestly labor to be in compliance with all of God’s statutes, judgments, and commandments, so that when the Judgment of the living shall be closed, we are counted “worthy” with “the Lamb that was slain!”

In preparation for the seals and trumpets, it is worthy to remember the following biblically sound guidelines, earlier announced by the authors of this Quarter’s Lesson:

Quarterly’s Note: “In trying to determine the meaning of the symbols used in the book, we must be careful **not to impose on the text** a meaning that comes out of *human imagination* or the current meanings of those symbols in our culture. Instead, **we must go to the Bible and to the symbols found in its pages** in order to understand the symbols in the book of Revelation.” [Tue, Jan. 1, Paragraph 3](#).

“A correct interpretation of Revelation requires a proper understanding of its symbolic language in light of the Old Testament.”—[Sabbath, Jan. 19, par. 4](#).

Lesson 4 ends here.

LESSON 5*January 26—February 1

The Seven Seals

SABBATH AFTERNOON

Read for This Week's Study: [Rev. 6:1-17](#), [Lev. 26:21-26](#), [Ezek. 4:16](#), [Deut. 32:43](#), [2 Thess. 1:7-10](#).

Memory Text: ⁹ 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; ¹⁰ And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth." ([Revelation 5:9-10, KJV](#)).

What a great moment for the consummation of God's solution to the sin problem! The lyrics of this song gives clear testimony that these "elders" and "living creatures" will one day "reign" as "kings and priests...on the earth." This internal Biblical evidence, forever settles the truth that those who sing this song are the "redeemed" of "earth," and not angels, as the lesson suggests of the "living creatures." This is important for what will follow in the judgment, and it is this *key* that Inspiration will use to unlock the truth of the rest of this Book.

Quarterly's Note: "Christ...regained what was lost through Adam. He is now ready, by opening the seals on the scroll, to carry forward the plan of salvation to its ultimate realization. Pentecost marked the beginning of the spread of the gospel, by which Christ expands His kingdom. Thus, the breaking of the seals refers to the preaching of the gospel and the consequences of rejecting it."—[Sabbath, Jan. 26, Paragraphs 1, 2](#).

This statement is suggesting that the seals commence with Pentecost, which is entirely contrary to what we were told about the book containing them. By way of review, in last week's lesson ([Tue. Jan. 29, par. 3](#)), we learnt that the book contains the history of the world's inhabitants, from the very beginning—

"There in His open hand lay the book, the roll of *the history of God's providences, the prophetic history of nations and the church*. Herein was contained the divine utterances, His authority, His commandments, His laws, the whole symbolic counsel of the Eternal, and **the history of all ruling powers in the nations**. In symbolic language was contained in that roll *the influence of every nation, tongue, and people from the beginning of earth's history to its close*...The destiny of **every nation** was **contained in that book**." — Ellen G. White, [Manuscript Releases, vol. 9, p. 7](#). Also in {20MR 197.2-197.3}

With the above understanding, one can readily see that the seals comprehend the entire history of the world's inhabitants, "from the beginning of earth's history to its close." Therefore, any teaching which does not respect this fact, as in the case of the current lesson, is fraught with errors!

Quarterly's Note: In preparing us for this study, we should do well to review the following Biblical positions established by this Lesson's authors, and hold them to this test:

- “In trying to determine the meaning of the symbols used in the book, we must be careful not to *impose on the text a meaning that comes out of human imagination* or the current meanings of those symbols in our culture. Instead, *we must go to the Bible and to the symbols found in its pages* in order to understand the symbols in the book of Revelation.” [Tue, Jan. 1, Paragraph 3.](#)
- “A correct interpretation of Revelation requires a proper understanding of its symbolic language in light of the Old Testament.”—[Sabbath, Jan. 19, par. 4.](#)

SUNDAY [↑] January 27

The Opening of the First Seal

The word “seal” has to do with salvation, hence, “the foundation of God standeth sure, having this **seal**, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.” 2Tim 2:19.

The sealed book, therefore, is intended to showcase “those that are Christs,” while exposing those who have walked contrary to His Statutes, judgments, and commandments. It is entirely inaccurate therefore, for the Quarterly to suggest that “The events of the seven seals must be understood in the context of the Old Testament covenant curses,” for it undermines the truth of the judgment. We’ve already seen the jubilation what was created when Christ took the book to read its contents—those that are his were vindicated!

When God wants to show His church as an evangelistic movement He has *never* employed the symbol of a woman, for whereas a man cannot produce a child, a woman can! The symbol must match the sense of the prophecy, and God has *never* used a man to symbolize the Church!

“Some have applied the seven seals of the sixth chapter of Revelation to the church in the New Testament time, but the symbols are contrary to the application. In both Old and New Testament time, God’s church has been symbolized by a chaste woman. (See Jer. 6:2; Rev. 12:1.) Inspiration makes no change in the rule for a symbol of an impure church, for in Revelation 17:1, 4, 5, an harlot is used to point out a church, or churches, that are fallen or untrue. The change of this rule (from “woman” to “man” or “horses”) cannot be found anywhere within the Bible.”—V.T. Houteff, 2SR, p. 193.

The Prophetic Key: To correctly understand the seals, there is a divine “key” that must be used, and it is found in the second seal: “And when he had opened the second seal, I heard the second beast say, Come and see. And there went out another horse *that was red*: and *power* was given to him that sat thereon to **take peace from the earth**, and that they should kill one another: and there was given unto him a great sword” Rev. 6: 3, 4.

The career of this second horseman was “to take peace from the earth” with his peace destroying “sword,” thus causing humans to “kill one another!” The only time that this celestial “peace” has ever reigned on this earth was during its Edenic state. Until the time of Cain, vindictive bloodshed was unknown among humans, and although marred by the curse of sin, the physical earth remained in its pristine eden form until the time of the flood when it was radically transformed. “The entire surface of the earth was changed at the Flood. *A third dreadful curse rested upon it* in consequence of sin.” {PP 107.4}

Quarterly’s Note: “The scene of the first seal describes the spread of the gospel, which **started** powerfully at **Pentecost**...Prophetically, **the scene of the first seal corresponds to the message to the church in Ephesus**; it

describes the apostolic period of the first century during which the gospel spread rapidly throughout the world ([Col. 1:23](#)).”—[Sunday, Jan. 27, pars. 5, 6](#).

The above statement from the quarterly ignores the truth of the Beasts and Elders, for they were redeemed from “every nation, kindred, tongue, and people” from the beginning of human history, and not just the last 2,000 years—the Gospel era!

MONDAY ↑ *January 28*

The Second and Third Seals

Read [Revelation 6:3-4](#). On the basis of the description of the red horse and the rider, what is being talked about here in reference to the gospel?

Red is the color of blood. The rider has a great sword and is allowed to take peace from the earth, which opens the way for people to

TUESDAY ↑ *January 29*

The Scene of the Fourth Seal

Read [Revelation 6:7-8](#). What scene is portrayed here? How is this scene related to the previous one?

The color of the horse in the fourth seal is expressed with the Greek word *chloros*, which is the ashen-gray color of a decomposing corpse.

WEDNESDAY ↑ *January 30*

The Opening of the Fifth Seal

Read [Revelation 6:9-10](#). What is happening here?

The word “soul” in the Bible denotes the whole person ([Gen. 2:7](#)). The martyrdom of God’s faithful and persecuted people is

THURSDAY ↑ *January 31*

The Opening of the Sixth Seal

In the fifth seal, we see God’s people suffering injustice in a hostile world

FRIDAY ↑ *February 1*

Further Thought: Read Ellen G. White, [“The World’s Need”](#), pp. 457-460, in [Testimonies to Ministers and Gospel Workers](#).

The vision of the opening of the seven seals points symbolically to God’s care for, and discipline of, His people on earth. As Kenneth A. Strand has pointed out:

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