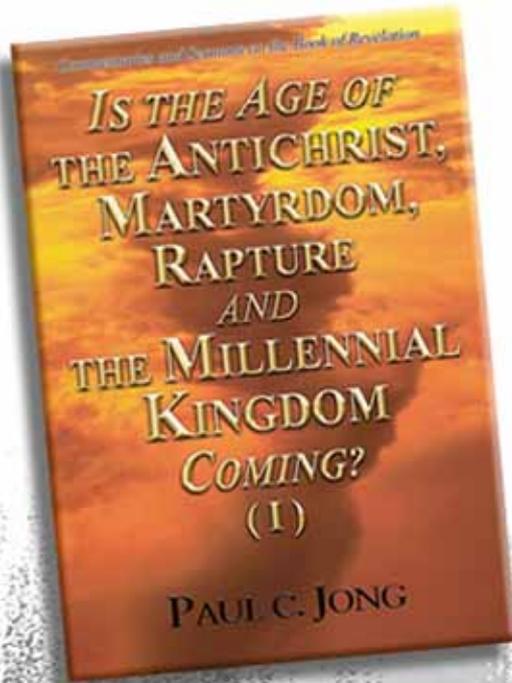




The New Life Mission

Commentaries and Sermons on the Book of Revelation



IS THE AGE OF THE ANTICHRIST, MARTYRDOM, RAPTURE AND THE MILLENNIAL KINGDOM COMING? (I)

BEGIN READING

TABLE of CONTENTS

USER GUIDE

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The Motif for Writing This Book

My motif for writing this book is, first of all, to accurately point out and bear witness to all the biblical truth that awaits this world at the end times—to explain in detail everything about the Antichrist, the mark of 666, the martyrdom of the saints, their rapture, the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth.

My second motif is to deliver the believers from the deceitful, false doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture that is leading them to destruction.

The last motif for writing this book is to shed light on the truth of Revelation so that the real truth of the end times may be known and the faith of the true believers may not be stolen.

All these things are what God has allowed me to write for the good of everyone who lives in our present age.

This book will bring into full light all that awaits this world in the future, as recorded in the Book of Revelation, answer all your questions about the end times, and bless you with the true faith. May God bestow you with all His blessings.



***IS THE AGE OF
THE ANTICHRIST,
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AND
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(I)***

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PAUL C. JONG

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CONTENTS



Acknowledgements

Is the Age of the Antichrist, Martyrdom, Rapture and the Millennial Kingdom Coming? (I)

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It is by the grace of God that the first volume of the *Commentaries and Sermons on the Book of Revelation* is published.

First of all, I would like to thank God for allowing me to spread the Word of Revelation throughout the world, illuminated by the whole Scripture and the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in this time of the impending arrival of the era of the pale horse. I believe that now is the pressing time for every soul to be born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit, to hear what the Word of Revelation says about the end times, and to obey its teachings in faith.

Words cannot express my deepest gratitude for all the servants and members of The New Life Mission, who have labored together to put out this book, and who have, to this very moment, united their hearts all along to spread the gospel. Each and every one of



them is the actual publisher of this book.

I would like to also thank Rev. Samuel Kim and Rev. John Shin, my fellow workers who have faithfully carried out all the tasks for the publication of this book. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Mr. Youngwon Cho as well for his translation. It is only regrettable that I cannot give my individual thanks to all my fellow workers involved in the editing and printing of this book.

I give all glory to God, who has allowed us to be born again in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and who has made us, by spreading the Word of Revelation in this evil generation, keep our hope for the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth, and defend our faith. ☒

PAUL C. JONG



CONTENTS

Foreword ----- 10

CHAPTER 1

Hear the Word of God's Revelation
(Revelation 1:1-20) ----- 13

We Must Know the Seven Eras ----- 22

CHAPTER 2

Letter to the Church of Ephesus
(Revelation 2:1-7) ----- 32

The Faith That Can Embrace Martyrdom ----- 39

Letter to the Church of Smyrna
(Revelation 2:8-11) ----- 64

Be Faithful until Death ----- 67

Who Is Saved from Sin? ----- 81

Letter to the Church of Pergamos
(Revelation 2:12-17) ----- 91

The Followers of the Doctrine of
the Nicolaitans ----- 95

Letter to the Church of Thyatira
(Revelation 2:18-29) ----- 129

Have You Been Saved by Water
and the Spirit? ----- 134

CHAPTER 3

Letter to the Church of Sardis
(Revelation 3:1-6) ----- 148



Those Who Did Not Defile Their White Garments -----	152
Letter to the Church of Philadelphia (Revelation 3:7-13) -----	170
The Servants and Saints of God Who Please His Heart -----	174
Letter to the Church of Laodicea (Revelation 3:14-22) -----	188
True Faith for the Life of Discipleship -----	193

CHAPTER 4

Look at Jesus Who Sits on God's Throne (Revelation 4:1-11) -----	199
Jesus is God -----	204

CHAPTER 5

Jesus Who Is Enthroned as the Representative of God the Father (Revelation 5:1-14) -----	209
The Lamb Who Sits on the Throne -----	214

CHAPTER 6

The Seven Eras Set by God (Revelation 6:1-17) -----	219
The Eras of the Seven Seals -----	225

CHAPTER 7

Who Will Be Saved during the Great Tribulation? (Revelation 7:1-17) -----	239
Let Us Have Faith That Battles -----	245



Foreword

The Era of the Pale Horse Is Coming

The Scripture reveals to everyone that the era of the pale horse is not far away. When the era of the pale horse comes to this world, people would suffer greatly under the tyranny of the Antichrist. But even in such a desperate world, the saints will still be able to attain the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth through their victorious faith given by God.

With this book, you, too, will be able to discover the Antichrist's schemes to destroy your faith, and how to stand firm on the kind of faith that the wise bride, who prepared oil and waited for the arrival of the groom, had. Because you will find the truth by hearing the Word of Revelation, you will no longer be deceived by those who spread false faith. Those



who hear and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will receive the paradise on earth and the Kingdom of Heaven.

From this book you will discover the seven eras planned by God. The world today needs true prophets who can bear witness to all the changes that are about to occur in this world. The true prophets of God will show us what awaits this world in the future. Just as our Lord told the sinners that man must be born again of the water and the Spirit not only to enter the Kingdom of God but also to see it, the prophets will also give us the assurance of our salvation.

We must realize now that the era of the pale horse is imminent. The Great Tribulation of seven years, divided into two periods of three and a half years, is the providence of God for this era of the pale horse.

In the era of the pale horse, the world will face the plagues of the seven trumpets and the seven bowls. Hail and fire from the sky will destroy a third of the world's forest; comets will fall into the sea and kill a third of the creatures in it and turn a third of the

world's water poisonous; and a third of the sun, the moon, and the star will be struck and turn dark.

As heroes arise in times of great difficulties, the Antichrist will emerge as the hero of the world at the end times, and the whole world will become his. He will solve all the problems and difficulties of the world and be worshipped as a god. The Antichrist will then require all to receive the mark of 666, his name and number, on their right hands or foreheads.

But the born-again saints will not receive the mark, and they will be martyred to defend their true faith. These saints who would stand against the Antichrist and be martyred for their faith will then be raptured by the Lord and be called to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The era of the pale horse is fast approaching us. We must have sound knowledge and faith that can prepare us for the end times. May the blessings of our Lord be with you! ☒

PAUL C. JONG

CHAPTER

1



CONTENTS



Hear the Word of God's Revelation

< Revelation 1:1-20 >

“The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John, who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw. Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near. John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne, and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us

and washed us from our sins in His own blood, and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father, to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen. Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen. ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End,’ says the Lord, ‘who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.’ I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet, saying, ‘I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,’ and, ‘What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.’ Then I turned to

see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band. His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire; His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters; He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength. And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, ‘Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last. I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this. The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and

the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches.”

Exegesis

Verse 1: “The Revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave Him to show His servants—things which must shortly take place. And He sent and signified it by His angel to His servant John,”

The Book of Revelation was written by the Apostle John, who recorded the revelation of Jesus Christ made to him during his stay in Patmos, an island in the Aegean Sea to which he was sent in exile in the declining years of the Roman Emperor Domitian’s reign (about AD 95). John was exiled to the Island of Patmos for bearing witness to the Word of God and the testimony of Jesus, and it is in this island where John saw the realm of God shown by

Jesus Christ through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit and His angels.

What is this “Revelation of Jesus Christ?” By the revelation of Jesus Christ, it is meant that God would reveal to us, through His representative Jesus Christ, what will happen to this world and the Kingdom of Heaven in the future. Who is Jesus in His fundamentals? He is the Creator God and the Savior who has delivered the humankind from the sins of the world.

Jesus Christ is the God of the New Kingdom to come, the revealer who shows us everything about this coming new world, and the representative of God the Father. Through the Word of Revelation recorded by John, we can see how Jesus will deal with the old world and open the new one.

Verse 2: “who bore witness to the word of God, and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, to all things that he saw.”

John could bear witness to the Word of the truth

particularly because he saw what Jesus Christ would do in the future as the representative of God the Father. John saw and heard what will be fulfilled through Jesus Christ, and as such, he could testify on all such matters.

Verse 3: “Blessed is he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it; for the time is near.”

It is said here that blessed are those who read and hear the Word of God testified by John. Who are the blessed? First and foremost, they are the believers who have become the people of God by being delivered from all their sins through their faith in the Word of God. Only the saints can be blessed because it is they who read, hear, and keep the testimony of the Word of God—all the things that are to come through Jesus Christ—recorded by John. Those who have become the saints of God in this way will receive the blessings of Heaven by hearing the Word of God and keeping their faith in Him.

Had God not foretold us, through John, the secret of the truth of all that is to come to this earth and Heaven, how could the saints ever hear and see it? How could they have had the blessing of knowing beforehand and believing in all the changes that the world is undergoing? I give thanks and glory to God for showing us through John all that awaits this earth and heaven. In our present time, blessed are indeed those who can see and read with their own eyes the Word of God's revelation through Jesus Christ.

Verse 4: "John, to the seven churches which are in Asia: Grace to you and peace from Him who is and who was and who is to come, and from the seven Spirits who are before His throne,"

John says here that he is sending his letter to the seven churches in Asia. Having recorded the prophecies and revelations that God made to him during his exile in the Island of Patmos, John sent it to the seven churches in Asia, as well as to all the churches of God in the entire world.

Verse 5: "and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,"

Why does John call Jesus Christ "the faithful witness"? Our Lord came to this world and was baptized by John the Baptist to deliver all those who are in sin and bound for their destruction. Through His baptism Jesus took upon all the sins of the world at once, bled on the Cross to pay the wages of sin with His own life, and rose again from death in three days—all to save the believers and cleanse away their sins. Because it is no other than Jesus Himself who has delivered all the sinners of the world from all their sins, Christ is the living witness to this salvation.

By "the firstborn from the dead," John is telling us that Jesus became the firstfruit by coming to this world and fulfilling all the requirements of the Law—paying, in other words, the wages of sin—by taking upon all the sins with His baptism, dying on

the Cross, and rising again from death. And as Christ “loved us and washed us in His own blood,” God has freed those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit from all their sins.

Verse 6: “and has made us kings and priests to His God and Father; to Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

As the representative of God the Father, Jesus came to this world in flesh and saved the sinners with His baptism and blood on the Cross. With these acts of grace, Christ has cleansed us and made us the people and priests of God. To the Father who has given us these blessings of His amazing grace, and to the Son who is His representative and our Savior, may all glory, praise, and thanks be given forever and ever! The purpose of Christ's incarnation was to make us the people and priests of the Kingdom of God for the Father. We have been made “kings,” in other words, of the Kingdom of Heaven where we will live eternally with God.

Verse 7: “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”

It is said here that Christ will come with clouds, and I absolutely believe in it. This is not a science-fiction story. This is the prophecy that Jesus Christ will indeed return to this earth from Heaven. It is also said here that “even they who pierced Him” will see Him. Who are these? These are those who saw the Word of the water and the Spirit as merely one of the many religious doctrines of the world, even when this Word has the power to save them all.

When Christ returns, those who pierced Him with their disbelief will surely mourn. They will cry and grieve, because by the time they realize that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is indeed the gospel of redemption and deliverance from their sins, and that Jesus was baptized by John to take upon all the sins of the world, it would be too late for them.

Verse 8: "I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End," says the Lord, 'who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty.'"

By "the Alpha and the Omega," John tells us that our Lord is the God of judgment from whom both the beginning and the end of the whole universe and the history of the mankind are derived. The Lord will return to reward the righteous and judge the sinners. He is the Almighty God who will judge the sins of the people and reward the righteousness of those who believe in His righteousness.

Verse 9-10: "I, John, both your brother and companion in the tribulation and kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ, was on the island that is called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ. I was in the Spirit on the Lord's Day, and I heard behind me a loud voice, as of a trumpet,"

The word "brother" is used when the fellow believers call each other. In the born-again church of

God, those who have become family by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit call each other as brothers and sisters, and these titles are given to us by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The "Lord's Day" here refers to the day after the Sabbath, when Jesus rose from death. It is this day of the week when Jesus was resurrected, and this is why we call Sunday "the Lord's Day." This day marks the end of the age of the Law and the opening of the new age of salvation. Also, with His resurrection, our Lord told us that His Kingdom is not of this world.

Verse 11: "saying, 'I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last,' and, 'What you see, write in a book and send it to the seven churches which are in Asia: to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamos, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.'"

John wrote down what he saw through the revelation of Jesus Christ and sent them as letters to the seven churches in Asia. This tells us that God

speaks to the entire Church through His servants who walked before us.

Verse 12: "Then I turned to see the voice that spoke with me. And having turned I saw seven golden lampstands,"

Because the Scripture of God was not yet completed in the apostles' days, there was a need to show signs and visions to the disciples. When John turned to hear the voice of God, he saw "seven golden lampstands." The lampstands here symbolize the churches of God, the gatherings of the saints who believe in the revelation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God was the Lord of the seven churches in Asia, and He was and is the Shepherd who takes care of all the saints.

Verse 13: "and in the midst of the seven lampstands One like the Son of Man, clothed with a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band."

"One like the Son of Man," whom John saw "in the midst of the seven lampstands," refers to Jesus Christ. As the Shepherd of the saints, Jesus visits and talks to those who believe in the Word of the truth of His baptism and crucifixion. John's description of Christ in "a garment down to the feet and girded about the chest with a golden band" symbolizes the status of our Lord as the representative of God the Father.

Verse 14: "His head and hair were white like wool, as white as snow, and His eyes like a flame of fire;"

Our Lord is perfectly holy, majestic, and dignified. "His eyes like a flame of fire" means that He, as the Almighty God, is the just Judge of all.

Verse 15: "His feet were like fine brass, as if refined in a furnace, and His voice as the sound of many waters;"

Who do we think that Jesus is? The saints believe that He is wholly and completely God. Our Lord is

almighty and has no weakness. But because He experienced our weaknesses while living on this earth, He has a profound understanding of our circumstances and conditions, and can thus better help us. That His voice was as the sound of many waters shows just how holy and almighty our Lord is. There is not a trace of imperfection or weakness in our Lord, and He is filled only by His holiness, love, majesty, and honor.

Verse 16: "He had in His right hand seven stars, out of His mouth went a sharp two-edged sword, and His countenance was like the sun shining in its strength."

That "He had in His right hand seven stars" means that the Lord keeps the church of God. The "sharp two-edged sword" from His mouth, on the other hand, symbolizes that Jesus is the Almighty God who works with the Word of the authority and power of God. "Like the sun shining in its strength," our Lord is the God of Word, the Omnipotent One.

Verse 17: "And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, 'Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.'"

This verse shows us just how weak and dark we are before the holiness of God. Our Lord is always omnipotent and perfect, and He reveals Himself to the servants of God sometimes as a friend, and other times as the God of strict judgment.

Verse 18: "I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death."

Our Lord lives forever and has all the authority of Heaven as the representative of God the Father. As both the Savior and Judge of the mankind, He is the God who has the authority over eternal life and death.

Verse 19: "Write the things which you have seen, and the things which are, and the things which will take place after this."

The servants of God have the duty to record the

purpose and works of God, of both the present and the future. The Lord thus told John to spread in faith what He had revealed to him, the faith of the church of God that would earn eternal life, and all the things that are to come in the future. This is what God has, through John, also commanded us to do.

Verse 20: "The mystery of the seven stars which you saw in My right hand, and the seven golden lampstands: The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven lampstands which you saw are the seven churches."

What is "the mystery of the seven stars?" It is that God would build His Kingdom by making us His people through His servants. "The golden lampstands" symbolize the churches of God built through the saints who believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God gave to the mankind.

Through His servants and His churches, God has shown the believers what His purpose is and what awaits this world in the future. Through the Word of

revelation that He showed to John and made him record, we, too, will shortly see His works with our own eyes. I thank and praise God for His divine providence that has revealed all the things that will come to pass in this world. ☒

We Must Know The Seven Eras

< Revelation 1:1-20 >

I thank the Lord who gives us hope in this dark age. Our hope is that everything would unfold as written in the Book of Revelation, and to wait in faith that all the Word of prophecy would be fulfilled.

Much has been written on the Book of Revelation. While theories and interpretations by scholars abound, it is still difficult to come across a work that is truly biblical in its approach. It is only by the grace of God that I, having spent countless hours studying and researching on the Word of Revelation, am able to write this book. Even as I speak right now, my heart is filled with the truth of Revelation. The Holy Spirit has also filled me while I prepared my commentaries and sermons for this book.

It is little surprise, then, that my heart would be abundantly filled by the hope for Heaven and the glory of the Millennial Kingdom. I have also come to realize just how glorifying the martyrdom of the saints is for our Lord. Now, I am ready to share with you the Word of wisdom that God has shown me, and to help you to understand it.

As I write this book on Revelation, the glory of God fills my heart evermore. In all frankness, I truly had not realized just how great the Word of Revelation is.

God showed John the world of Jesus Christ. What is meant by the opening words, “the Revelation of Jesus Christ?” The dictionary definition of the word revelation is an act of revealing or communicating divine truth. The revelation of Jesus Christ, then, means the revealing of what would happen in the future in Jesus Christ. Put differently, God showed to John, a servant of Jesus Christ, all the things that will come to pass in the end time.

Before we delve into the Word of Revelation,

there is one thing that we must be sure of beforehand—that is, we must ascertain whether or not Revelation’s written Word of prophecy is symbolic or factual. All that is written in the Book of Revelation is certainly factual, as through the visions that John saw God has revealed to us in detail what will come to pass in this world.

It is true that many scholars have put forward different theological theories and interpretations on the prophecies of Revelation. It is also true that these scholars’ efforts have been to unveil the truth of Revelation to the best of their abilities. But such hypothetical propositions have done more harm to the Christendom, as they did not conform to the truth of the Bible and only brought about confusion. For example, many conservative scholars have supported the so-called ‘amillennialism’—that is, they claim that there will be no Millennial Kingdom. But such opinions are far removed from the biblical truth.

The Thousand-year Kingdom is factually recorded in chapter 20 of Revelation, where it is written that

the saints will not only reign this Kingdom, but also live with Christ for a thousand years. Chapter 21, on the other hand, tells us that after the Millennial Kingdom, the saints will inherit the New Heaven and Earth and live and reign with Christ for eternity. All these are facts. The Bible tells us that all these truth will be realized *not as a symbolic* fulfillment in the hearts of the believers, but as an *actual* fulfillment in history.

But looking at the Christians today, we find that many of them appear to have little hope for the Millennial Kingdom. Were their claims of denial true, would this not mean that God’s promise to the believers would be only empty words? If there were no Millennial Kingdom waiting the believers, nor the New Heaven and Earth, then the faith of those who have been saved by believing in Jesus as their Savior would turn useless.

On a related note, many theologians and ministers today claim that the mark of 666 prophesied in Revelation is only symbolic. But make no mistake:

when the day of this prophecy's fulfillment comes, the faith of those unfortunate souls who believed in such false claims will founder at once like a house built on sand.

Were those who believe in Jesus not to believe in the Word of truth revealed to them in the Bible, they will be treated by God the same as the unbelievers. This can only mean that they not only do not know the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by God, but that the Holy Spirit does not even dwell in their hearts. This is why their hearts have no hope for the Millennial Kingdom or the New Heaven and Earth that God has promised us. Even if they had believed in Jesus, they had not believed in Him according to the written truth of the Word of God. What is written in Revelation is the Word of God that shows us what will absolutely and soon come to pass in this world.

Chapters 2 and 3 of Revelation record the Word of admonition to the seven churches in Asia. In them are found both the commendations and rebukes of God for the seven churches. In particular, God promised

that the crown of life would be given to those who persevere in their faithfulness and overcome their tribulations. This means that there will surely be martyrdom waiting all the believers of the end time.

The Word of Revelation is about the martyrdom of the saints, their resurrection and rapture, and the promise of the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth that God made to them. The Word of Revelation can be a great comfort and blessing to those who believe in the certainty of their martyrdom, but it has little to offer to those who do not believe in it. We can therefore live in steadfastness by abiding by our unfaltering faith in the Word of promise written in Revelation and its Word of the truth on the end time.

The most importantly treated subject of the Word of Revelation is the martyrdom, resurrection and rapture of the saints, and the Kingdom of one thousand years and the New Heaven and Earth. This is why the purpose and will of God for the Early Church were to have the saints defend their faith to

the end with their martyrdom. It is because God planned all these things that He spoke of martyrdom to all the saints. God has told us, in other words, that all the saints will overcome the Antichrist through their martyrdom in the end time.

A full understanding of chapters 1-6 is critical to understand the Book of Revelation in its whole. Chapter 1 can be described as the introduction, while chapters 2 and 3 speak of the martyrdom of the saints of the Early Church. Chapter 4 tells us of the sitting of Christ on the throne of God. Chapter 5 tells us of Jesus Christ's opening of the scroll of the Father's plan and its fulfillment, and chapter 6 discusses the seven eras that God has set for the mankind. Understanding chapter 6 is particularly important, as it will open the door to the understanding of the whole Revelation for you.

Chapter 6 may be described as the blueprint for the seven eras that God the Father has planned for the humankind in Jesus Christ. In this blueprint of God is found the divine providence for the seven eras that

God will bring to the human race. When we know and understand what these seven eras are, we will be able to realize in which of these eras we are now living. We will also realize what kind of faith is needed for us to strive against and overcome the era of the pale horse, the age of the Antichrist to come.

As described in Revelation 6, when the first seal was opened, there came out a white horse. Its rider held a bow, was given a crown, and he went out conquering and to conquer. The rider on the white horse here refers to Jesus Christ, while the fact that He had a bow means that He will continue to fight against and win over Satan. Put differently, the era of the white horse refers to the era of the victory of the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God has allowed on the earth, and this era will continue until all God's purposes are fulfilled.

The second era is the era of the red horse. This refers to the advent of the era of Satan, in which Satan will deceive the people's hearts to wage wars, taking peace away from the earth and persecuting the

saints.

After the era of the red horse comes the era of the black horse, when famine will strike both the souls and the bodies of the people. You and I are now living in this era of spiritual and physical famine. When this is followed by the era of the pale horse in near future, the Antichrist will arise, and with his appearance the world will fall into deadly calamities.

The era of the pale horse is the fourth era. In this era, the world will be struck by the plagues of the seven trumpets, where one-third of the forest will burn off, one-third of the sea will turn into blood, one-third of the fresh water will also turn into blood, and one-third of the sun and the moon, having been struck, will turn dark.

The fifth era is the era of the saints' resurrection and rapture. As recorded in Revelation 6:9-10, *"When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, 'How long, O Lord,*

holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?'"

The sixth era is the destruction of the first world. According to Revelation 6:12-17, *"I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?'"*

What, then, will happen in the seventh era that God has set for us? In this final era, God will give the

saints His Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth.

Which among these seven eras, then, are we now living in? Having passed the era of the red horse, during which the world had been ravaged by many wars, we are living in the era of the black horse.

All the Word of Revelation is written not negatively, but in a positive spirit for the believers. God said that He not only wants to give the believers of the end time hope for His Thousand-year Kingdom, but also that He would not abandon them as orphans in the world.

To realize the truth revealed in Revelation, however, we must first discard such false teachings as the theories of pre-tribulation rapture, amillennialism, and post-tribulation rapture, and return to the Scripture.

God has set seven eras for us in Jesus Christ. These seven eras were all planned by God for the saints in Jesus Christ at the very beginning of His creation. Yet because many scholars, remaining

ignorant of these seven eras set by God, have offered only their own interpretations and unfounded hypotheses on the Word of Revelation, people have been confused even more. But we must all recognize the seven eras set by God, and with the knowledge and faith in this truth, give thanks and glory to Him for all He has done for us. All the plans of God for the saints are set and fulfilled within these seven eras.

I hope that my discussion so far has given you some basic understanding of the introductory passage to Revelation. Through the Book of Revelation, we find that God's creation marked the beginning of the seven eras that He has set in Jesus Christ with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By knowing these seven eras, our faith will become stronger. And by knowing them, we will realize what kind of trials awaits us while living in the era of the black horse, and with this realization, we will be able to live by faith.

The believers—and that includes both you and I—are to be martyred when the era of the pale horse

comes as one of the seven ages planned by God. When the believers realize this, their hearts will be filled by hope and their eyes will see what they could not see before. When the servants and saints of God realize the imminent arrival of the era of martyrdom, their lives will be cleaned of all the debris, for as soon as they realize that they are set to become martyrs in the era of the pale horse, their hearts will become prepared even when they do not realize it at the moment.

We will all be martyred in the same way as the saints of the Early Church were martyred. You must realize that when the era of the pale horse comes, martyrdom becomes the unavoidable reality for the true believers, for immediately following their martyrdom will be their resurrection.

After martyrdom will come resurrection, and with resurrection rapture, and with rapture our meeting with the Lord in heaven. After the saints' martyrdom, our Lord will raise the saints from death and bring them up in rapture to the marriage supper in heaven.

By the time the saints' rapture comes, the earth would have been so thoroughly destroyed that it would be virtually uninhabitable. One-third of the forests would have been burnt off; seas, rivers, and even springs would have turned into blood. Would you want to live in such a world any longer than you absolutely had to? The saints will have even more reason to join in the martyrdom, as there will no longer be any hope left for the world.

Do you want to live in a desolated world, trembling in fear? Of course not! At the end time is the martyrdom of the saints, and after it their resurrection and rapture, and with their resurrection and rapture is the glory of living eternally with God in the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth.

The Bible tells us clearly that after the midpoint of the Great Tribulation—that is, three and a half years into the seven-year period—the saints will be martyred for standing against the Antichrist with their faith, and that this will be followed by their

resurrection and rapture and the second coming of Christ. In other words, the return of Christ and the resurrection and rapture of the saints are to occur after their martyrdom during the Great Tribulation. Now is the time for you to have more careful thoughts on such subjects.

Can we be martyred even when the era of the pale horse set by God has not arrived yet? Of course not. But the “theory of pre-tribulation rapture” teaches that all the saints will be raptured by God before the beginning of the Great Tribulation, and that they will thus not go through any of the seven-year Tribulation. This view claims that there is no martyrdom, and does not believe that the era of the pale horse will come to the saints.

If this “theory of pre-tribulation rapture” is true, what, then, does the martyrdom of the saints spoken in chapter 13 of Revelation mean? It is said here quite clearly that the saints will be martyred because they, whose names are written in the Book of Life of God, would not capitulate before Satan.

Those who teach the “theory of post-tribulation rapture” also lack the proper understanding of the era of the pale horse, and the martyrdom, resurrection, and rapture of the saints. According to this hypothesis, the saints will remain on this earth until the last of the seven trumpets of plague are sounded. But Revelation tells us unambiguously that the resurrection and rapture of the saints will occur when the last angel sounds the trumpet—before, in other words, the seven bowls of the wrath of God are poured. This is why Revelation is the Word of great comfort and blessings to those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

“Amillennialism” has brought only disappointments and confusion to the people, and is not the truth. What our Lord promised to His disciples—that the saints will be rewarded the authority to reign over five or ten cities—are what will actually happen in the Millennial Kingdom.

You must remember that such hypothetical notions as the theories of pre-tribulation rapture, post-

tribulation rapture, and amillennialism are groundless claims that bring only distrust and confusion to the believers.

Why, then, did God give us the Book of Revelation? He gave us the Word of Revelation to show us His providence through the seven eras and to give those who have become the disciples of Jesus the true hope of Heaven.

Even now, things are happening as planned by God. The age in which we now live is the age of the black horse. In the near future, this era of the black horse will soon pass and the era of the pale horse will arrive. And with the era of the pale horse will begin the martyrdom of the saints with the rise of the Antichrist. This era is the era in which the whole world will become integrated and united under the single authority of the Antichrist. The disciples of Jesus must prepare now and be ready to face with their faith the imminent arrival of the era of the pale horse. ☒

CHAPTER

2



CONTENTS



Letter to The Church of Ephesus

< Revelation 2:1-7 >

“To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ‘I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary. Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. But this you

have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.’”

Exegesis

Verse 1: “To the angel of the church of Ephesus write, ‘These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands:’”

The Church of Ephesus was a church of God planted by faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that Paul had preached. The “seven golden lampstands” in this passage refer to the churches of God, the gatherings of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and the “seven stars” refer to God’s servants there. The phrase “He who holds the seven stars in His right hand,” on the

other hand, means that God Himself holds and makes use of His servants.

We must realize that what God spoke to the seven churches in Asia through His servant John is also addressed to all His churches of the present time, which are now facing the nearing end times. Through His churches and His servants, God speaks to us and tells us how to overcome the trials and tribulations that await us. We must overcome Satan by hearing and believing in the Word of Revelation. God speaks to every one of His churches.

Verse 2: “I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars;”

The Lord commended the Church of Ephesus for its works, labor, patience, for its intolerance of evil, and for its testing and unveiling of false apostles. We can find out from this passage just how great the faith and dedication of the Church of Ephesus had been.

But we must realize that regardless of how good the beginning of faith might have been, if that faith goes astray later, then it becomes useless. Our faith must be the true faith whose beginning and end steadfastly remain the same.

But the faith of the servant of the Church of Ephesus was not so, and for this he was harshly rebuked and warned by God that He would remove His lampstand from its place. As the church history reveals, the seven churches in Asia Minor were indeed accursed to have their lampstands removed. We must learn from the lessons of the Ephesian Church and remember that our churches must be approved by God as His own by grounding them in the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and that we must become the servants of God who keep our churches by this faith.

Verse 3: “and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and have not become weary.”

Our Lord watches over all His churches and knows well how His saints labor for His name's sake. But the saints of the Ephesian Church were leaving their first faith and beginning to fall into an erroneous path by diluting the pure gospel of the water and the Spirit with other beliefs.

Verse 4: "Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love."

The works of the faith of the servant and saints of the Ephesian church were so great that the Lord Himself commended them for their deeds, labor, and patience. They had tested and unveiled false apostles, they had persevered and labored for the sake of the name of the Lord, and they had not become weary. But in the midst of these highly commendable works, they lost what was arguably more important than any of these: they left their first love given by Jesus Christ.

What does this mean? It means that they had failed to keep the gospel of the water and the Spirit

that had allowed them to be delivered at once from all their sins by their acceptance of and faith in the Lord. Their abandonment of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, on the other hand, means that they had allowed false teachings and other gospels to creep into their church.

What, then, were these other gospels and teachings? They were the worldly philosophies and humanist ideologies. These things still stand against the truth of salvation that God has given to the mankind. They may be beneficial to the flesh of man, or perhaps even conducive to bringing unity and peace among the people, but they cannot make the people's hearts to unite with that of God. This is how the servant and saints of the Church of Ephesus ended up turning their faith into that of apostates, accursed before God. And this is why they were rebuked by the Lord.

When looking at church history, we can see that the gospel of the water and the Spirit began to degenerate from as early as the Early Church period.

Learning from this lesson, we must hold steadfastly onto the gospel of the water and the Spirit, please the Lord with our unwavering faith, and overcome Satan and the world in our struggle against them.

What was, then, the “first love” for the servant and saints of the Church of Ephesus? Their first love was none other than the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God had given them. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Word of salvation that has the power to deliver everyone from all the sins of the world.

God revealed to Paul, John, and the servants of the seven churches in Asia what the gospel of the water and the Spirit was and allowed them to understand it. This is how they could believe in this gospel, and how those who heard and believed in the gospel preached by them could be saved from all the sins of the world.

The gospel of the water and the Spirit given by our Lord is found in the Word of the baptism of Christ and His blood on the Cross. Yet the servant of

the Church of Ephesus, although he had met the Lord through the gospel of the water and the Spirit and preached it in thankfulness at the beginning, abandoned this gospel later on. Thus, the Lord rebuked him for his fallacy in this passage.

Verse 5: “Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.”

That the servant of the Church of Ephesus had fallen from the love of God meant that the congregation had abandoned the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why the Lord told them to reflect upon where they might have lost their faith, repent, and do the first work.

What, then, might have caused the Church of Ephesus to lose the gospel of the water and the Spirit? The weakness of the faith of the Ephesian Church, traced to the carnal thoughts of its servant, is what led the church astride. The gospel of the water

and the Spirit is from God, the absolute truth that has revealed all the lies of the false doctrines and teachings of all the religions of this world. This means that when the Church of Ephesus preached and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, conflict with the worldly people was inevitable.

This conflict, in turn, made it more difficult for the believers of the Ephesian church to deal with the worldly people, even leading them to be persecuted for their faith. To avoid this, and to make it easier for the people to enter the church of God, the servant of the Ephesian Church departed from the gospel of the water and the Spirit and allowed a more philosophical gospel to be taught.

The “philosophical gospel” here is a false gospel derived from humanistic thoughts that seek to not only restore the relationship between God and man but also to bring peace in the relationship among men. This kind of vertical and horizontal faith is not the kind of faith that God wants from us. The faith that God wants us to have is a faith that, through our

obedient relationship with God, restores our peace with Him.

The reason why the servant of the Church of Ephesus lost the gospel of the water and the Spirit is because he tried to accept what could not be accepted into the church of God—that is, the worldly people who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit—and fit his teachings to their whims. The church of God can be planted only on the foundation of the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Yet there are many people, in today’s time as in the Early Church period, who think that it is enough to believe in Jesus somehow to be saved, and who do not see why they should believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But believing in Jesus while ignoring the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by God is a greatly mistaken faith. Those who believe in the Lord only as a mere religious practice, half-heartedly going through motion, will become the enemy of God. This is why the Lord rebuked and admonished the servant of the Ephesian Church to

repent of his wrong faith and return to his earlier, true and earnest faith, the first faith that he had had when he heard the gospel of the water and the Spirit for the first time.

There is an important lesson for us here: if a church of God falls away from its faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God will no longer call it His church. This is why the Lord said that He would remove the lampstand from its place and give it to the believers in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

A church that has abandoned and no longer preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not a church of God. It is absolutely critical for us to realize that believing, defending, and preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit are much more important than any other deeds.

The Asia Minor where the seven churches in the above passage were located is now a Muslim region. The Lord has thus removed the lampstand, the church of God, to here, and made us preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world. But in the true

church of God is the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God's church cannot exist without it. The twelve disciples of Jesus had consistent faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit during the apostolic age (1 Peter 3:21, Romans chap. 6, 1 John chap. 5).

What is too unfortunate, nevertheless, is that God's churches in Asia Minor had lost the true gospel of the water and the Spirit since the Early Church era, and that this region became Muslim as a result. Moreover, even the Church of Rome was struck by the tragedy of losing the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the Edict of Milan issued by the Roman Emperor Constantine.

Verse 6: "But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate."

The Nicolaitans were those who used the name of Jesus to pursue their worldly and material gains. But the Church of Ephesus hated the Nicolaitans' doctrines and deeds. For the Church of Ephesus, this

was one thing that was worthy of being greatly commended by God.

Verse 7: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”

The servants and saints of God must hear what the Holy Spirit says to them. What the Holy Spirit tells them is to defend their faith in and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the end. To do so, they must fight against and overcome those who spread untruth. Losing the fight against the untruth means destruction. The believers and the servants of God must conquer and overcome their foes with their arms—that is, with the Word of God and the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

God said, *“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”* God will give the fruits of the tree of life only to “him who overcomes.” But overcome

what or whom? We have to overcome with our faith those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The believers must engage in constant spiritual battles with those who belong to the untruth, and they must emerge as victors in these battles by their faith. They must also give all glory to God and live a life of victory with their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Only those who, with their faith in the truth, overcome their foes in their struggle will be able to live in the New Heaven and Earth given by God.

In the Early Church period, those who sought to believe in and defend the gospel of the water and the Spirit had to face martyrdom. Likewise, when the time comes for the Antichrist to emerge, there will be many more martyrs to come. ☒

The Faith That Can Embrace Martyrdom

< Revelation 2:1-7 >

For most of us, martyrdom is an unfamiliar word, but for those who have been raised in a non-Christian culture, it is even more foreign. Certainly the word “martyrdom” is not a word that we often encounter in our everyday life; we feel detached and aloof from the word, for it is quite surreal for us to imagine our actual martyrdom. Nevertheless, chapters 2 and 3 of the Book of Revelation discuss this martyrdom, and from its Word we must establish the faith of martyrdom in our hearts—that is, the faith with which we can be martyred.

Roman emperors were the Empire’s absolute rulers of their people. Wielding absolute power over their domain, they could do anything that their hearts

desired after. Having waged and won many wars, the Roman Empire subdued countless nations under its rule, enriching itself with the tributes paid by the conquered nations. Not having lost a single war, the small nation grew to become one of the greatest empires of the world. Only sky was the limit to the power that its emperors came to wield. So great was this power that they eventually came to be worshipped as living gods by the people.

It was not uncommon, for instance, for the emperors to build statues in their image and have the people bow before them. For the emperors who had proclaimed themselves to be gods, the spread of the believers in Jesus could not be anything but a serious threat to their absolute power. Outlawing the gathering of the Christians, they resorted to oppressive policies to persecute the believers, arresting, jailing, and eventually even executing them for their faith. It is against this historical background that the Early Christians went underground to such places as the Catacombs to escape persecution, and it

is this persecution that laid the groundwork for them to embrace martyrdom to defend their righteous faith.

This is how martyrs arose in the Early Church period. The saints of that time, of course, were not martyred for simply refusing to recognize the authority of the emperors. They did recognize their worldly authority, but they no longer accepted that authority when it forced them to worship man as god and to abandon Jesus from their hearts, even at the price of their own lives. The Roman emperors commanded the Christians to deny Jesus and to worship them as not only emperors but also as gods. Unable and unwilling to capitulate before such demands, the Early Christians continued to face persecution and to be martyred to defend their faith, until the Edict of Milan in 313 AD finally brought them religious freedom. Like these forefathers of faith before us, we, too, would rather face righteous death than to abandon our faith.

The passage about the seven churches in Asia Minor is not only the description of the

circumstances and situations of that time, but also the revelation about the world to come. In it is found the revelation that the servants of God and His saints will be martyred to defend their faith. Just as in the time of the Roman Empire, there will come a time when an absolute ruler will emerge as the modern-day version of the Roman emperor subjecting everyone under his tyrannical reign, making statues after his image, requiring all to bow before them, and demanding that he be worshipped as a god. This is not too far away from our own time, and when this age comes, many saints will follow in the footsteps of the Early Church believers to their martyrdom.

We must therefore keep in our hearts the Word of admonition that our Lord gave to the seven churches in Asia. In greeting, encouraging, and admonishing the seven churches in Asia, God promised them that “he who overcomes” will “eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God,” and receive the “crown of life,” “the hidden manna to eat,” “the morning star,” and more! It is the faithful

promise of God that to those who overcome through their martyrdom, He will give all the eternal blessings of Heaven.

How, then, could the saints of the Early Church face their martyrdom? The first thing that we must remember is that those who could be martyred were the servants of God and His saints. Not everyone can be martyred. Only those who believe in Jesus as their Savior, do not capitulate under persecution, and hold onto their faith and trust in the Lord can face martyrdom.

The Apostle John, whom we see here rebuking the Church of Ephesus in his exile in the Island of Patmos, was the last one alive among the twelve Apostles of Jesus. All the other apostles had already been martyred, as well as other saints. Historically speaking, the saints of the seven churches in Asia were only a few among the countless Christians who were martyred until 313 AD. Fleeing the persecution of the Roman authorities, they literally went underground, digging caves to escape from their

reach and gathering in underground cemeteries known as the Catacombs for worship—through all this and beyond, they never betrayed their faith and willingly embraced their martyrdom.

The servants and saints of the seven churches in Asia, including the Church of Ephesus, despite being rebuked by God here, were also all martyred. What enabled them to be martyred was their faith in the Lord. They all believed that the Lord was God, that He took away all their sins, and that He was the Sheppard who would lead them all to the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth. It is this faith and the conviction of hope that enabled them to overcome all their fear and pain of death entailed by their martyrdom.

We are now living in the end times. It is not too distant that the world will be united under one authority and that a ruler wielding absolute power will emerge. This absolute ruler, as recorded in Revelation 13, will threaten the lives of the saints and demand that they renounce their faith. But we, the

saints of the end times, will be able to overcome his threats and coercion and defend our faith through our martyrdom, because we have the same faith that the saints of the Early Church had.

In verses 4-5, God rebuked the Church of Ephesus, saying, *“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent.”* What does this mean? It means that the Church of Ephesus had left the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All the saints of the Early Church, including those of the Ephesian Church, had believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This was because the disciples of Jesus had all spread and preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Thus the gospel that the saints of that time received from the Apostles was the whole gospel, not the false, man-made gospel that believes only in the blood on the Cross.

But it is said here that the servant of the Church of Ephesus had left his first love. This means that the servant of the Ephesian Church had abandoned the gospel of the water and the Spirit in his ministering of the church. This is why the Lord said that He would remove the lampstand from its place unless he repents. Removing the lampstand from him meant to remove the church, which, in turn, meant that the Holy Spirit could no longer work in the Church of Ephesus.

For the servant of the Church of Ephesus, returning to the gospel of the water and the Spirit was actually not such a difficult thing to do. But this was the least of his problems. What landed him in trouble was that he, while believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in his heart, failed to preach explicitly what he believed. He accepted into his church all those who merely confessed Jesus as their Savior, even if they did not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, when in fact to confess their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit meant

for the believers to be prepared for martyrdom.

Hence, he welcomed, in other words, all those who came to his church regardless of whether or not they had the same faith in God and His gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because entering the church of God required so much sacrifice, and because the servant of the Church of Ephesus was afraid that these sacrifices would prevent many from joining the church, he had failed to preach the absolute truth in precise terms.

But since the Holy Spirit cannot dwell where there is no truth, God said that He would remove the lampstand. It is not because of the lack of the works of the servant and saints of the Church of Ephesus that God said He would remove the church; rather, He meant that He could no longer dwell in the church because the truth could no longer be found in it.

It is an absolute requirement that a church of God follows the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The servants and saints of God must not only believe in this gospel but also preach and teach it in precise and

absolute terms, for only in this gospel can we find the love of God, His grace, and all His blessings for us.

Instead of preaching this gospel, the servant of the Church of Ephesus accepted into his congregation those who only believed in the blood on the Cross. But even for a born-again servant, saint, or church, believing and yet not preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has taken away all our sins with the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross would render all the works of our Lord useless.

Even though we may fall short before the Lord's eyes, if we believe in this gospel and preach it, the Lord can dwell and work in us as the Holy Spirit. Even if the servants of God or the saints are full of shortcomings, the Lord can teach and lead them through His Word. In the church of the gospel of the water and the Spirit is found the Holy Spirit, and the presence of the Holy Spirit in it means that the church is holy.

There can be no holiness for the servants of God or the saints if they do not preach the gospel of the

water and the Spirit anymore. They may be able to say that they no longer have sin, but holiness cannot be found where the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not preached.

This gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gospel that the saints of the Early Church believed in, the gospel that proclaims that the Lord came to this earth to save the mankind by taking upon all the sins of the world with His baptism and by taking them all away with His death on the Cross. He took away all our weaknesses and shortcomings with His baptism. God took away all our sins from our weakness and shortcomings, and He has become our eternal Sheppard.

Having been so richly blessed, how can anyone exchange the Lord for a Roman emperor and worship a mere mortal as his or her god? Because the grace of God was so great and so abundant, neither enticements nor threats of a Roman emperor could make the saints to deny His love, and they willingly and gladly embraced martyrdom to defend their faith.

They defied both the threats that sought to coerce them to renounce their faith and the attempts to appoint them to public officials in order to entice them to abandon their faith for material benefits. Nothing could make them renounce their faith and abandon their God, and this undying faithfulness is what enabled them to be martyred.

The martyrs' hearts were filled by thankfulness for the grace and love of God that had delivered them from their sins through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those whose faith could not betray the love of God that had eternally freed them from their sins embraced martyrdom over apostasy. The time will come when, just as the Roman emperors demanded the saints of the Early Church to recognize their divinity and worship them as gods, we, too, will be coerced to renounce our faith. When this happens, we must follow in the footsteps of the forefathers of faith and defend our faith with martyrdom.

Though we are full of shortcomings, God has loved us so much that He has taken upon all our

shortcomings and sins upon Himself. Regardless of how short we have come before His glory, He has accepted us into His arms. Not only has He embraced us, but also He has solved all the problems of sin and destruction and has made us His children and His brides forever. This is why we can never betray our faith in Him and why we would willingly and gladly embrace martyrdom for His name. Martyrdom is to defend the first love that God gave to us. It is not a product of our human emotions, but rather of the faith in the fact that God has given us all His blessings despite our weaknesses and shortcomings. It is not by the strength of our will that we can be martyred, but by our faith in the greatness of our God.

There are, of course, people who die martyrs to their country or ideology. These people have unbending conviction in what they believe to be right and are even willing to give up their lives for its sake. But what about us? How can the children of God who have been born again by the water and the Spirit

through their faith in Jesus Christ be martyred? We can be martyred because we are so grateful for the gospel with which our Lord has loved and saved us. Because God has accepted us despite our innumerable shortcomings, because He has given us the Holy Spirit, and because He has made us His people and blessed us to live eternally in His presence, we can never abandon Him.

God has also promised us the New Heaven and Earth, and for this hope alone we cannot abandon our faith. No matter what happens—even if the Antichrist threatens and persecutes us to death in the end times—we can never deny our Lord and His gospel of the water and the Spirit. Even if we are dragged to the feet of the Antichrist and put to death, we can never betray the grace and love of God that have saved us. As the saying goes, not even “over our dead bodies” will we betray the Lord. We may be coerced to do other things, but there is one thing that we will never succumb to: we will neither leave nor betray the love of Christ that has saved us.

Do you think the Antichrist would have mercy on us because we have shortcomings? Of course not! He couldn't care less! But our Lord has made us whole and complete by taking upon all our problems and being judged in our place, regardless of how utterly weak and deficient we are. This is why we cannot leave the Lord's love of salvation that has delivered us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and why we cannot abandon our faith in this first love. Nothing can be abandoned unless we abandon it in our hearts first.

Likewise, if we keep our faith deep in our hearts, we can defend our faith to the very end no matter how much threat, enticement, or coercion are put upon us. If we know in our hearts the precious love of God for us, and if we hold onto this love to the end, we can defend the gospel to the final days. For those who walk in faith, martyrdom is never difficult to embrace.

We must all give some serious thought to the prospect of our own martyrdom. Martyrdom is not

just enduring pain and suffering. Our flesh is such that even the smallest poke of a needle can bring unbearable pains. Withstanding such pains of the flesh is not what martyrdom is about. Rather, martyrdom is about giving up your own life. Not merely suffering physical pains, but actually losing one's life is what martyrdom is all about. When the Antichrist demands that we call him and worship him as god, we will resist to our own death. Because only the Lord is our God and He alone deserves our worship, it is only fitting that we would be martyred to defend His name. We cannot exchange this faith for anything.

Does the Antichrist, who denies God and demands to be worshipped as a god, really deserve to be worshipped so? Of course not! Only God has the power to create the world and the universe. He alone has the power over life and death, He alone is without blemish, sinless, and completely righteous before all creation, and He alone has the power to take away all the sins of the world. What about the

Antichrist then? The only thing that the Antichrist has is the worldly power. This is why we cannot exchange our Lord for him, and this is why we can never betray our faith in the Almighty God.

God is the One who will surely make us eternally happy. He will resurrect those who have been made sinless by believing in Jesus Christ into glorified bodies and open the gates to the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth for them. But those who bow before the Antichrist will face eternal punishment and be thrown into hell along with Satan. It would be the most foolish thing to do if we were to throw away our eternal happiness by standing with the Antichrist for the fear of what would be only transient pain and suffering. Knowing this truth, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their hearts will bravely stand against the Antichrist, be martyred, and receive eternal happiness as the reward for their sacrifice.

You and I, we are all to be martyred. Make no mistake: when the era of the black horse ends, the era

of the pale horse will arrive, and then, the Antichrist will emerge and the plagues of the seven trumpets will begin. The Antichrist will most assuredly arise, we the saints will most assuredly be martyred, and with our resurrection we will most assuredly be raptured. And we will most certainly enter the Kingdom of One-thousand Years. This is why we would all be martyred willingly when the Antichrist persecutes us and demands our death.

Quo Vadis, one of the classic movies, portrays many Christians who gave up their lives to defend their faith and sang praises even as they were put to death. The movie itself is a fiction, but the historical background to it is all true—that is, many Christians did give up their lives to defend their faith. Why did they do so? Because what the Roman authorities demanded from them—to deny God, to worship other gods instead, and to throw away their faith—was not something that they could accept.

If they had changed their God as demanded by the Roman emperors, they would have changed

everything. The emperor would have become their god, subjugating them under his tyranny, and they would die in battle as his pawns. Neither would they be delivered from sin, nor would they be able to enter the New Heaven and Earth. This is why they could not betray their faith and instead chose to face their certain death in joy and praise. They could sing praises to the Lord even as they were dying because their hope was far greater than their dying pain.

It is absolutely critical for us to defend the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is also imperative for us to live in hope, believing that beyond our death awaits eternal life in a new world filled by happiness and glory.

Have you ever suffered for the Lord? Have you ever really suffered, not because of your own shortcomings or mistakes, but for the sake of the Lord? If our suffering is for the Lord, all our pains will turn into even greater joy. As the Apostle Paul expressed this joy, *“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared*

with the glory which shall be revealed in us” (Romans 8:18). Because the joy of the glory that will be revealed in us is so much greater than the pain of our suffering for the Lord, all our present sufferings will be buried beneath the great joy and happiness of our faith.

In other words, the saints and the martyrs of the Early Church could overcome their pain and give up their lives for the Lord because they knew that the joy that awaits them was far greater than their immediate suffering. Their martyrdom was not a product of their ability to bear with the pain and endure the suffering, but of their hope for the glory that awaited them.

In general, people endure their pain thinking that they just have to put up with it. This is a difficult and tiring battle. When their endurance brings disappointing outcomes, their frustration becomes even greater—all that suffering for nothing! But for us Christians, what becomes greater is the joy and happiness of our perseverance, for we are secure in

the certainty of our hope and rewards. If we set our minds to serve the Lord with all our hearts as His faithful servants, we know that the joy and the comfort that await us are far greater than the pain of our present sacrifices. Because all the difficulties are buried in this joy, we can all live our lives for the Lord and even embrace our martyrdom for His sake.

People have souls, emotions, thoughts, and faith. For the born-again souls, because the Spirit of our Lord is dwelling in them, being persecuted for their righteousness can only bring them unspeakable joy and happiness for the glory that awaits them. But if they were to leave the first love, the Lord will not hesitate to remove the lampstand.

If those who had been joyfully serving the gospel of the water and the Spirit with all their hearts and lives cease to do so, it could only mean that they had gradually left the joy of serving the gospel, their first love, even if they did not entirely throw away this gospel. They may still hold onto their personal faith, but if they no longer take pride in preaching the

gospel and no longer have a clear understanding of what it takes to be saved—that the blood on the Cross is not enough for salvation—then their faith would be diluted, and their martyrdom would become unreachable for them. God would then remove their lampstand from its place.

Those who serve the gospel with joy and in steadfastness will be able to embrace martyrdom willingly because they would have never left their first love. Because these people were blessed by God for believing and preaching the love of Christ, they can be martyred. It does not matter how able or gifted you are; if you do not spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the church will be removed from its place. This is an important message that God wants us to grasp. If we realize and believe in this truth, we can renew our hearts in the end times and be able to be martyred for the name of the Lord.

What is the fundamental essence that sustains our faith? It is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Were it not for the gospel of the water and the Spirit,

what would be the use of our works of faith? The reason why we can keep our faith is because God has loved us and embraced us in His arms with His gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because this love is an unchanging love that glorifies us, we are able to keep our faith and continue to preach and spread it.

Despite our weaknesses, we can run toward God until the very end, because the gospel of the water and the Spirit has saved us, and because in this gospel is found the love of Christ. We are full of shortcomings, but because we have been clothed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that is filled by the love of our Lord, we can love our brothers and sisters, the servants of God, and all the souls of the world. Fundamentally, perfect love is beyond the reach of man. Because there is no love among us, we are incapable of loving anyone else but only ourselves in selfishness. Many people are deceived by what appears on the surface, drawn to the glittering façade that is only skin-deep. They judge people according to what material and outward

possessions they have. But among the true believers is the love of God. This is what enables us to spread the gospel, the perfect love of our Lord.

Our Lord came to this earth, was baptized to accept all our shortcomings, and cleansed us from all our sins to save us. How, then, could we ever leave His first love that has made us the children of God? We may lack in many aspects, but we must never lack in our faith in this truth. We must preach this gospel with our absolute faith. What is most needed in times of tribulation is exactly this faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. When we face trials and tribulations, the strength to defend our faith and overcome the difficulties will come only from the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. It is by the power of this gospel that our faces can light up in joy even as we get tired from the countless struggles that we face in our everyday lives. This is the love of our Lord.

Sometimes people are prone to fall into the legalist trap. They think that God blessed them for

what they have done. I would not, of course, suggest that this is entirely false, for the Lord said that He would love those who love Him. But it is not because of what we have done that God has loved us so much as to make us sinless. Because God knows all the promises that He has made to us, and because He knows all our sins, He has, in His perfect will and love, embraced us and made us whole. It is only because of His blessings that we can live in joy. It is because God has made us His people and His servants that we can work for the Lord, be clothed in His glory, preach the gospel to others, and, when the time comes, be martyred for His name. He is the One who enables us to do all these things.

Where did the women martyrs in *Quo Vadis* find the strength to sing praises to the Lord even as they were being put to death? They found the strength in the love of our Lord. Because the love of Christ was so great, they could embrace martyrdom with praises.

The same principle applies to our own lives. We live our lives because the Lord has enabled us to do

so; it is not because of our own works that we live as the children and servants of God. We have done nothing to deserve it. It is by God's unchanging and perfect love for us and our faith in this love that we can follow Him to the end, even as we stumble at times. This strength is the strength of God, not ours. Martyrdom is possible only by the love of God that has made us whole—by the grace of God alone can we embrace martyrdom. Remember this truth, that it is God who enables you to be martyred, and do not waste your time trying to prepare yourself for martyrdom, as if there is anything that you can do about it. Only our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will enable us to praise the Lord until our very last breath.

The Lord said to the seven churches in Asia: "*To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.*" The tree of life is found in the New Heaven and Earth. In there is the throne of God, houses built with precious stones, and the overflowing water of life. To

those who overcome, God has promised this Paradise of His, where they will live eternally with Him in perfection.

Those who overcome do so with their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Anything other than this gospel would make it impossible to overcome, which can be achieved only by the strength of God, not by the strength of man. The strength that enables us to overcome comes only from God. We must realize and appreciate just how great the gospel of the water and the Spirit is and how great the love of God and His salvation are, because it is this gospel that will give us the faith to embrace martyrdom. We may all be weak, untalented, ungifted, incompetent, foolish and ignorant, but we still have the power, for we have the gospel of the water and the Spirit in our hearts.

The names of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are written in the Book of Life. Everyone whose name is not recorded in the Book of Life, on the other hand, will fall and

capitulate before Satan. Only those whose names have been written in the Book of Life by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will not bow before the Devil. You must make sure that your name is clearly and surely written in this Book of Life.

When we are martyred, it will be by our faith, the first love of Christ that our Lord has given us. We can wait for our martyrdom without worry or fear because we believe that the Holy Spirit who dwells in us will give us the strength to face our martyrdom. Because the suffering of martyrdom cannot be compared to the glory of heaven that awaits us, we do not cower before our death and instead boldly embrace our martyrdom to defend the precious gospel. We must now leave behind any wonderings on how we can be martyred, for it is not by our effort but by God that we are martyred.

I am sure the following announcement will be made through loud speakers some day: “Dear citizens, this is the last day to receive the mark. Only a few citizens have to receive the mark today. We are very

grateful for your cooperation until now. To receive the mark is very good and indispensable for you, because it is to establish order of our country. So, please come to the city hall and receive the mark as soon as possible. Again I say to you, this is the last day for you to receive the mark. Those who do not receive the mark until the due time today will be severely punished. Now, to make it clear, I will call the names of those who have not receive the mark yet.” Of course, this is a fiction, but such things will surely happen in the near future.

Believers of the Early Church identified each other with the sign of fish. These were the password among them. We, too, would rather make a sign that enables us to recognize our brothers and sisters, so that we can encourage each other’s faith enough to embrace martyrdom.

Because martyrdom is not something that we can achieve by our effort, we can leave aside our worries and face it in boldness. There is nothing to be feared before our righteous death. All that we have to do is

to live for the Lord while on this earth. We can give ourselves to the Lord because we know that we are destined to be martyred for the name of our God. You must realize that if you were to try to escape martyrdom for the fear of losing your possessions, you would face even greater sufferings and disasters. You must become the people of faith who, knowing that they would be martyred for Christ, live their lives for the Lord until their very end.

When we realize that we would be martyred, we would become wiser in our faith, minds, and in our actual lives. This knowledge is the cure for our foolishness, allowing us to leave behind all lingering worldly attachments. It does not mean that we have to give up our lives, but that we would live for the Lord. Until the power of God throws Satan into the bottomless pit, we live for the Lord who has saved us, fight against and overcome Satan and the Antichrist, and give all the glory of the victory to God and Him alone. God wants to be glorified by us. I thank the Lord for allowing us to give, with our faith, glory to

Him who has given us so much.

We believe that the Lord will soon return to take us away. When many souls return to God in the end times, God will receive them all into His arms and carry them away. As God said to the Church of Philadelphia in Revelation 3:10, *“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”* God will most surely fulfill His Word of promise.

By *“you have kept My command to persevere,”* God is referring to the saints’ faithful lives. It means that they held steadfast to their faith no matter what others were saying or doing to them. When God says that He *“will keep you from the hour of trial,”* He is saying that those who have kept His command to persevere will be exempted from the trials of faith.

When the time of tribulation and martyrdom comes, in other words, God will simply whisk us away as we faithfully go about in our everyday lives of service and prayer. When we set in our minds that

we are to be martyred, our hearts will be cleaned of all the debris, and our faith will become even stronger as a result. We must live our present lives of faith before God by remembering God’s promise that, with our martyrdom, we will all be kept from the hour of trial. We must live, in short, by our faith.

Today’s era is the era of Revelation. There are many foolish Christians who, while ignoring the Word of God, obstinately cling onto their false belief in the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture. When the last day comes, they will find out just how wrong they had been. Their days of influence and power are numbered; all that we have to do is just live in the certainty of our hope that God will fulfill His Word of promise.

When we reach the midpoint of the Great Tribulation, we will be martyred to defend our faith, and just before the plagues of the seven bowls begin, we will be raptured to the air by God and enter the Millennial Kingdom. When our hope to reign with Christ is realized, all our sufferings on this earth will

be more than compensated by the rewards that await us, and our entrance to the eternal New Heaven and Earth will then overwhelm us with unspeakable joys. Today, we live by faith, for the Lord, in the hope for the fulfillment of this promise of God. Trusting in our Lord to fulfill all His promises, we live in eager anticipation of the day when we will be able live with Him forever in our glorified bodies.

I thank the Lord for giving us the gospel of the perfect remission of sin, for enabling us to embrace martyrdom to defend our faith in Him, and for having us stand among His blessed.

Background to the Church of Ephesus

Ephesus, a large port city in the Asia Minor region of the Roman Empire, was a center of commerce and religious activities. At the time of the Early Church, it

was a booming international city; to its north was Smyrna, and to its south Miletus. According to myths, Amazon, the brave goddess of war, first built the city in the 12th century BC when she gave it to Androclus, a crown prince of Athens.

Ephesus was, materially speaking, a prosperous city, which meant that it was also a very worldly city. This is why God told the Church of Ephesus to fight to the end and overcome Satan so that it would not lose His gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must realize how important God's Word of truth is, and we must defend our faith by all means.

Through the Apostle John God wrote to the Church of Ephesus: *“These things says He who holds the seven stars in His right hand, who walks in the midst of the seven golden lampstands: ‘I know your works, your labor, your patience, and that you cannot bear those who are evil. And you have tested those who say they are apostles and are not, and have found them liars; and you have persevered and have patience, and have labored for My name’s sake and*

have not become weary.’” The Church of Ephesus was commended by God for its works, patience, for not tolerating evil, and for testing and uncovering false apostles, for tirelessly laboring for the sake of His name in perseverance and patience.

But the Church of Ephesus was also rebuked for its wrongdoings. As the passage continues: *“Nevertheless I have this against you, that you have left your first love. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place—unless you repent. But this you have, that you hate the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.”*

It is said in the above passage that God hates the Nicolaitans. The Nicolaitans here refer to a certain group of believers who had stood against God, His church and His truth. Just exactly what the

Nicolaitans did is elaborated in more detail in the subsequent passage directed toward the Church of Pergamos.

The Wrongdoings of the Nicolaitans

Revelation 2:14 says, *“But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”* The cross-reference for this passage can be found in chapter 22 of the Book of Numbers, where the story of Balak, the king of the Moabites, is recorded.

By the time that the Israelites had reached the plains of Moab in Canaan after their exodus from Egypt, they had conquered the seven tribes of the land, *“as an ox licks up the grass of the field.”* Having heard of this conquest, Balak became

terrified of their God, for he feared that the fate of the Moabites would also follow that of the already conquered tribes of Canaan. In trying to devise a way to prevent the Israelites from conquering them, Balak called upon Balaam, a false prophet, so that he would curse the Israelites at his bequest.

Balaam was a false prophet, but the Gentiles thought that he was a servant of God. He was neither an offspring of the High Priest Aaron, nor a Levite. But the Moabites' king, Balak, believed that those whom Balaam blessed would be blessed, and those whom he cursed would be cursed. At that time, Balaam, though a false prophet, was famous throughout the land as a renowned sorcerer.

Yet Balaam could not oblige what King Balak had asked him to do. The reason was that because the Israelites were the people of God, not only would Balaam have no permission from God to curse the Israelites, but also trying to do so would only end up as a curse upon himself. Overwhelmed by the spiritual power of God, Balaam could do nothing but

to actually bless the Israelites. Angered by this, Balak then asked Balaam to curse the Israelites from where he could not see them.

Balaam received a great amount of treasures from Balak and in return taught him a way to bring curse to the Israelites. The scheme was to tempt them to commit harlotry by inviting them to the Moabites' feasts and providing them with their women, so that the Israelites would be punished by God for their sins. This is how the false prophet Balaam taught Balak to bring destruction to the Israelites.

God said that He hated Balaam because Balaam was a man who loved money. There are many people in today's Christian community who are just like Balaam. They are in fact all false prophets, but many of them are still respected and revered. But what Balaam pursued was material possessions. When he was fed money, he blessed; when he was not, he cursed. In today's Christian community, sadly, too many of those who are supposed to be the servants of God are just like Balaam. When those who believe in

God end up pursuing only material gains, they end up as false prophets. This is why God hated the Nicolaitans.

Do you know what brings destruction to the church of God and His servants? It is the love of money. Those who pursue only material gains before their eyes will face their own destruction before God.

The Churches That Follow Balaam

Today, as in the time of the Apostles, there are many worldly churches and false servants following the way of Balaam. They exhaust every means to rake in the money from their followers. For example, there is this curious drive to have the congregation compete among themselves to testify their faith not by their spirituality but by their material offerings, as if the contribution of a believer is the barometer of his/her faith. Implying that the faith of those who contribute more to the church is greater than the faith

of those who give less, the only purpose in fostering this corrupting drive is the enrichment of the church.

It is, of course, a wonderful thing if the believers decide to serve God and His gospel out of their sincere hearts. But the false prophets like Balaam prey on the believers to fill their own belly. They incite their followers to a competition of material testimonies such as, “I offered the tithes faithfully, and God has rewarded tenfold blessings through my business.” Deceived by Balaam, the unsuspecting believers think that this is the way to the true faith, when in fact it is the way to their impoverishment, both spiritual and material, false pride, and ultimately their own destruction.

“*The deeds of the Nicolaitans*” are none other than the deeds of Balaam. Just as Balaam, in his greed, taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the Israelites, many who claim to be the servants of God in today’s Christian community are interested only in the pockets of their congregations. Those who are led astray by these false prophets end up empty

handed after giving up all their possessions to these false shepherds, and what is even worse is that sooner or later they will come to their senses and realize that what they had believed is totally false. In the end, they will blame the false church and end up renouncing their faith. Unfortunately, the sad reality is that this sorry state of affairs is not that uncommon, even in the so-called evangelical churches. Deceived by Balaam, many believers are led astray by this fraud and end up leaving the church.

The Scripture tells us that God hates the deeds of the Nicolaitans. If we follow the Nicolaitans, we will lose our faith in God. We have many testimonies that God gave us, and these are all spiritually enriching treasures. But pursuing material gains by using the testimonies is something that we must absolutely stay away from, for it is the way of the Nicolaitans hated by God Himself.

Faith with Character

God warned against the deeds of the Nicolaitans to all the seven churches in Asia. In addition, He also promised them that those who overcome would eat from the tree of life. When we serve the Lord, we do so by faith, because of our thankfulness for His redemption, and because of the knowledge that spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit is just the right thing to do. We do not serve God to show off to others, or to make us look good in any way. Doing so is neither true service nor true faith. In the church of God, we must be most careful about these deeds of the Nicolaitans. This is why the Lord warned all the seven churches of Asia about the Nicolaitans.

Do you know why many of the churches, that are not born-again churches, have grown so big and so rapidly? They grew because what built these churches were false faith and false testimonies. The servants of God must never take advantage of their

flocks to fill their own belly.

The true faith is believing in the salvation that God gave us with the baptism of Jesus, His blood on the Cross, and His judgment in our place. But many churches, born-again or not alike, uses testimonies to raid the pockets of their congregations. You must be careful and wise enough to recognize that while true testimonies are edifying for your faith and glorifying to God, false ones will be your own trap.

All the richest churches in today's world are led by the ministers who are just like Balaam. The church leaders who pursue Balaam's path use their churches to exploit their followers to further only their material interests. The Christian leaders like Balaam snatch money from their followers by inciting them to a competition of material testimonies. I detest their deeds to the extreme.

True life of faith begins with none other than faith. We must be wise enough to avoid the traps of the Nicolaitans that Satan has set up. Everyone must know what the deeds of the Nicolaitans are, and

never be deceived by the servants of Satan whose greed knows no bound. The servants of God in particular must be extremely careful in this regard. This includes the ministers. When the ministers become overly concerned with their material possessions—what cars they drive, how big their houses are, how much real estate they own, how fat their bank accounts are—they will end up corrupting their churches, leading them down to the path of the Nicolaitans.

God told the seven churches in Asia to take particular heed to this issue. The man of Balaam's faith only seeks material gains, self-glory and eventually intends to become a founder of a cult. The church of God must not seek after material possession itself. As God has promised us that He will bless those who pursue the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we must use our material possession to preach the gospel, not to store them on this earth.

Reject the False Shepherds

Even the born-again believers will be doomed if they are caught in the traps of the Nicolaitans. At the beginning they may think that such leaders' faith is wonderful and strong, but the deception of the false shepherds will ultimately lead them to their destruction.

God said to the angel of the Church of Ephesus that He hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans. Everyone who is trapped by the Nicolaitans will face his/her certain doom. Whether he/she is a born-again believer, a servant of God, or anyone else, destruction is a certainty when trapped by the Nicolaitans. As a bad shepherd leads the flock to death, false prophets bring upon curses.

This is why God told His servants to “feed My lambs.” The servants of God must tend the believers as shepherds tend their lambs, protecting them from danger and taking care of their needs. As shepherds, they must make sure that their flocks do not go astray,

find out what dangers might lurk before them, and prevent them from nearing such dangers.

I heard from the people who actually raise sheep that they are one of the most stubborn animals. Are we not just like these obstinate sheep before God? God had a good reason when He used the metaphor of lambs to describe us, for He knows very well just how stubborn we are in our basic essence.

Why did God repeatedly speak of the deeds of the Nicolaitans, Jezebel and Balaam to the seven churches in Asia? Why did He promise that to those who overcome, He would give the tree of life to eat from? He did so to teach us to be on guard against the deceptions of the false prophets. We must meditate on the Word of God and ask ourselves, “What is the true gospel of the water and the Spirit?” Mixing the Word of God with some human lessons and systemizing it plausibly does not mean that it is the gospel. There are plenty of beautifully crafted and delivered sermons in today's Christianity that has nothing to do with the gospel of the water and the

Spirit. Many famous preachers even have their own professional speechwriters who write sermons on their behalf, and all that they do is just read from these texts prepared by someone else.

We must never be trapped by the Nicolaitans. The born-again church must be most careful to not to pursue material gains; ministers in particular must be on constant guard, but so does everyone else in the congregation. Trying to extract money out of the church members, adorning the church in material extravagance, and building church edifices that look more like palaces than a temple of worship—all the while preaching that the return of the Lord is imminent!—are all the deeds of false faith, precisely the deeds of the Nicolaitans.

We must particularly take heed to the false shepherds, and must make sure that we are never deceived to follow their faith. The saints simply must not love money. Rather, what we must love and keep is the gospel of the water and the blood, the first love of God. We must live our faithful lives holding onto

the truth that He has saved us by Christ's water and blood until the day we meet Him. We must believe in the Word of God that Jesus has taken away all our sins with His baptism and His death on the Cross.

Those who follow the Nicolaitans never preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They are not interested in the works of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but only in making money. These are today's Balaam, who put a stumbling block before the Israelites and led them to their destruction. You must remember this.

Balaam was eventually killed by Joshua. As the Book of Joshua records, this false prophet was killed under the sword of Joshua when the Israelites conquered Canaan. Balaam was killed because he was not a true servant of God. All those who use the name of Christ to exploit the innocent believers and feed their own belly are today's Balaam. We must remember that Balaam used every disposable means to feed his greed.

God told the servants of the Church of Ephesus,

“To him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life, which is in the midst of the Paradise of God.” To put it differently, this passage also means that those who falter and lose will die. Following the way of Balaam is losing, the path to one’s own death. God gave us His Word of warning so that we would not fall into the trap of the Nicolaitans, and I thank Him for it. It is my sincere hope and prayer that you will not succumb to the material temptations and end up being abandoned by God for your greed. ☒

Letter to The Church of Smyrna

< Revelation 2:8-11 >

“And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life: ‘I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

Exegesis

Verse 8: “And to the angel of the church in Smyrna write, ‘These things says the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life:’”

The Church of Smyrna was founded while Paul was ministering the Church of Ephesus. According to the above passage, the members of this church were rather poor, who, because of their faith, were antagonized by the Jews in their community. Just how persecuted this church was by the Jews can be seen by the martyrdom of Polycarp, an overseer in the age of Church Fathers. The saints of the Early Church faced constant persecution by the Jewish believers who rejected Christ as their Messiah.

The Church of Smyrna was founded by the Apostle Paul. By *“the First and the Last, who was dead, and came to life,”* John is referring to God, who created the universe. Our Lord, born of the Virgin Mary, took upon the sins of the world through His baptism by John and was judged for these sins by

bleeding on the Cross. He then rose from the dead in three days and is sitting at the right hand of God. Jesus speaks to the angel of the church of God not only as our Savior but also as the Almighty God.

Verse 9: “I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.”

The Lord knew of all the difficulties and tribulations that the Church of Smyrna was facing. Although it was a poor church in material terms, the Church of Smyrna was spiritually rich. In Smyrna lived many Jews, whom God described as *“those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.”* These Jews gave themselves up as the tools of Satan to be used to carry out his purposes, and thus became obstacles to the preaching of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, persecuting the church of God. They believed that they alone were orthodox Jews, and that they alone were the

children of Abraham. But in fact they did not only fail to follow the faith of Abraham, but even worse, they ended up rejecting very God of their forefathers. Heavily persecuted by these Jews, the Church of Smyrna was poor, but still it was a church that was wealthy in its spirituality.

Verse 10: “Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”

God told the Church of Smyrna to *“not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer.”* He also told them to *“be faithful until death,”* and promised that He will give them *“the crown of life.”* The Lord knew beforehand that Satan would threaten some of the saints of the Church of Smyrna and try to break their faith. This is why He promised that if they remained faithful to Him until death, He would give them the crown of life.

What the Lord is telling us through this passage is that the servants of God and His saints who live in the end times will also be persecuted by Satan and his followers. But we will have the strength to be faithful to God until death, for this strength comes to us abundantly from our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and our hope for the New Heaven and Earth that God has promised us.

Verse 11: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”

The believers of the end times will engage in a battle against the Antichrist and those who stand against God. God tells us that those who have the hope for the true gospel and Heaven will triumph with their faith. By giving us His Word of truth and faith, God has enabled every believer to overcome His enemies. The only question remaining is whether or not we will be on the side of God and His servants.

Romans 8:18 tells us that *“the sufferings of this*

present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.” Our persecution by the Antichrist and his followers will last only briefly, perhaps even just 10 days. Trusting in God, you can withstanding this short period of suffering, overcome the Antichrist, and glorify God and receive His Eternal Kingdom as your reward. God has given the saints the strength to win their battle against the Antichrist.

Let us all triumph over the Antichrist with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and let us all meet again in the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth to live together forever. The first death here refers to our physical death, while the second death refers to the spiritual death by the eternal punishment of hell. For the saints, there is martyrdom, their physical death, but there is no spiritual death.

I thank God for giving the glory and honor of martyrdom to us, the believers in this last times, as He had given the martyrs of the Early Church. ☒

Be Faithful until Death

< Revelation 2:8-11 >

During the Early Church period, many Christians were wandering the land, looking for a safe place where they could escape from the persecuting hands of the Roman authorities. The Roman Empire continued with its policy of persecution even after the demise of the Emperor Nero, as the Christians kept defying the authority of the subsequent emperors. The early saints accepted and recognized the worldly authority of the Roman emperors, but they refused to recognize it when it required them to give up their faith. Because they stood up against such a demand of the Roman authorities, the annals of the Early Church were filled by persecution and martyrdom.

We should ask ourselves whether the Word of

Revelation has any particular relevance for today's believers. After all, it was written almost two thousand year ago, not now, and to the seven churches of Asia, not to us. How could it be relevant to us?

It is relevant because it is the Word of God that reveals to us the secrets of what is to come in the future. We should realize that we are now living in the era of the black horse, the third era of "the eras of the four horses" described in Revelation 6. Having passed the eras of the white and red horses, we are now living in the era of the black horse, almost at its end. The whole world will soon face great famines, both physical and spiritual. Actually, it is probably safe to say that this era of famine has already arrived. When the present era of the black horse, the era of famine, passes, the era of the pale horse will arrive.

The seven seals spoken of in Revelation 6 mean that God has planned in Christ a total of seven eras when He first created the universe. The first era, the era of the white horse, is the era of the gospel; the

second era, the era of the red horse, is the era of Satan when the Devil brings great confusion to the world, wages wars, and continues to antagonize the church of God. These eras are followed by the era of the black horse, the era in which physical and spiritual famines ravage the world. This era of the black horse has already begun a while ago.

When this era is over, the era of the pale horse will begin, in which the Antichrist will emerge, as well as the plagues of the seven trumpets described in Revelation 8 will begin. When the last of the seven trumpets is blown, the saints will be raptured, and this will be followed by the plagues of the seven bowls. There will then be the marriage supper of the Lamb in the air for the raptured saints, and when all the plagues of the seven bowls end, the Lord will return to the earth with us and begin His Millennial Kingdom. The Millennial Kingdom will then be followed by the New Heaven and Earth that will descend upon those saints who had lived in the Millennial Kingdom by their first resurrection.

Thus the passages of the Book of Revelation, such as “*Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life,*” and “*He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death,*” are all directly relevant to us. The Word of Revelation, in other words, is critically relevant to the Christians who are living in today’s world. Were Revelation not relevant to us, all this Word of God would have no meaning.

The plan of the seven eras that is revealed in the Book of Revelation is implemented and completed in Christ our Lord. When the era of the pale horse arrives, the Antichrist will make his appearance. We need to find out from the Word of God what plan our Lord has for us for that time. It is absolutely critical that we all understand from the Word of Revelation how God has set up His overall plan for us and how He will complete it—what plagues will descend upon the world, what will happen to the believers, what disasters will plague the unbelievers, and so forth. You must accept and believe in the utter importance and relevance of this Word of prophecy for you.

You must also have a sound understanding of what the Book of Revelation speaks of, such as the seven-year Great Tribulation and the second coming of Christ. Many of today's Christians believe in the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture, which first appeared in England in the 1830s and was subsequently made widely popular by a scholar named C. I. Scofield, a professor at the Moody Bible Institute.

This theory postulates that the rapture of the saints will take place before the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation begins. In this view, the Gentiles would be raptured first, and then God would begin His work of salvation for the people of Israel. Also, the rapture of the saints would precede both the emergence of the Antichrist and the plagues of the seven bowls.

In general, most Christians believe in either amillennialism or this theory of pre-tribulation rapture. But these are mere hypotheses that were built from unsound knowledge and deficient

understanding of the Bible. Instead of answering the many questions that the believers have about the Book of Revelation, these hypotheses have done more harm than good by raising even more questions and doubts about the Word of Revelation.

If the theory of pre-tribulation rapture were correct, what relevance would the Book of Revelation have for the Gentile believers? The Great Tribulation and the series of events that are prophesized in Revelation would have no relevance for us, for we would all be raptured beforehand. This is why many people often take the Word of Revelation as a matter of curiosity rather than faith.

But we must realize that the Word of Revelation is critically relevant to us who are living in today's world. Let me ask you this: do you believe in the Word of God, or do you believe in the words of scholars? There are plenty of theories on the end times, from amillennialism to post-millennial rapture, post-tribulation rapture, pre-tribulation rapture, mid-tribulation rapture, and so on. These theories

proposed by the scholars are just that—they are no more than mere hypotheses, postulates and speculations.

Which among these theories do you believe in? Many people say that they believe in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture because that is what they had been taught by their pastors. But let me tell you clearly and definitively: you and I will go through the plagues of the seven trumpets and live in the midst of the Great Tribulation. Because we are destined to go through the Great Tribulation, our faith must be true and strong enough to overcome the trials and tribulations that await us.

What would happen if you had, believing in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, thought to yourself, “I’ll be raptured before the Great Tribulation; I couldn’t care less about it,” and did not prepare your faith for the end times? When the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation comes as the Word of God says it will, those who did not prepare their faith for the Tribulation will be engulfed in great confusion,

suffering, and perhaps even death—that is, their very faith in Jesus might be all shaken up. Many of them would not be able to overcome the Tribulation and end up losing their battle of faith.

Prior to the appearance of the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, many Christians had actually believed that they would go through all of the seven-year period of Great Tribulation, and that they would be raptured only afterward its end when Christ makes His second coming. Thinking that they had to bear through every year of the seven-year period, they prepared their faith in eagerness, but also in great fear. Going through all the plagues must have been a terrifying prospect for them, as it should indeed be so for anyone. But such belief was also only an academic theory, a product of the ignorance of the Word of God.

Then there are the conservatives who believe in amillennialism. These people see the Millennial Kingdom as symbolic. They view it as a symbolic representation of the peace that the believers in

Christ gain through their salvation. Were such academic theories true, we couldn't care less about what happens to the world, for we would all be lifted up to the air by God before the Tribulation begins.

But if they were not true, what would happen then? Facing the Great Tribulation without having prepared our faith, we would be seized by immobilizing fear. We would be unable to defend our faith, capitulate before the waves of trials and tribulations, and end up flowing down in the same current as the rest of the world. But God has told us that those whose names are written in the Book of Life—that is, those who are born again by water and the Spirit—will never surrender.

God tells us in His Word of Revelation that those who are born again will overcome the trials of the Great Tribulation by faith, and that it is in the midst of the Tribulation that He will lift them up in the air. The theory of pre-tribulation rapture thus departs from this biblical truth, meaning that this claim is only a man-made postulate. It is, in other words, a lie,

not the truth.

Yet many people throughout the world have now accepted this theory of pre-tribulation rapture. Those who believe in Scofield's teaching of pre-tribulation rapture believe in the following:

1. The seven-year period of the Great Tribulation will begin after the emergence of the Antichrist in the end times.

2. The Antichrist will rule over the world during the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation; for the first half of the seven-year period, he will rule as a benevolent ruler, and the latter half as an evil tyrant.

3. The Temple in Jerusalem will be rebuilt and sacrificial offerings will resume once again.

4. The Antichrist will make a seven-year covenant with Israel.

5. After the first three and a half years of the Tribulation, the Antichrist will break this covenant with Israel.

6. The following three and a half years will be a time of great tribulations and persecution for the

Israelites. During this period the gospel of Millennial Kingdom will be preached instead of the gospel of grace.

7. Among the Israelites, 144,000 will survive the Tribulation.

8. The Tribulation will end with the battle of Armageddon.

Having defined the Great Tribulation in the above terms, Scofield made no mention of what would happen to the Gentiles during the Tribulation. Scofield, in other words, argued that all the Gentiles who believe in Christ would be raptured before the start of the Tribulation, and that only after their rapture would God begin to work among the people of Israel. His work would be completed with the deliverance of 144,000 Israelites, and with it, He would finish His work of salvation. The Millennial Kingdom would then begin.

The source of influence on Scofield and his claims of pre-tribulation rapture was John Nelson Darby, the

founder of a group known as the Plymouth Brethren, who began espousing this theory after meeting a Pentecostal leader. This leader was actually a fifteen-year-old girl named Margaret MacDonald of Scotland, who claimed in 1830 that she had a vision from God in which she saw Christians being raptured just prior to the Great Tribulation. It is after having visited this girl that Darby began to teach the theory of pre-tribulation rapture.

Darby's teachings were then passed onto Scofield, an American theologian. Scofield, who had spent his entire life working on his widely used Scofield Reference Bible, was at the time pondering upon the question of whether rapture would occur before or after the Tribulation. When Scofield heard of Darby's theory of pre-tribulation rapture, he was completely immersed in it, and having been thoroughly convinced of its claims, he embraced this new theory by including it in his Scofield Reference Bible. This is how Scofield came to believe in and argue for the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, and how many of

today's Christians came to follow it as well.

Before the theory of pre-tribulation rapture was expounded upon by Darby and Scofield, most Christians had believed in post-tribulation rapture. But Scofield, who was a professor at the Moody Bible Institute in the United States, had a tremendous influence on doctrinal issues, particularly with the impact of his Scofield Reference Bible. It was because of Scofield and his influence that the theory of pre-tribulation rapture became so widespread in the Christian communities throughout the world.

Unfortunately, as a result, many of today's Christians are now fast asleep in their faith. They are asleep because they mistakenly think that the rise of the Antichrist would have nothing to do with them. They see no need to prepare their faith for the era of the Great Tribulation, as they believe that they would be raptured before it begins. But our Lord has told us to be always awake, for no one knows when the groom would come. Yet sadly, those who disregard the Word of God and instead rely on the teachings of

pre-tribulation rapture remain deeply asleep.

But now is the time to wake up. Now is the time for you to cast away your mistaken belief in pre-tribulation rapture and believe in the Word of truth. Neither the theory of pre-tribulation rapture nor the theory of post-tribulation rapture has any biblical foundation; you must return to the true Word of God. The Word of Revelation (6:8) tells us, *“So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.”*

It is said here that the name of the one sitting on the pale horse, the Antichrist, was Death, and that Hades followed with him. This means that the Antichrist is a murderer who leads his victims to hell. It is also said here that he would be given power over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. The Antichrist, in other words, would commit the same

atrocities as the Roman emperors—only this time even worse—to kill, abuse, and persecute the Christians and to destroy their faith.

You should realize that the era of the pale horse is the era of the Antichrist. The Lord tells us, “*You know how to discern the face of the sky, but you cannot discern the signs of the times (Matthew 16:3).*” When we cannot discern the signs of the times, we cannot know what kind of faith we must have, and thus we can neither sow the seeds nor harvest the fruits—we cannot, in other words, work for the Lord. Today, the era of the red horse has passed, and we are in the era of the black horse. The world will soon be struck by great economic calamities and face the era of severe famine. Hunger and starvation will run rampant throughout the world. When all these things come to pass, many will regret in agony. Do not be one of them; instead, be the one whose faith can discern the signs of the times.

Today’s era is the era of the black horse. When this era of black horse passes, the era of the pale

horse will arrive. The Antichrist, emerging in this period, will indiscriminately kill and persecute the saints, marking this era as the era of martyrdom.

Revelation 13:6-8 says, “*Then he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, His tabernacle, and those who dwell in heaven. It was granted to him to make war with the saints and to overcome them. And authority was given him over every tribe, tongue, and nation. All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.*” The “he” here refers to the Antichrist. The passage tells us that one of the rulers of the world will be given the power of Satan to blaspheme God and to persecute the saints. This is the child of the devil, with the power of the dragon. With his power he will fight and “overcome” the saints. But by overcoming, it only means that he will make martyrs out of the saints. This refers just to the saints’ physical death; the Antichrist can never take away the saints’ faith itself.

What Scofield argued was that the saints would face no Great Tribulation at all. But without the seven-year Great Tribulation, there can be no Millennial Kingdom for the saints. The saints will come out of the Great Tribulation as martyrs. This prophecy of the Bible has all been planned in Christ Jesus from the very beginning of the world. All the history of the world will end in the works that Christ will accomplish.

You must be able to discern the seven eras that God has set for us. The first era is the era of the white horse, the era in which the Word of God begins its work. The second era, the era of the red horse, is the era of the devil. The third era of the black horse is the era of physical and spiritual famine. The fourth era of the pale horse is the era of the rise of the Antichrist. This is the era of the seven trumpets, the era of martyrdom. It is the failure to discern this era of the pale horse that makes people so confused.

Without knowing this era, we cannot properly live our lives as born-again Christians. If we remain

oblivious to what awaits us, how can we ever be ready for the future? Even people who run businesses must know beforehand the changing trends of the times to be successful. How could we, the believers in Christ, be ready for His return when we have no clue as to what is awaiting us?

We must have a clear understanding of the Great Tribulation to be ready for it. The saints will live through the first three and a half years of the Tribulation, and it is during this time that they will be martyred. They will not go through all the seven years of the Tribulation, but only the first half, and then, with their martyrdom they will be resurrected and raptured. When the saints are raptured, it does not mean that Christ would descend to the earth, but rather that the Lord would lift them up to the air to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

This earth, meanwhile, will be engulfed by the plagues of the seven bowls. Those who return to the earth with Christ after the plagues are only those whose sins have been forgiven, as white as snow, by

believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. This is why we must prepare our faith by understanding this era and its critical relevance and importance for us.

Our Lord told to the angel of the Church of Smyrna, *“I know your works, tribulation, and poverty (but you are rich); and I know the blasphemy of those who say they are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan. Do not fear any of those things which you are about to suffer. Indeed, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* From this passage, we can see that the Church of Smyrna had been heavily persecuted by the Jews. But the Lord said that these Jews were not really Jews, but a synagogue of Satan. He said this to not just the Church of Smyrna, but to all the seven churches of Asia.

There was a large Jewish community in Smyrna, which, despite the fact that the Jews worshiped the

same God as the believers in Christ, nevertheless persecuted the saints of the Church of Smyrna, just as the Romans had done. To the saints facing this persecution, God said, *“Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life,”* and, *“He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”* God told the saints that they must overcome. Likewise, we, too, must fight the Antichrist to the end and overcome him in our battle of faith. Our Lord will then give us the crown of life—He will, in other words, bless us by giving us and allowing us to live in the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth.

Do you have the courage to be martyred? Now is the time for you to prepare your faith of martyrdom. And to do so, you must have the faith of redemption that wholly enables you to stand before the Lord—the faith that can embrace martyrdom without hesitation.

We must prepare this faith now. Our Lord has told everyone that no one can enter or even see the

Kingdom of God without believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He has told us that the faith in this gospel is the faith of the martyrdom in the end times.

If there is sin in people's hearts, how could they be martyred? Far from being martyred, they are the kind of the people who would lead others to receive the mark of the Beast! Nothing but the gospel of the water and the Spirit can cleanse away our sins. Not even your prayers of repentance that you routinely and ritualistically offer can cleanse away your sins. Trying to cleanse your sins with prayers of repentance is only a waste of time and effort.

Those who try to do so believe more in what the theologians have said than in what the Word of God actually tells them. Does not the fact that the scholars, the very people in whom so many Christians put their trust, argue and believe in amillennialism only show just how ignorant of the Bible these supposed scriptural experts are? According to these amillennialists, there would be neither the Millennial

Kingdom nor the martyrdom of the saints in the Great Tribulation. To those who believe in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture or amillennialism, the Book of Revelation would have no meaning at all!

The Word of Revelation is the Word of God. It is the Word of God written by the Apostle John, the most beloved disciple of Christ. No one can deny this.

I am not criticizing the established theories and doctrines of the theologians for no reason, but I do so to prepare your faith so that you would be able to be faithful to the Lord until death. It is to train you in the Word of the Scripture so that you would be ready to withstand the persecution of the Great Tribulation with a determined readiness to embrace your martyrdom.

To do so, you must prepare your faith with the gospel of the water and the Spirit now. Those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, on the other hand, will capitulate before Satan and end up becoming God's enemies, because those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will

worship Satan. This is what the Word of God tells us.

God will have the saints be martyred in the middle of the Great Tribulation. When the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation passes, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be martyred. Shortly after their martyrdom will come their resurrection and rapture. This is the overall summary of the Book of Revelation, and this is why I am reiterating its key points.

You should remember that when the era of the Antichrist comes, there will be many who, shortly after being martyred for believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, will be resurrected and simultaneously raptured. When the era of the pale horse arrives, the flowers of faith will blossom with their martyrdom. True faith, when the right time comes, bears true fruits and blossoms with beautiful flowers.

There are certain plants in desert that sprout, blossom, and bear fruit in only a week's time. This is

because they have adapted to their desert conditions, where rainfall is far in between and water is scarce. They have to sprout, blossom, and bear fruit quickly because the scarce supply of water can last only so long.

The faith of those who come to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit during the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation are like these plants. For them to believe in, follow, and be martyred for this gospel along with us, only a short period of time would suffice. The madness of the Antichrist will reach its peak at the midpoint of the Great Tribulation, three and half years from its start.

This is when the martyrdom of the saints will occur. Even those who, having already heard of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, are yet to accept it into their hearts will still be able to have true faith and join us in our martyrdom, if they believe in this gospel later on during the time of the Tribulation, despite its shortness. This is why we are spreading the gospel, to wake up the Christians throughout the

world from their spiritual sleep. We will preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the end of the world until our very own martyrdom. If there were to be no martyrdom, what good would this gospel that we are spreading now serve? Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can be martyred in the end times. We must prepare our faith for it now.

If we do not prepare our faith to embrace martyrdom to defend the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, when we are at peace before God, we will only regret it later on. When the end times come, we will be busy with ourselves, saying, “Lord, I am too busy right now. Just wait a little bit more for me; I am repenting now.” If this is the kind of the faith that we hold onto until the end, the Lord would tell us, “Why don’t you just jump into the lake of fire yourself? You are more than qualified for it!” Those who have sin now must realize that they will end up like this at the end. This is why God said, *“He who has an ear; let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”*

By the time the saints are martyred, the natural environment of the world would have been completely destroyed. Forests would have been burnt down; the seas, rivers, and springs would have turned into rotting blood; and the sun, the moon, and the stars would have lost their light, engulfing the whole world in darkness. Its inhabitants, ruled by evil spirits, would have lost their minds, their behavior would have become savagely violent, and their only goal would have become to round up and kill all the children of God that they can find. This is why you must understand and believe in the Word of Revelation.

Today’s churches are obsessed only with building bigger, larger, and taller churches. They spend millions of dollars to build their churches, and yet in their hearts is found only sin, not the faith that can embrace martyrdom for Jesus. These people must first have their hearts cleansed of their sins.

The world will soon enter the era of the Tribulation, the era of the pale horse. I hope and pray

that you would have the kind of faith that can embrace martyrdom and remain faithful to Christ until death. We have to believe in the Word of Revelation after examining it seriously with the Berean spirit. ☒

Who Is Saved from Sin?

< Revelation 2:8-11 >

This passage is the Lord's letter to the Church of Smyrna in Asia Minor, a church that was materially poor, but nonetheless spiritually rich in faith. Its saints and servant of God defended their faith despite being persecuted by the Jews, and even in their tribulations of death, they did not deny the Lord and His gospel of the water and the Spirit. They fought and won by believing in the Word of God.

The Lord told the saints of the Church of Smyrna not to fear the sufferings to come, but to be faithful until death, promising them the crown of life.

God told His people to fight and overcome the false doctrines of those who call themselves prophets. We must know what kind of faith is needed to be saved from all our sins. We must realize that the

gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true gospel, and with this faith we must fight against and overcome the false doctrines and lies that are plaguing today's Christian world. When the whole world had been deceived by Satan, God sent our Lord to fulfill the gospel of the water and the Spirit. He has also saved all those who believe in it from all their sins. We must realize and believe in this truth.

Who are the people that have been saved from all their sins before God? They are not the strong-bodied or willed people, but the ones who have been delivered from all their sins only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. These are the people who have fought and overcame the false doctrines and lies by knowing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. To those who believe in this gospel and overcome the false doctrines, God will give them the blessing of avoiding the second death.

God's Salvation Given to Those Who Overcome

As the Word of Revelation tells us, *“He who overcomes shall not be hurt by the second death.”* Only to those who overcome will God give a new life and His New Kingdom. As we have two ears, we hear two different stories—that is, we hear both the truth and the false at the same time. Between the Word of God and that of Satan, our destiny is determined by whose word we accept and whose word we reject.

This is why we must all believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and, with this Word of truth and our faith in it, fight and overcome the false teachings. Because everyone in this world is suffering under the weight of sin, we look for and must find the gospel of the water and the Spirit that can wholly deliver us from our sins. But there are many who cannot accept the truth because of the lies

that they have already been fed by the false teachers. The supposed salvation preached by these false prophets is based on the claim that if you do not sin, then you would be blessed.

But we are, in our essence, destined to sin; it is our unavoidable nature to sin, and thus we can only remain chained to the sins of this world. If the sinners' hearts are thus chained to the sins of the world by the false prophets, how could they ever believe in God and be saved from their sins? They must return to the church of God, hear the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and receive the true rest of their hearts through the remission of their sins. Many people in this world look for the true church of God and yearn for their salvation, but most of them fail to find it and instead end up in the church of the Law—and this is why they are bound to hell.

What kind of church, then, is the church of God that the sinners are truly in need of? The church of God that every sinner needs is the one that preaches

the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The church of God spoken of in the Bible preaches Jesus' baptism and His blood on the Cross. The true church of God accurately explains and teaches just how exactly Jesus took upon all the sins of the world onto Himself and how He has made them disappear, all within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Every sinner who has been delivered from his/her sins has done so by the faith that came from hearing the gospel of the water and the Spirit through the church of God.

Yet because many Christians have neither heard of nor come into contact with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they have not been able to be saved from all their sins. But God tells us that He will deliver from sin those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and who fight against and overcome the false gospels. God has promised us that those who overcome will not be hurt by the second death.

True deliverance from sin is available only to

those who stand against and overcome the false teachers. Because we are born as sinners, if we cannot overcome the false teachings, we will end up as the prisoners of Satan, bound by sin, and destined for hell in the end. This is why God told each and everyone of us to overcome the enemies in our spiritual battle of salvation.

It is said that some animals, such as lions or tigers, train their cubs by deliberately pushing them down to the bottom of a hill and making them climb up by themselves. Only the cubs that make it back up to the hill would be raised. Likewise, God has given us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and only to those who fight and overcome the false teachings with this gospel will He allow Heaven.

Our salvation does not come by our own blood and flesh. We can be saved from sin only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. True salvation is reached by the faith in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross. When our hearts believe in the baptism and the bloodshed of the Son

of God that have taken away the sins of the world, we will be saved from all our sins and delivered from our certain destruction. Everyone who enters Heaven does so by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and everyone who ends up in hell does so by not believing in this gospel. This is why we must all believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and reject the false gospels.

By spreading false teachings and lies, Satan tries to prevent the people from being saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. What are these false teachings then? The false gospels are the ones that teach that Jesus did not take away all the sins of the world with His baptism. They teach that while Jesus took away our original sin, our daily sins must be cleansed by our daily prayers of repentance. These teachings may perhaps make sense in religious terms, but when looked at with the true gospel of the water and the Spirit, they are simply false.

Everyone's redemption comes by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit; false gospels will

never deliver us from sin. This is why we must fight and overcome these false teachings. Fighting against Satan means standing against what is untrue. We must thus decide whether we would believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit or the false gospels, and having made our decision, we must fight against the other. Even those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot overcome Satan if their faith remains only lukewarm.

Many of the people who are saved had been debating between the Word of God and that of Satan before. Their sins were forgiven only when they decided to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Everyone who has been saved, from the very beginning of creation until now, has been the one who fought and overcame the false gospels. We must all find the gospel of the water and the Spirit, reject the false gospels, and be delivered from all our sins by faith.

What Are the False Gospels?

Let's assume, for the purpose of illustration, that there is a village where everyone who lives in it has only one eye, and that a visitor with two eyes came to this village. The people in the village would call this visitor with two eyes as "strange," "abnormal," "very different," or perhaps even "heretic." The reason why they judge the visitor as a heretic is because he is different from them, who, in this case, constitute the absolute majority. Likewise, there is a bias in this world where "the majority rules," or, to put it differently, where "the truth belongs to the majority." But we must realize that such standards of judgment and conclusions are quite wrong.

In the eternal world, the truth is not decided by majority, but on absolute, fundamental standards. Where, then, can this truth be found? It can be found in the redemption of the sinners and their deliverance from destruction. All those who become righteous become so by being saved from their sins—after

hearing, with their ears, the truth of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and believing, with their hearts, in this gospel.

But because so many people have fallen into the false gospels for so long, when the real truth is revealed before them, they call it strange, even heretic, and reject it. But the gospel of the water and the Spirit that they reject is the gospel of the truth that was revealed, believed, and preached by the apostles themselves, going all the way back all to the Apostolic Age. The problem of sin can be solved only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit before God.

Jesus, our Truth, took upon the sins of the world on Himself all at once with His baptism by John, a descendant of Aaron, and shed His blood on the Cross for us. The Word of God bears witness that Jesus carried all the sins of the world with His baptism. He then died on the Cross, rose from the dead, and ascended to Heaven to sit at the right hand of God. This truth was fulfilled two thousand years

ago, when Jesus became the Lord of the truth by taking away all the sins of the world with His baptism and His blood on the Cross.

Yet those who are deceived by lies still do not know that with their faith in Jesus comes their complete deliverance from sin; worse yet, many souls in today's Christian world are lost in sin, confused by the false gospels. This is why those who believe in the true gospel of the water and the Spirit must preach and spread this gospel even more and further. Only by hearing this true gospel can people be delivered from their sins.

The truth revealed in the Bible is the gospel of the water and the Spirit (Matthew 3:13-17, Ephesians 1:13). In the above passage, God commended the Church of Smyrna, saying that despite their material poverty, they are rich in their faith. But He called the Jews as the servants of Satan, because although they claimed to believe in God, they still refused to accept His gospel of redemption into their hearts. They did not believe in Jesus as the Son of God and their

Savior, even though our Lord had taken all their sins away with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because they still did not accept the fact that Jesus had taken away their sins, even as they claimed to believe in the Jehovah God, there continued to be sin in their hearts.

Such people claim with their lips that they believe in God, but in truth they are a "synagogue of Satan" that does not believe in Him. Those who, even as they claim to believe in Jesus, have not yet accepted His redemption into their hearts also belong to this synagogue of Satan.

There exist in this world two synagogues: one of Satan, and the other of God. When the Lord returns, the synagogue of Satan will be eternally destroyed, and the synagogue of God will be eternally blessed. God will, in other words, clearly separate the righteous from the sinners. Not everyone who claims to believe in Jesus as his/her Savior will go to Heaven.

This is clearly demonstrated in what Jesus told us

in Matthew 7: 21-23: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’”*

In other words, we cannot say that Heaven is guaranteed to everyone who claims to believe in Jesus and calls upon His name. Even if they believe Jesus to be their Savior, if they do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they are, in the end, the servants of Satan, ultimately bound to hell. Because they follow the false gospels even as they claim to believe in Jesus, it is only fitting and just that they shall be sent to hell.

Those who have sin and therefore belong to Satan are bound to hell. But for those of us who have received the remission of all our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gates of

Heaven will be opened. Everyone who believes in Jesus must enter Heaven by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

To be saved from the sins of the world, we must not only have a clear knowledge of our sins, but also have the spiritual ability to discern the truth from the lies. To do so, we must dwell in the written Word of God and believe according to it. If you do not want to be thrown into the lake of fire, you must reject the false gospels by faith. You must win in your battle against the false gospels. And to secure your victory of faith, you must know what the gospel of the water and the Spirit is. Only then can you avoid the second death, and only then can you enter the Paradise of God.

2 John 1:7 tells us, *“For many deceivers have gone out into the world who do not confess Jesus Christ as coming in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.”* The deceiver here refers to those who deny that Jesus Christ came to this earth in the flesh. Put differently, it is those who deny that the Lord

who came in the flesh is the Son of God, that He took upon all the sins of the world on Himself with His baptism in the Jordan River, and that He was judged in our place for our sins with His blood on the Cross.

Those who do not accept these facts, that He has taken away from us all the judgment of our sins, are the deceivers and the servants of Satan. These are the enemies of God and the faithful servants of the Devil. They confuse and lead many people to destruction by teaching and spreading their false gospels and standing against the true gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Those who claim to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and yet do not fight in the spiritual battle against the false gospel of Satan will eventually end up as the enemies of the Kingdom of God and His people. Such people do not care whether or not their followers believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All that they care about is only their own glory and wealth. These are the false servants who only desire to fill their own belly. They

are, in short, those who belong to the Antichrist that the Bible speaks of.

The Trickeries of Heretics

Ezekiel 13:17-18 says, *“Likewise, son of man, set your face against the daughters of your people, who prophesy out of their own heart; prophesy against them, and say, ‘Thus says the Lord God: Woe to the women who sew magic charms on their sleeves and make veils for the heads of people of every height to hunt souls! Will you hunt the souls of My people, and keep yourselves alive?’”* From this passage we can see how the servants of Satan seek to snatch away people’s souls.

The passage tells us that the servants of Satan sew magic charms on the people’s sleeves. In King James Version, this passage is translated as *“Woe to the women that sew pillows to all armholes.”* How uncomfortable and awkward would it be to have

pillows sawn into your arms, and how unsightly would this be to others? Those who, even as they neither know nor believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, have been given the leadership positions in the church are exactly like this: uncomfortable, awkward, and unsightly. Why? Because these church positions are not fitting to them. They know that they have not even been justified or born again, for they are yet to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

How, then, could they ever work for the Lord? To do the works of God, therefore, the first thing that you must do is to receive the redemption of your sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, ascertain that the Holy Spirit resides in your heart, and then be trained sufficiently in the Word of God and His truth before you take up any post in the church.

Through the Bible God tells us, His people, that we must fight and overcome the false prophets by believing in His truth. Being born again by believing

in the gospel of the water and the Spirit is not achieved by doing nothing. It is achieved by winning the righteousness of God by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Matthew 11:12 states, *“And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.”* Those who are forceful enter the Kingdom of God—forceful, that is, in their fight against the untruth. You must remember that only by accepting the gospel of the water and the Spirit into your heart and overcoming the false teachings can you be completely saved, and only then can the Holy Spirit dwell in your heart.

To reach one’s complete salvation, everyone who is born unto this earth must fight and overcome the untruth with God’s Word of truth. This world is the battleground between the forces of the truth and the forces of the untruth, between those who are born again and those who are not. This world became the battleground between God and Satan because Adam and Eve, though given life by God, ended up

believing more in the lies of the Devil than in the Word of God.

Today's era is particularly more dangerous, as Satan, knowing that his days are numbered, is trying to prevent people from believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit by confusing them with false prophets, deceiving them with false miracles, and misleading them with his false works clothed as the works of the Holy Spirit. *“And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14)*. Having won over the mainstream religions, Satan stands against the righteous. Though now is an era where lies are eclipsing the truth, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will in the end be freed from all that are untrue, and ultimately triumph over them.

To be saved from all our sins, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and stay away from the false teachings that claim that we must daily repent to be forgiven of our sins. God has promised us that those who overcome such lies with His truth will not

suffer the second death. Let us strive, like the saints of the Church of Smyrna before us, to defend our faith before God, so that we, too, would be commended by Him for our faithfulness to the Lord. ☒

Letter to The Church of Pergamos

< Revelation 2:12-17 >

“And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword: I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells. But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality. Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate. Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will

fight against them with the sword of My mouth.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

Exegesis

Verse 12: “And to the angel of the church in Pergamos write, ‘These things says He who has the sharp two-edged sword:’”

Pergamos was an administrative capital city in Asia Minor, whose inhabitants worshiped many pagan gods. In particular, it was a center of emperor worship. By “*He who has the sharp two-edged sword,*” it means that the Lord fights against the enemies of God.

Verse 13: “I know your works, and where you dwell, where Satan’s throne is. And you hold fast to My name, and did not deny My faith even in the days in which Antipas was My faithful martyr, who was killed among you, where Satan dwells.”

While Pergamos was a stronghold of emperor worship, it also was the place where a servant of God named Antipas was martyred for refusing the imperial idolatry to defend his faith in the Lord. The time will come once again when the people will be coerced to worship the Antichrist, but the saints and servants of God will defend their faith until the end, just as Antipas had defended his faith with his own life. To have such a bold faith, we must start to put our faith into our action now, even if we begin with small steps. When the time of persecution comes, the saints and servants of God must especially rely on the Holy Spirit. They must trust in God and willingly embrace their martyrdom in hope, so that they can give glory to God and receive the New Heaven and Earth from Him.

Verse 14: “But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.”

God rebuked the Church of Pergamos because some of its members held the doctrine of Balaam. Balaam was a false prophet who led the Israelites away from God and made them commit idolatry by tempting them to have relationships with the Gentile priestesses who worshipped idols. The Lord rebuked those whose faith had left God. The people’s hearts had left Him and instead worshiped the false idols. And the sin of idolatry is the gravest sin before God.

Verse 15: “Thus you also have those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, which thing I hate.”

The words “Nicolaitan” and “Balaam” in the Bible are basically synonymous, meaning “those who prevail over the people.” When God said that there

are “those who hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitans,” this was another way of saying that the church of God must reject “those who hold the doctrine of Balaam.” Those who followed these doctrines of the Nicolaitans and Balaam were those who pursued material gains and idolatry. Such people must of course be driven out of the church of God.

Verse 16: “Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”

God therefore told the Church of Pergamos to leave from their worship of false gods and their pursuit of the worldly gains and return to the right faith, warning them that unless they repent, He would fight against them with the sword of His mouth. This is, in other words, a severe stricture in which God warned that He would punish those who do not repent from following the doctrine of Balaam, even if they were believers. Those who heard this warning of God and returned to Him were to live, both

physically and spiritually, but those who did not were to brace themselves for their physical and spiritual destruction. For the saints and servants of God to be blessed on this earth and beyond, they must hear the Word of God and follow the Lord with their faith.

Verse 17: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”

The true saints will embrace even their own martyrdom. God tells us that to those who are martyred in His name, He will give the foods of Heaven and record their names in His Kingdom. For us to live physically and spiritually, we must listen to what the Holy Spirit has said to the church of God. To those who overcome—that is, those who win their battle against the followers of Satan—God will give the righteousness of faith that delivers them from sin,

and, for their faith, He will write their names into the Book of Life.

The Bible tells us repeatedly in several different passages that those who persevere until the end will receive salvation. The saints, in other words, need to be patient in the end times, so that they can defend their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The names of the born-again are written in the Book of Life. The believers must, therefore, enter the Kingdom of God by not pursuing material and worldly gains but overcoming them by faith, until the very day when they will finally stand before God. ☒

The Followers of the Doctrine of the Nicolaitans

< Revelation 2:12-17 >

The Way of Balaam

It is said here that among the seven churches in Asia, the Church of Pergamos had some members who followed the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. These people were consumed only by their desire to build up their own worldly wealth and fame, and had no interest in saving souls. Ministers in particular must be very careful so as not to end up following this doctrine of Balaam. Balaam made the saints worship the world and led them to their destruction.

God gave us His Word of promise that to those who overcome, He will give the hidden manna and a white stone. Put differently, this also means that the

pastors who pursue the world will end up losing their manna. The manna here means “the exquisite Word of God,” and losing the hidden manna means losing the will of God that is hidden in His Word.

When the born-again servants of God pursue the world, they come to lose the sight of His Word. This is a fearful prospect. I am fearful of this possibility, and you, too, should fear it. God tells us that to those who overcome He would give the hidden manna and a white stone, but those who lose to the world by compromising with it and surrendering to its worldly fame or pleasure will not be given this manna.

The Bible tells us, “*And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.*” How true is the Word of God! Those who love the secular world are those who have not been saved from their sins by not believing in the baptism of Jesus Christ and His blood on the Cross. These people do not know the truth that Christ has forgiven all their sins with His baptism.

Some people's faith in Jesus remains only on a theoretical plane. They think that Jesus took away their sins, and therefore they have been made righteous, but their faith is empty because there is no Holy Spirit in their hearts. This is a theoretical faith. If one has really received redemption, he/she must fight and overcome the things of the world—the worldly fame, honor, wealth, or power. Overcoming the world means holding onto the Word of God that has allowed us to be born again, fighting against those who pursue the wealth and honor of this world, and keeping the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

God tells us that He would write into the Book of Life the names of those who have been redeemed, and in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells. As the Bible tells us, *“if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new,”* those who have been born again and who has the Holy Spirit dwelling in their hearts know that they no longer are what they used to be before. They realize themselves that their old

selves have now become new creations by believing in the water and the blood of Jesus Christ. With their faith they know that their names are written in the Book of Life. This is how they can see the hidden manna of God, and this is how such servants and saints of God can hear God's Word of truth, the exquisite voice of God.

Manna was given to the Israelites when they were wandering in the desert for forty years before reaching the promised land of Canaan. According to the Bible's description, manna was like white coriander seed, round and small. When the Israelites woke up in the morning, the surface of their surroundings was covered by manna, as if it had snowed overnight. The Israelites then gathered manna and ate them in the morning. This was their daily bread. Perhaps they fried it, perhaps they boiled it, or perhaps they baked it; regardless, this was the staple of the Israelites during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness.

Because manna was small like coriander seed, one

could not be filled by just having a single manna. But God gave them enough manna overnight so that the need of every Israelite was met for the day—no less and no more than a day, for manna could not be stored. But on the sixth day, God gave them enough manna to last for two days, so that the Israelites would not have to gather manna on the Sabbath day.

The Bread of Life

The Word of God is our manna, our bread of life. In the Word of God is found the bread for our souls, the bread of life. It is not that in a particular passage you would find a huge loaf of bread, but that the great will of God is found throughout the Scripture, even in its smallest details.

To the servants and saints of God who did not make compromises with the world, God has given the bread of life. And He continued to give to each and everyone of us this daily bread that meets both

our physical and spiritual needs.

Because of this manna, the Israelites never went hungry during their 40 years of wandering in the wilderness, even though the desert produced nothing eatable for them. Likewise, to those who reject the deeds of the Nicolaitans, God has promised that He would give His hidden manna to eat. To the servants of God who do not pursue such things of the world as wealth and status, God gives His exquisite Word, the Word of Life that allows them to be born again by the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We must hate and reject the deeds of the Nicolaitans that prevail in today's Christian communities. We must not follow the faith of those who are not born again, and we must refuse to conform to the world. Though it is the law of God that our flesh pursues the things of the flesh and our spirit pursues the things of the Spirit, we must nevertheless reject the doctrine of the Nicolaitans, hate all the deeds that conform to the world, and instead feed on God's manna by believing in the

Word of truth that God has given us. Recognizing that we have now become righteous and that we now have the Holy Spirit residing in our hearts, we must all live by faith.

The born-again must fight the world. They must fight the Nicolaitans. As you know well yourself, too many of today's pastors pursue their own wealth and fame, adorn themselves, conform to the world, and try to be successful in worldly ways. We must fight these false prophets.

We, too, have our flesh, and so we also have the desire to pursue secular gains. But those who have the Holy Spirit in them must know that they cannot follow the world in their hearts, that they must deny the things of the world, and that they must live only by faith. If your heart unites with those who follow the world, approves their faith, and pursues the world as they pursue it, you will end up following in the path of Balaam, moving toward your ultimate destruction. This is the path for the destruction of both your flesh and spirit. When you follow the

world, you will lose your faith. God said that He would spit such people out of His mouth; these people will no longer eat manna, and will end up losing their faith completely.

The reason why God rebuked the Church of Pergamos was because its members followed the doctrine of Balaam. God rebuked the servant of the Church of Pergamos because he, though a born-again servant whose heart was dwelt by the Holy Spirit, sought to be recognized by the world and ministered his church as if he was a secular person. Not only that, he planted the same mistaken belief among his flock and led them astray. Such a servant is no better than a worldly pastor who is not born again. With this passage, God has issued a clear and strict warning to the kind of the servants of God whose only interest revolves around secular gains and enriching the church coffers: *“Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth.”*

Faith That Leads You to Destruction

What would happen if man fought against God? You don't even have to think for a second—surely this would be the quickest way to destruction. By “He who has the sharp two-edged sword,” it means that the Word of God is a double-edged sword. It does not matter who you are; if you are hit by the Word of God, you will surely die. The Word of God is the sword of power that can pierce “*even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow*” (*Hebrews 4:12*). And it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, so that people may be clothed in the redemption offered by the water and the blood of Christ Jesus.

There are many who, while believing in Jesus, nevertheless fall into the trap of legalism, and as a result end up being beaten to death by the Law. To avoid this sorry outcome, we must fight and overcome such worldly faith. God's workers must overcome the false teachings, and they must also

make sure that their flocks are not deceived by such lies. Whoever loves the world and falls into its traps will see his/her faith disappear.

Many of today's churches are described not as churches but as businesses. This is a sad but penetrating description. Why have these churches ended up being treated as businesses? Because today's churches are too busy to pursue the world, being the first to follow and worship the worldly values. I am not saying, of course, that the born-again has absolutely no desire of the flesh. Even the born-again believers have the lust of the flesh, but this lust is curtailed by their faith. They do not seek the things of the flesh as the unbelievers pursue their carnal desires with all their hearts.

Those who are not born again set their own standards, and live their lives enjoying everything they can within the bounds of these standards. Idolatry and sexual immorality are only natural for them. Even worse, some of them worship the Devil. Could the born-again do any of these things? Of

course not! They can never do such things, because the born-again know how filthy and unclean these acts are. Because we who are born again are fundamentally different from those who pursue the glory of the world and every carnal desire of theirs, we must not live our lives obsessing ourselves with the worldly gains, nor can we ever live so.

Those who pursue the deeds of the Nicolaitans are those who pursue only the wealth of this world. There is nothing wrong, of course, in trying to make a living, and even to become rich. But when the sole purpose of your life becomes accumulation, and when you fall into idolatry and end up being driven by your greed, then your faith is sure to be destroyed. Those who minister for money and those who go to church for the wealth of the world are all following the deeds of the Nicolaitans. These people will lose to the world in the end, because although they claim to believe in God, their hearts are yet to be wholly redeemed of all their sins.

Four Kinds of the Field of Heart

The Gospel of Matthew tells us a parable in which Jesus talked about a sower whose seeds fall on four different grounds. The first ground on which the seeds fall is the wayside; the second is stony place; the third is thorny ground; and the fourth is good ground. Let's take a look at each of them.

The wayside symbolizes a hardened heart. This person hears the Word of God, but because he/she does not quickly take it in into the heart, it is snatched away by birds. In other words, because such a person looks only intellectually at the Word of salvation that can allow him/her to be born again by water and the Spirit, the bird (Satan) snatches it away, and his/her faith does not even begin to grow.

What, then, is meant by the stony place? This refers to those who, while receiving the Word with joy, do not endure for long, because they have no root in the shallow ground. Those who receive the seed among the thorns, on the other hand, refer to

those whose cares for this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the Word that they had joyfully received at the beginning.

Lastly, those who receive the seeds on the good ground are those who bear fruits in their hearts by wholly accepting the Word of God and following it.

Which of these grounds represents your heart? If your heart is like the wayside that is completely unprepared to grow the seed of the Word, it will be swept aside or be snatched away by birds, turning the blessing of this Word completely irrelevant to you. We must realize that because we are the seeds of sin, were it not for God's Word we would have remained irrelevant to Him. If, on the other hand, our hearts like the stony ground, then the seed of the Word would not be able to take its root, and would not survive rainstorms, winds, or draughts. These people need to turn over their fields. Regardless of how joyfully they might have received the Word of God at first, if it cannot grow and withers away at the slightest trouble, then their first acceptance would

have no use at all.

We must also overcome the hearts of thorny grounds. We must fight against and cut through the thorns that threaten our lives. If you leave them alone, the thorns will cover us in no time and block us from the sunlight. Cut off from the sun and losing the nutrients of the soil to the thorns, this tree of the Word would then die.

When we face trials and tribulations in our lives, we must boldly overcome them. We must fight the thorns that are blocking our way and covering our faces with all our strength, as if our very lives depended on it. When the money of this world holds us back or when its fame threatens us, we must fight them all and overcome them. Because the worries of the world and its greed are deadly for the soul, we must always conquer them. When we live such a spiritual life of victory, our bodies and souls will prosper, for they will receive the sunlight and nourishment from God.

For the born-again saints and servants of God,

there must always be a spiritual battle against the world. We thus must not follow the Nicolaitans. The Nicolaitans were said to have been heavily involved in providing services for the public. But serving the public in the world is not the main role of the church. It would be a huge mistake to think that the main purpose of the church is social service.

Reject Boldly!

God tells us that we are the salt of this world. What does He mean by that? When God tells us that we are the salt of the world, it means that we are needed by the world. The role of the salt is to preach the Word of the water and blood of Christ to the sinners so that they would be delivered from their sins, made into the children of God, and allowed into Heaven. Just as salt is needed to bring out taste, the world needs the born-again righteous as its salt. The born-again righteous, in other words, must preach the

Word of the water and the Spirit and guide the people to their redemption. We must fulfill this role of salt and help the souls to be born again. We must turn the sinners into the righteous.

What is the real church of God? The true church of God is where people gather to worship Him; it is where they praise God; and it is where they pray to Him. When temptation comes, the servants of God must be able to resist it. The saints, too, must be able to resist the temptations of the world coming from Satan. The Devil may tempt you, “Forget your faith; I will make you rich! You don’t have to attend a born-again church; come to one of my churches, and I will even make you an elder!” But because Satan is always trying to make the righteous stumble and draw them into his traps, we must always be ready to fight and overcome him so that we can defend our faith until the end.

Those who have false faith often try to tempt the redeemed with material things. They tempt with money and fame. Satan shows us the worldly values

and tells us to abandon our faith and God. What we must have in such times is the faith in the Lord that He will meet all our needs, and with this faith we can boldly reject and overcome Satan's temptations.

The root of blessings is found in God. God is the one who blesses us, both spiritually and physically. Knowing that the Devil is not the one who blesses the mankind, we can fight against him. There are also times when we fight against our own desires. When greed and lust begin to surface as we let our hearts be carried away by the current of this world, we must fight against ourselves. It goes without saying that we must battle against the worldly people who seek to sabotage our faith. We are simply fated to fight spiritual battles against all the worldly forces.

Why? Because when a Christian is not engaged in a spiritual battle, this can only mean that his/her faith is dead for all practical purposes. Until the world ends and the judgment day of the righteous and the sinners is over, there will continue to be trickeries to destroy our faith. This is why we must ceaselessly

engage in spiritual battles. If we tolerate those who stand against God and seek to destroy our faith, we will end up losing everything, including our lives. Without the strong determination to not permit anything other than our faith to rule us, we will not only lose all our possessions, but we will also be abandoned by God. We must be able to clearly discern who stands with us and who stands against us in order for us to fight and overcome our enemies. While we should be generous to each other, we must be firm in our resolve against our foes—to the point where our enemies cannot even dare to try anything on us.

The Nicolaitans are enemies for us. They are our foes because they are a “synagogue of Satan” whom we can neither tolerate nor work with. We who have been forgiven of our sins must not tolerate the Nicolaitans who engage in idolatry and only seek after material gains, but we must instead devote our lives to serving the Lord and His righteous work of building the Kingdom of God on this earth.

Seek First the Kingdom of God

Jesus told us to “*seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness,*” admonishing us to do the works of God before the works of our flesh. We who are born again have spiritual desires. These are not the desires of the flesh, but the desires of the Spirit. This is how we can first serve the works of God and His Kingdom. We serve God first, but we also do the works of the flesh. As the Bible tells us, “*Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*” We live, in other words, not by our flesh alone, but by both the flesh and the spirit. We must be able to balance between these two. If we follow the deeds of the Nicolaitans thinking that all that matters is our happiness on this earth, we will end up facing our own destruction. This is why we must first seek our spiritual desires.

Some people become rather hostile whenever the topic of Heaven and hell is brought up. They ask, “Have you been to hell? Have you seen it with your

own eyes?” But these questions are coming from Satan’s thoughts. Not only are the common people like this, but even most of the pastors who spent years studying theology minister their flocks without having any assurance of Heaven and the knowledge of how to be born again. This is most unfortunate and deplorable condition, for such ministers who do not have such convictions and are not even born again themselves can never lead those who know nothing of God to be born again. When so many souls are confined to the thoughts of Satan and stand against God, what could they possibly learn from the pastors who neither believe in Heaven nor are convinced of their own salvation?

By “*where Satan’s throne is,*” it is meant that Satan now reigns over the whole world. This is the kind of age in which we live, the kind of era when the world is full of the Nicolaitans who light up the night skies with their neon crosses and run their churches as if they are running a business. God has told us that these are not His churches, but the

“*synagogues of Satan.*” Today’s world is now full of countless people who, trapped by the thoughts of Satan and seeking after the greed of this world, pretend to minister, attend church, and call upon the name of the Lord; however, the rebirth of their souls and their hope for Heaven have disappeared long ago. This is the kind of age in which we now live and serve the Lord.

Spiritual Battle against Those Who Are Not Born Again

We are living here on this earth “*where Satan’s throne is.*” We must defend our faith by being on guard and bravely facing our enemies when challenged. Until the day of our Lord’s return, we must carefully guard and keep our “*white stone*”—our faith, that is—by believing in the gospel that has allowed us to be born again by its water and blood.

We must live by eating manna, the Word of God. To do so, we must fight against and overcome the deeds of the Nicolaitans. We must reject them. We must not go near those who seek only money and worldly fame. Though we can tolerate and forgive their weaknesses, we cannot break bread with those who stand against the truth and lust after only money, far less to do the works of God with such people.

Where are the names of those who have been born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit recorded? They are written in the Book of Life. What, then, is meant by writing in a new name into this white stone? It means that we have become the children of God. It is also written that no one knows this new name “*except him who receives it.*” This means that no one but those who are born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit knows the salvation of Jesus. Sinners do not know how they can become righteous—that is, only those who receive their new names from Jesus know how their sins were made to disappear.

We must fight against the Nicolaitans; not against someone else, but against the Nicolaitans. The core essence of the passage is that we must struggle against and overcome the Nicolaitans who, though they believe in God and know the Word of truth, still continue to disobey and reject the Word of God and pursue only money, material gains, wealth, and fame for their flesh.

We must also struggle against ourselves. If we cannot follow God because of our vanity or pride, we must fight against such hearts. And we must also engage in a spiritual struggle against those who claim to believe in Jesus without having been born again.

Despite the fact that we have come far short of His glory, the Lord has saved us by His water and blood. We must defend our faith by believing in this Word and live our lives as the servants of God, giving thanks to Him for the perfect salvation that He has given us. We must first seek the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. Let us all become those who overcome by fighting to the end in faith.

Those Who Overcome Shall Be Given Manna

The biggest case of disappearance in human history will be the rapture that is to come. At the same time, the second coming of Jesus is the issue that draws the most interest from all those who believe in Christ. Some people think, “There will be a massive disappearance of people as the saints are raptured; as people from all walks of life disappear, from pilots to train conductors to cab drivers, the world will be inundated with all kinds of accidents and disasters, with planes crashing down from the sky, trains derailing, and highways becoming littered with traffic accidents.” A book that based its story along these lines, titled Rapture, used to be a bestseller in the past. These people believed that the saints would disappear into thin air when they are raptured. Thus, not only did they repent and prepare their faith for the day of their rapture, but some of

them even quit their schools and jobs, a not-so-laughable phenomenon.

Not too long ago, a denomination that embraced the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture had its congregations give up their possessions to the church and only wait for the day of rapture that its leaders had prophesized. Of course, the day that they had prophesized and so eagerly waited for ended just like every other day—all that wait for nothing! Everything that they had so sincerely believed in and waited for was proven to have been just a lie.

But some of them indomitably declared another day in 1999 as their day of rapture, and waited and waited. However, as before, they were proven to have been all deceived by lies. Their leaders, put to shame for their unfulfilled prophecy, decided to never again set the time of Christ's return. We can see from these events how the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture simply does not fit into the Word of God at all.

The most important point in the Book of

Revelation is the second coming of Jesus and the rapture of the saints. For all faithful Christians, when Christ would return to the world and lift up His believers into the air is their biggest hope and wait. In fact, it is reasonable for Christians to eagerly wait for the return of Christ in their faith. Whoever truly believes in Jesus must wait for the day of the Lord's return with great anticipation and eagerness.

It is better to have the kind of faith that waits for the second coming of the Lord and the rapture than the one that does not wait at all. What the apocalyptic end-timers veered off from the right path is that they set a specific day and time for their rapture. As the basis of their calculation, many of them misinterpreted the seventy-week prophecy that appears in Daniel 9, as well as Zechariah, and arrived at their own predicted dates.

Paul says in 1 Thessalonians 4 that when Christ returns to this earth, the saints will be lifted up into the air to meet Him. It is therefore only proper that those who genuinely believe in Jesus would wait for

the day of their rapture. But calculating and setting aside a specific date for the rapture was something deeply wrong, for it was a reflection their pride that ignored the wisdom of God. It was a great mistake to try to solve and understand the prophesies of the Bible with man-made mathematical formulas.

When, then, would the real rapture happen? Revelation 6 speaks of the rapture of the saints; according to it, during the fourth era of the seven eras of God—that is, the era of the pale horse—there will be the martyrdom of the saints, and after this the rapture will happen in the fifth era. The rapture of the saints is described in detail, and it will indeed become a reality when the time comes.

God has planned seven eras for the mankind, the first of which is the era of the white horse. This is the era in which the gospel of the water and the Spirit begins and continues to triumph. The second era is the era of the red horse. This era marks the beginning of the age of Satan. The third era is the era of the black horse, when the world will be struck by both

physical and spiritual famine. The fourth era is that of the pale horse. This is the era in which the Antichrist will emerge and the saints will be martyred. The fifth era is when the saints will be resurrected and raptured following their martyrdom. The sixth era entails the complete destruction of the first creation—this world, that is—by God, which will then be followed by the seventh era in which God will open the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth to live with His saints forever. God has thus set these seven distinct eras for all mankind. It is only proper that those who believe in Jesus should know and believe in these seven eras that God has set for them.

In Korea alone, it is estimated that over 100,000 people, at the end of last century, set aside and waited for their own day and time of the second coming of Christ and their rapture. About 12 million Korean are said to be Christians. Among them, about 100,000 waited for the return of Jesus and their rapture. Put differently, these are the hardcore believers who believed in the Word of God as it was written and

waited for the return of the Lord—only 100,000 out of 12 million, that is, less than 1 percent.

Their problem, however, was that they did not have a proper understanding of the eras that God has set for them. Without properly understanding the gospel of the water and the Spirit, many of the Early Church Christians made such mistakes of trying to calculate the date of Christ's return based on their erroneous knowledge of the era of Christ's second coming and the saints' rapture. So Paul the Apostle warned them *“not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come”* (2 Thessalonians 2:2).

Historically speaking, many continued in their ignorance of God's plan and kept setting wrong dates one after another in vain. I believe that there is a need to correct their mistaken faith. But I have no desire to rebuke them harshly—I only want to correct them. Why? Because their failure was due to their ignorance of the seven eras that God has set for the

mankind. They miscalculated the date of Jesus' second coming because they misunderstood and misapplied the numbers that appear in the Bible, seeing them only in human terms.

This mistake has not been confined to the Korean Christians, but has been quite common for the rest of the world. Church leaders from all different parts of this earth, some of them rather famous, have made the same kind of mistake. My heart desires to testify the plan of God to all those who thus have believed in Jesus and waited for the rapture date of their setting, so that they may have a proper, not mistaken, understanding of God's plan for them. I only hope that they, too, will in fact be given the blessing of being raptured by God.

The true rapture by God will come after the era of the pale horse and the martyrdom of the saints come to pass. When the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation begins in this era of the pale horse, the Antichrist will emerge as the most powerful leader of the world and reign over it.

The Antichrist will begin to persecute the saints when the Great Tribulation begins, accelerating in intensity over the first half of the Great Tribulation—that is, the first three and a half years—until reaching its peak at the midpoint of the seven-year period. This is when the saints will be martyred to defend their faith. And this will be soon followed by the sixth era, when the martyred saints will be resurrected and raptured.

Those who believe in Jesus must know the times well. Depending on whether they believe in pre-tribulation rapture or in mid-tribulation rapture, their lives of faith would turn out quite differently. Whether the believers will wisely wait for their rapture with the proper faith, or make the mistake of focusing their minds on an absurd date of their own choosing—this will all depend on whether they base their faith in the Word of God or not.

If you approach these teachings on the Word of Revelation with calmness, you can actually find out what the reasonable propositions are, and thus be

able to correctly resolve all your questions. But if you do not have the right understanding of the rapture and fail to wait for it properly, then your faith will be ruined.

The theory of pre-tribulation rapture was expounded by Scofield, an American theologian, who was the first to systematically establish its doctrinal positions in his Scofield Reference Bible. This Reference Bible was widely translated and used throughout the world. It is because of the impact of Scofield's Reference Bible that the theory of pre-tribulation rapture came to be diffused so widely. Because the Scofield Reference Bible was written by an influential theologian of a powerful country, the book was translated into many different languages and read by a great number of Christians.

Scofield himself had no idea that his claim of pre-tribulation rapture would become so widespread through the world. The result was the prevalent acceptance of the theory of pre-tribulation rapture by virtually all the Christians of the world. But before

Scofield's theory of pre-tribulation rapture made its appearance, the dominant belief that had prevailed in the Christian world had been the theory of post-tribulation rapture.

The theory of post-tribulation rapture postulates that Christ would return after the end of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation, and that He would rapture the saints at that time. Many people thus had a great fear of the Tribulation prior to the rapture and the Lord's second coming. When the revivalists preached from their pulpit about the second coming of Christ, people rushed to repentance, crying and agonizing over their sins, inundating themselves with constant prayers of repentance. So who cried the most often was used as the barometer to measure who was blessed the most. Such people, though they believed in Jesus, shed far too much tears.

But this earlier belief in the post-tribulation rapture was slowly replaced by the pre-tribulation rapture. Why was this case? People found it infinitely

more comforting to switch from post-tribulation rapture to pre-tribulation rapture, for this switch meant that they would not face all the trials and tribulations that otherwise they would all have to go through. It is little surprising that they would prefer to be lifted up to the air before the terrifying hardships of the Great Tribulation descends upon them. In this way, the theory of pre-tribulation rapture spread like a bush fire, for it offered a comfortable faith, much more digestible than the terrifying prospect of going through the sufferings of the Great Tribulation.

Just as people prefer sweets over the plain or the bitter, people also prefer to have it easy when it comes to their faith as well. They like to choose and believe in whatever fits their taste the best among the different theories that the scholars have produced. This is how so many people ended up believing in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture so easily. Those who supported this view of pre-tribulation rapture thought that they had to keep their bodies and hearts

immaculately clean to be raptured. And so they were quite fervent in their lives of faith. But a serious fallacy buckled their belief in the pre-tribulation rapture. While their faith in Jesus and their wait for the Lord's return were all commendable, they nevertheless made two serious and grave mistakes.

First, not having believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they waited for the Lord while they still had sin in their hearts. They only held onto and relied on the blood of the Cross, but no amount of repentance could bring them the absolute remission of their sins that they commit on a daily basis. Yet for day and night, they waited for the second coming of Christ. They gathered together in their churches to repent their sins, to pray and sing praises all night long, united in their wait for the rapture. There was nothing wrong with the fact that they thus waited and longed for their rapture. But they made the grave mistake of waiting without the right faith—that is, they did not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the only faith that allows

us to stand before God as His children.

The second mistake was that some of them used to proclaim arbitrarily the imminent date of Jesus' return without any proper understanding of God's plan. This not only made many believers wait Him in vain, but it created all kinds of havoc in the society, leaving only bad impressions of Christianity and ruining its reputation among the unbelievers.

Because of these two mistakes, when the rapture that these people so fervently waited for never actually materialized, it only ended up leading many people to think badly of the rapture, pushing them even further away from the truth. Now, when it is actually the right time to talk of the second coming of Christ and when His return is imminent, hardly anyone speaks about it anymore—all thanks to the fiasco of the misguided few. The passage that we are presently discussing was what God wrote to the angel of the Church of Pergamos through John. God commended the Church's servant and saints for defending their faith to the end with their martyrdom.

But God's commendation for the Church of Pergamos also came with some rebukes, for the Church had among its members those who pursued the world. This is why God told the Church to repent, and why He told it that He would otherwise come quickly and punish it.

We need to pay attention here to what God said through John to all the seven churches in Asia in common: *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."* This means that God makes sure that He speaks His truth to the saints and the souls through His churches and His servants. Notably, God told to the Church of Pergamos: *"He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches. To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it."*

Let me emphasize the phrase, *"to him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat."* This means that those who truly wait for the

Lord must overcome the enemies of God. It means that they must fight against those who follow the world, and that they must set themselves apart from these lovers of the world. Those who follow Balaam are those who follow the false prophets. God tells us that these people only seek after the riches of the world in their sinful greed, calling them the followers of the doctrine of Balaam.

Not every church is a church of God. Many of today's church leaders accept that Jesus is the Son of God, but they do not believe that He is God. There are many who do not even believe that Jesus Christ created this world.

In addition, many people come to church just so that they can be materially blessed. Too many church leaders tell their congregations that they will be blessed if they give more money to the church. Deceived by such false teachings, many believers actually think that how much offerings they give to the church is a reflection of their faith. Just by giving offerings and attending the church regularly, too

many of them are approved as the faithful believers. Moreover, some of them are even given leadership positions within the church, such as deaconship or eldership, just for their regular attendance and services for the church, and cutting out big checks for their offerings. These are all the ways of Balaam, something that we all must break away from.

We must fight against such faith. If you really want to be fed the hidden manna, you must first discern whether or not your church is a church that truly follows the Word of God. If it is not, then you must fight and overcome it. Only by doing so can you be fed the truth of the water and the Spirit, the true Word of God.

Only by eating from the Word of the water and the Spirit, the hidden manna, can you be born again, and only by being born again can you continue to feed on the Word of truth given by God. It is in this way that the born-again can discuss what the Word of God is, feed on it by hearing, seeing, and sharing it in fellowship.

If you sincerely desire to be raptured by God, if you really want to be truly born again, then it is only a foolish thing to continue to attend a church that is a church only in name. By attending a church that does not belong to God, you will never be able to feed on the true Word of life, no matter how long you might have been going to that church—a hundred years, a thousand years, or even more, nothing will put you in the correct path toward your salvation.

Such people not only cannot be born again by faith, but they end up making the foolish mistake of waiting for their rapture without having fulfilled its first requirement—that is, without even having been born again. This kind of faith is simply wrong. No matter how eagerly you wait for the return of Christ, no matter if you really love the Lord in your heart, no matter if you are willing to give up your life for Jesus, all these would be futile. Such people will not meet the Lord. Their love for God will end only as an unrequited love.

This is why God told the seven churches in Asia:

“To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat.” God does not tell us that we can have His Word of truth without any struggle. If we do not fight against and overcome the liars, we will never be able to eat His manna, the Word of life. It does not matter how faithfully you might have attended your church; if you do not know the truth, it means that what you have known so far have all been just lies. You must escape from these lies by fighting and overcoming them in your search for the truth. Only when you encounter this truth by finding a church that bears witness to the Word of God and preaches the gospel of the water and the Spirit will you be able to eat the manna of life.

We have nothing that prevents us from accepting into our hearts the Word of the truth of the water and the Spirit. The hearts of those who preach and hear this Word of the water and the Spirit become united, and the Holy Spirit dwells in their hearts all alike.

God has promised us that He will give His hidden manna to those who overcome; as such, we must

overcome Satan in our struggle against him, and fight against and win over the liars. If you want eternal life, you must be truly born again; and if you want to be raptured by God, you must have the right faith. You must struggle against and overcome the many liars of this world, as well as the liars found within the Christian world.

Your faith must not be that of indecision, one that continues to vacillate from one side to the other and gets dragged by whatever current that happens to flow at a given time. If your church is not a church that preaches the Word of God as it is, then you must stop attending such a church. Only to those whose hearts love and pursue the truth will God come to meet them through His Word of manna, the Word of the truth of the water and the Spirit.

I was a very good student when I was studying at the seminary. I never missed a class, and my grades were all excellent. I studied diligently and faithfully. And yet there were too many things that I did not know. Because I had been, along with all my family,

a Buddhist before I encountered Jesus and believed in Him, my knowledge of Him was very limited at the time. Even more limited was my understanding of the Word, and so I was very anxious to learn about the Scripture. Thirsting after the knowledge of the Word of God, I sought learning from the many professors at the seminary, asking them many questions and hoping that their answers would quench my thirst for the Bible.

None of them, however, ever gave me a clear answer. When I brought my questions to the professors acclaimed for their Scriptural knowledge, they only used to commend on my own knowledge of the Bible instead of answering my questions. At the seminaries, professors do not preach the Word, but they teach their own “theories” on the Bible. But all their theories, from Old Testament Theology to New Testament Theology, from Systematic Theology to History of Christianity, from Calvinism to Arminianism, from Christology to Pneumatology and from introductory studies to detailed expositions, are

only the products of man’s thoughts. They only teach different theories espoused by the scholars, no different from your own college experience of learning different theoretical perspectives in your secular field of study.

I was a person who was ignorant of the Bible. It did not matter how extensive my scholarly training had been, or how many had commented on my wide knowledge of the Bible, or even how I myself had based my sermons on this knowledge—the more I studied the Bible and theology, the more doubts I had about my path. I eventually came to the self-realization that I was a completely ignorant person, and that I had to begin from the scratch all over again. So I began to raise what were then considered to be strange and awkward questions in my classes. One of them was this: “Why was Jesus baptized?” I never heard a clear answer for this question. No one was able to give me the correct answer, that Jesus was baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist to take upon all our sins onto His own flesh.

I also had questions about the miracles that Jesus performed, such as the one in which Jesus fed more than five thousand men with only five loaves of bread and two fish. So I asked, “When Jesus blessed the five loaves of bread and two fish, did they just explode in a heap of bread and fish all at once, or did they keep multiplying when the food was distributed to each?” More often than not, I was scolded and reproached for raising such questions.

This is how I came to realize, “So this is what theology is all about. We are just learning what the Frenchman Calvin systematized into a scholarly theory and expositions. We know nothing of the Bible.” So I began to engage myself in extensive research by compiling the publications of the many denominations and comparing them to the Bible. Still, I gained nothing.

They all reached the same conclusion, that when people believe in Jesus, their sins gradually disappear as they are sanctified by their prayers of repentance, and that they become completely sinless at their

death and then enter Heaven. Denominational differences didn’t matter—the same bottom line conclusion for all of them was for Christians to pursue prayers of repentance and incremental sanctification, something that had nothing to do with the Word. All these claims departed from what the Word of God had to say. So I knelt before God, and sought and asked for His truth.

This is when God taught me the true gospel of the water and the Spirit. This truth simply marveled me. And when I realized that the truth of the water and the Spirit is found in the whole of the 66 books of the Bible, my blinded eyes were opened and I began to see the Word of the Bible clearly. I was able to find out how the Old Testament and the New Testament fit together, and the Holy Spirit came to dwell in my heart when I found this truth. After seeing and realizing this Word of truth, so many sins that had plagued my heart and had weighed me down so much disappeared completely, in an amazing and wonderful act of God’s love and grace.

As ripples are made when a small stone is thrown into a tranquil lake, a serene joy and light entered my heart. By the light, I mean that I came to realize what the truth of the Word was. At this very moment of recognition, the Holy Spirit entered my heart, and because of the Holy Spirit I came to see the Word of the Bible clearly. From this moment on, I have always been preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

To this very day, the gospel of the water and the Spirit has steadied my heart, comforted and strengthened me, and kept my heart always clean. This is how I came to feed on the Word of God. When I dwelt on the Word, along with my realization of its meaning came the serene blessing that filled my heart, and my heart, in turn, began to swim in this sea of grace. Just as my heart was thus filled by this blessing, when you believe in His Word of born-again salvation, the Word of God will also bring you into His grace and blessing.

When I opened the Bible and dwelt on the Word,

all my worries and restless thoughts disappeared, filling my heart with joy and peace instead. I was enabled to always answer what God really meant in His Word whenever asked about the Bible. Only by knowing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can one feed on the Word of God, and only by feeding on the Word of God can one be born again. Because the born-again no longer have sin left in their hearts, regardless of when the Lord returns to this earth, they are all ready for their rapture when the Lord finally lifts them up to the air.

The Faith That Can Lead Us to Rapture

Rapture is what we wait for after we receive our redemption by knowing and believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And when waiting, we must wait with a clear understanding of the times set

by God. The times set by God are the seven eras, and the era for martyrdom among these is the era of the pale horse. The era of the pale horse is the fourth of the seven eras set by God. The era in which we are now living, on the other hand, is the third, the era of the black horse.

When we climb a high mountain, we rely on a map as a guide. But in order to accurately and safely reach our destination by using this map, we must first know what our location is. It does not matter how well-versed you might be in reading the map or how accurate the map itself is—if you do not know where you are, the map is useless. Only when you know your own location can you safely reach your destination.

Likewise, only by being born again through the gospel of the water and the Spirit can you find out when you will be raptured. The biblically accurate timing of the rapture is slightly past the midpoint of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation—that is, three and a half years into the Tribulation. This is

what God planned in Jesus Christ when He first created this universe.

God's plan of salvation in Jesus Christ, with which He sent His only begotten Son to this earth, had Him baptized and killed on the Cross, and raised Him from the dead, is not the only plan, but He has also set the times for the universe, from its creation to its end, with His seven eras. Even we draw blueprints before building our houses and plan ahead for our businesses—better yet, we even schedule into our organizers what we would do in a day. Would, then, God have created this universe, man, and you and I in Jesus Christ without any plan? Of course not! He created us with a plan!

This plan is clearly revealed in the Word of Revelation. When we open and dwell in this Word, we can find out exactly what God's plan is. This Word is the truth. Though the Word of God is several thousand years old, it is still the unchanging and unaltered truth, neither added to nor subtracted from. Those who do not know this and have not been born

again by water and the Spirit still remain ignorant of the truth revealed to us by the Word of God. But those who dwell in the Word will be able to find and realize all the truth revealed in the Bible.

The passage in which God promises to give His manna to those who overcome means that God will shed light on His Word only to those who can discern the truth from the false and overcome the liars by knowing His Word of truth. Those who have escaped from the lies and found the truth must overcome these lies by preaching this truth. God has promised us that to those who believe in the gospel he will give the blessing of eating His manna: *“To him who overcomes I will give some of the hidden manna to eat. And I will give him a white stone, and on the stone a new name written which no one knows except him who receives it.”*

The hidden manna here means the Word of God. The white stone, on the other hand, means that our names will be written in the Book of Life. When people believe in the gospel of the water and the

Spirit that God has given them, their hearts change. With their hearts filled by the Word of the Holy Spirit, they come to realize that by believing in the Word, all the sins in their hearts have disappeared. Having thus been cleansed by the water and the Spirit, their names are written on the white stone.

God tells us that no one knows this new name except him who receives it. Those who have been forgiven of all their sins must realize that their hearts no longer have any sin left in them, and that their names have been written in the Book of Life. They know, in other words, that the gospel of the water and the Spirit has taken away all the sins of their hearts. Only those who are born again by thus knowing the true Word of the water and the Spirit and received their redemption are able to know the Lord and the truth. Those who are not born again do not realize that they are yet to be born again. But the born-again can easily discern these people, that they are yet to eat the manna of God, and that their names are not written on the white stone.

Do you really want to be raptured? If you want to be raptured, you must be qualified to eat manna. By being qualified to eat manna, I mean that you must be born again by water and the Spirit. To feed on manna, you must also fight against and overcome the lies with your faith. The false teachers do not bring redemption to the sinners, but only exploitation of their souls and material possessions. We must battle against and overcome such false churches, false prophets, and false servants of today's Christianity.

We must know, based in the Bible, exactly how Jesus has taken away all our sins, why He was baptized, why He took upon the sins of the world, why He died on the Cross, and why He rose from the dead again. We must know accurately why Jesus came to this earth in the flesh and did all these things, and we must know who exactly Jesus is. But the false churches, instead of teaching these truths, call anyone who attends them "a saint" on their own authority. They only ask, "Do you believe in Jesus?" If the answer is, "Yes, we do," then these false churches

immediately call them saints, baptize them in about a year's time, and then proceed to extract all kinds of offerings from them, from thanks offerings to special offerings to pledge offerings for that shiny, brand new church building. Such churches as these, obsessed only by money and their greed to build a bigger, glittering church building, are all false churches.

When we feed on manna, we must fight against such false churches and those who spread the false teachings. If we lose in our battle, it would mean not only that we no longer are the saints of God, but also that we will not be raptured by Him. Not being the saints of God is the same as not being the children of God; even if Christ were to return for the 100th time, we will never be raptured.

Matthew 25 tells us the parable of the ten brides, five of them wise and five of them foolish. It tells us how foolish were the five brides who carried their lamps but no oil and went out to buy it only after the arrival of the bridegroom was announced. We must

be the wise brides who had prepared the oil beforehand. By having the faith of preparing the oil, I mean that we must be qualified to feed on manna before Jesus, overcome the liars, and be born again by the Word of the water and the Spirit.

When we hear a sermon, we must ask ourselves whether or not the pastor is preaching the Word of God. We also need to ask if the church spends its money, as God wants it to—that is, on His works, not on itself. We must find, in other words, the true church of God. Be weary of the churches that pay only lip service to preaching the Word of God and His teachings.

No matter how good they are in their talks and repentance, their deeds will tell you what they really stand for—whether they are more interested in building bigger church buildings than anything else; whether they look after the poor or cater only to the rich; and whether they show any interest in saving souls at all. God has given you your eyes and ears so that you could see and judge for yourself. And when

you reach the conclusion that your church is not the right church, then do not hesitate to come out of it at once, for continuing to attend such a false church is akin to trying to get into hell. You might as well throw away your life.

Do you realize how good the gospel of the water and the Spirit is? When you know and accept this truth, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, into your heart, you become a whole new person. Those who had belonged to the earth before now belong to Heaven, and those who had been tormented by the demons now become freed.

The demons can enter and torment the souls of those who have sin in their hearts and are thus chained by their sins. But the Lord came to this earth and took away all our sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because He has completely taken away our sins, the demons can no longer torment or steal our souls. This is why when you know and believe in this gospel, the demons are cast out and your life is changed.

In other words, those who had been the servants of the world become freed from this servitude. God has done the wondrous work of turning the sinners into the righteous, remaking those who were of the earth into those of Heaven, and, when the Lord returns, He will lift them up to His Kingdom.

Our earthly life is not the end of us. Having made us in His image, God did not put us on this earth to live only briefly. Life in the flesh is in fact very short. By the time we are out of school, we already reach our mid-20s. We spend our 30s trying to establish a base for our lives, and by the time this foundation is ready for us to build on, we are already in our 40s or 50s. When we finally reach the stage where we think to ourselves that we can now slow down a bit and enjoy life, our whole lifetime has already passed by us, and we are faced with its end. As flowers blossom in the morning and wither by the afternoon, just when we think that we finally got a hold of life, we realize that our time has passed by, and that we are only looking at its nearing end.

This is how short life is. But what is even more unfortunate is that there are far too many people who do not even realize this brevity of life. Yet the end of our lives in the flesh is not the end of us, for it is only the beginning of our souls' spiritual lives. Why? Because God, as if He is compensating us for the shortness of our earth lives, has prepared for us not only the Millennial Kingdom but also the New Heaven and Earth, where we are to live eternally. This is God's blessing of eternal life that He has bestowed only on those who are born again by believing in the Word of His water and Spirit.

Only when you eat the hidden manna and your name is written on the white stone can you be raptured. God tells us that only those who feed on His manna will be able to overcome Satan during the Great Tribulation, and that the names of only those who thus overcome will be written on the white stone. Those who do not overcome, therefore, should not even dream of being raptured, nor can they dream of being born again.

It takes great sacrifices to attain something valuable and precious. A good example is gold; it takes a great deal of effort, time, and risk to find and extract gold. Many people have died in gold mines before they could even find a piece of nugget. Extracting alluvial gold also takes many toils. Panning a truckload of earth all day long produces only a minute amount of gold. Moreover, this cannot be done in just any river, but you must first find a river that has alluvial gold. It takes, in other words, hard effort to find gold, at times even your life. Why, then, do people try so hard to find gold? They do so because they think gold is that valuable, worth risking their own lives.

What is far more valuable and precious than gold and silver, however, is the fact that we can become the children of God. Gold may bring you some transient happiness for your flesh, but becoming the children of God brings you never-ending, eternal happiness. To be raptured in the end times, to enjoy the wealth, prosperity, and honor of the Millennial

Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth, and to live such a life for eternity, you must now fight all the liars on this earth, believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and defend your faith and secure your victory.

There are so many lies in this world that are always watching for chances to snatch our hearts, trying to make us lose our faith. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and have the truth in their hearts know just how precious their faith is. And because they know the preciousness of this faith, they fight against all the false teachings that try to steal it from them. If we realize just how many people yearn after this faith and yet are unable to attain it, and if we realize that only this faith will clothe us to be welcomed to the marriage supper of the Lamb and give us His blessing of eternal life, we must make it completely ours and never let anyone take it away from us. This is the kind of faith that fights and overcomes.

I was convinced of the need to propagate the

proper knowledge and understanding of the Word of Revelation—to make sure that you are able to defend the precious gospel of the water and the Spirit—because I knew that many false teachers would try to use the Word of Revelation to deceive and confuse not only the people but also the born-again saints. This is why I am preaching the Word of Revelation through my sermons and books, to ensure that you can live your life of faith with the correct knowledge of and belief in the end times.

The Book of Revelation offers something tremendously important. But the Word of Revelation reveals nothing to those who cannot eat God's hidden manna and who have no Holy Spirit in their hearts. From the signs of the end times to the rapture, the hope of every Christian, to the New Heaven and Earth, an extraordinary plan is written in the Word of Revelation. But because of the wisdom of God that does not reveal His secrets to just anyone, Revelation remains a difficult text that not everyone can understand. No one but those who have fed on God's

manna and whose names are written on the white stone by being born again by the water and the Spirit and overcoming the lies can understand the Word of Revelation.

This is why, in their ignorance, those who are not born again speak of pre-tribulation rapture or post-tribulation rapture, and why we now even have some people who claim that the Millennial Kingdom is only symbolic. The Word of God is the truth, and it clearly states that the rapture will not happen without the Great Tribulation. It tells us that the rapture will happen slightly past the midpoint of the seven year period of the Great Tribulation—after the martyrdom of the saints, and simultaneous with their resurrection.

Being raptured while going about the usual everyday life—pilots disappearing all of a sudden and mothers disappearing from the dinner tables around the world—will, I am sorry to inform, simply not happen. Rather, the rapture will happen when great disasters fall upon the world, earthquakes ravage through it, stars fall from the sky, and the

earth splits open. The rapture, in other words, will not happen on a peaceful day in broad daylight.

Stars have not fallen yet, one-third of the world is yet to be burnt down, and the sea still has not turned into blood. What do I mean by this? I mean that now is not the time for the rapture yet. God tells us that He will give us the signs that we can all recognize before the rapture comes. These signs are the disasters that will fall on this world—one-third of the sea and rivers turning into blood, one-third of the forests burnt down, falling stars, undrinkable water, and so forth.

When the world is thus engulfed in great calamities, the Antichrist will emerge to bring order. First emerging as a remarkable world leader, he will eventually turn into a tyrant who will reign the world with his absolute power. The Bible tells us that it is at this time, when the Antichrist's tyrannical reign over the world is established, that the Lord will return to the earth to take away His saints. The rapture will not happen when the great natural disasters are yet to

happen and the Antichrist is still to emerge.

It is wrong, in other words, for anyone to quit their work, stop going to school, and all around come to a complete stop in their lives, thinking that they are about to be raptured, when in fact these signs that God has promised us have not materialized yet. You must not be deceived in this way, for it is to fall into Satan's traps of lies.

We must battle against and overcome everything that such false teachings have set up to trap us. The only faith that can triumph over the false teachings is the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Only those who believe in the baptism of Jesus that has taken away all their sins are completely freed from the chains of these sins. Because Jesus took upon our sins onto Himself with His baptism, and because He has bought us with His own blood that has cleansed away our sins, we received His perfect salvation by believing in all these things that the Lord has done for us—by faith and faith alone. Those who believe in this Word have now become the children

of God, and they will triumph in all the plans that God has set for them.

On the other hand, the only thing that awaits the liars who claim to believe in Jesus and yet have sin in their hearts, and who seek after only their own greed in serving the Lord, is the punishment that they will face together with Satan. This is why our gospel of the water and the Spirit is so precious. Only those who know it and who can discern between the true and false gospels can eat God's hidden manna, overcome all the lies in the end, and enter the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth. Read the Word and see for yourself what is the real truth that can save you, give you hope, and bless you with eternal life. Realize it, and believe in it. This is the faith of victory.

Victory in our spiritual battle is exceedingly important for us because losing this battle does not just mean a simple loss, but it means to be bound to hell. In other fights we may recover from a loss, but in this battle of faith there is no chance of recovery.

You must thus be able to discern between what is the truth and what are your own thoughts, the lust of your flesh, and the lies of the false teachers, and you must prepare your faith for the end by coming to grasp the correct knowledge on its times with the light of the Word.

God has prepared the plagues of the seven trumpets and the seven bowls, and He has permitted the Great Tribulation to us. When the world is stuck by enormous natural disasters—great fires ravaging, stars falling, seas, rivers, and springs turning into blood—the Antichrist will emerge, and you should realize that this marks the beginning of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. The martyrdom, resurrection, and rapture of the saints will happen at the end of the plagues of the seven trumpets, when the last trumpet sounds, but before the plagues of the seven bowls are unleashed.

When the fourth seal of God is removed, the Antichrist will demand apostasy from the saints. At this time, those whose names are written in the Book

of Life—that is, the born-again saints who have eaten manna and whose names are written on the white stone—will be bravely martyred. This is the last and the greatest faith that gives all the glory to the Lord. This is the courageous faith of those who believe in and live according to the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This, in short, is the faith with which we can become the victors in our spiritual battle.

We must overcome our adversaries at all costs. After being born again, we must continue to fight against and overcome the liars. To do so, we must live the kind of life that feeds on God's manna and peaches the Word of our Lord until the end. To those who overcome, God has promised to give His glory and blessings. The faith that deserves to be lifted to the air by God, the greatest hope for believers, and the conviction for the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth—all these things will be permitted to only those who have received God's hidden manna by overcoming all the lies with the faith in the Word of God.

Those who know what is truly precious sell everything to get it and withstand great sacrifices to keep it. Because such sacrifices will come not as a pain but as a great joy for us, and because this is the truly priceless treasure that will give us everything in the end, it is worth every while for us to give up everything we have to defend it.

It is my hope and prayer that you will continue to hope for the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth, overcome all the adversaries with this hope, and emerge as the winner of great joy and happiness in the end. ☒

Letter to The Church of Thyatira

< Revelation 2:18-29 >

“And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass: ‘I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first. Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. I will kill her children with death, and

all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works. Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden. But hold fast what you have till I come. And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—

‘He shall rule them with a rod of iron;

They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—

as I also have received from My Father; and I will give him the morning star.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.’”

Exegesis

Verse 18: “And to the angel of the church in Thyatira write, ‘These things says the Son of God, who has eyes like a flame of fire, and His feet like fine brass:’”

The wrongdoing of the Church of Thyatira was allowing the teachings of Jezebel into the church. Jezebel, the wife of King Ahab, brought idolatry to Israel and seduced its people to commit sexual immorality and eat the sacrificial offerings to idols. By the description of Jesus as having “eyes like a flame of fire,” God is warning that He will rebuke and judge those who have wrong faith in His churches.

Verse 19: “I know your works, love, service, faith, and your patience; and as for your works, the last are more than the first.”

But at the same time, God said to His servant of the Church of Thyatira and its saints that their works were better now than before.

Verse 20: “Nevertheless I have a few things against you, because you allow that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophetess, to teach and seduce My servants to commit sexual immorality and eat things sacrificed to idols.

The problem for the Church of Thyatira was that it accepted the teachings of a false prophetess. By allowing a harlot, Jezebel-like false prophetess into the church and by following her teachings, the hearts of its saints ended up seeking after the lust of their flesh. As a result, God’s fearful wrath was to be laid on them.

The true church of God does not call those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as saints. Nor does it put people who have no Holy Spirit in their hearts in leadership positions of the church. Because those without the Holy Spirit seek after their flesh and the world instead of God, they can never be allowed and tolerated in the true church of God.

Verse 21: “And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent.”

This tells us that those of the flesh who have not received the Holy Spirit cannot recognize and hear the voice of the Holy Spirit. This is why the false prophetess could not repent from her sexual immorality. As a result, she was struck by the sword of the Holy Spirit and became doomed both in the flesh and the spirit.

In the true church of God, only those who believe in the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit can be established as the servants of God. Those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot, regardless of how excellent a pastor they might have been in this world, become the faithful leaders who lead God’s children to Him. We must therefore discern the false prophets and drive them out of our churches. Only by doing so can the church of God survive all the trickeries of Satan and follow Him spiritually.

Verse 22: “Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds.”

This passage tells us that if a servant of God does not discern and expose the liars, God Himself will find those who commit spiritual adultery and cast them into great tribulation. The saints and servants of God must realize that God Himself keeps His churches clean and leads them to the right path.

There is no room for false prophets in the true church of God. If there were false prophets, God Himself would find and judge them. When confusion is brought to the church of God by these false prophets, God will certainly punish them with great tribulations.

Verse 23: “I will kill her children with death, and all the churches shall know that I am He who searches the minds and hearts. And I will give to each one of you according to your works.”

God casts out the false prophets from His church,

so that everyone would know that He guards His own church. The saints will find out that God takes care of their church, and that He rewards their deeds of good faith.

Verse 24: “Now to you I say, and to the rest in Thyatira, as many as do not have this doctrine, who have not known the depths of Satan, as they say, I will put on you no other burden.”

This means that those who already have become the saints of God by believing in His gospel of the water and the Spirit must hold onto their faith until the end of the world. Those who believe in this gospel have no other way but to live their lives by uniting their hearts with the church and saints of God and defending their faith until the end. The true church of God must not only always preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but it must also expose the liars with the faith in this gospel.

Verse 25: “But hold fast what you have till I

come.”

Believers must never lose their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and hold onto it until the day of our Lord’s return. There is great power and authority in their gospel of the water and the Spirit that are more than sufficient to overcome Satan. The saints can please God with this faith. If the saints live by their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and remain within the true church of God, they can overcome and triumph even in the end times.

Verse 26: “And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—”

The saints can overcome all their enemies by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God has given to them. This battle of faith is a battle that always gives us victory. All the saints will thus fight against the Antichrist and be martyred in the end times, and as a result, they will be given the power to reign with the Lord.

Verse 27: “He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter’s vessels’—as I also have received from My Father;”

The Lord will give the martyred saints His authority of kingship. Those who thus overcome will reign with a power that, as the passage describes, is as strong as a rod of iron that can dash to pieces the potter’s vessels.

Verse 28: “and I will give him the morning star.”

Those who fight against the enemies by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be given the blessing of realizing the truth of the Word of God.

Verse 29: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

All the saints can hear the voice of the Holy Spirit coming through the church of God, because the Spirit speaks to all the saints through the servants of God. The saints must recognize what they hear through God’s church as His voice. ☒

Have You Been Saved by Water and the Spirit?

< **Revelation 2:18-29** >

The Church of Thyatira served the works of God with love, faith, and patience, and its deeds were getting better with passing time. But at the same time, it was a church that was plagued by an evil prophethess. Its wrongdoing, put differently, was that some of its members were deceived by this unrepentant false prophethess to commit idolatry and sexual immorality. The Lord thus demanded the Church of Thyatira to repent and to hold onto its first faith until the end. The Lord also promised that to those who defend their faith to the end, He would give power over the nations and the morning star.

Jezebel's Baal

Jezebel was a Gentile princess who brought her pagan god, Baal, to Israel when she became the wife of King Ahab (1 Kings 16:31). Baal was a pagan god of the sun, an idol of Phoenicians whom people worshipped to wish for prosperity. Images of this god were carved out and worshipped, whereupon its followers prayed for the fertility of their family and land. This was similar to the general pagan practice of worshipping the earth and nature found throughout the world. For instance, conferring deity upon a large rock and worshipping it as a god is a common pagan practice of worshipping natural elements. Such religious practice and faith are held by those who follow pantheism.

With the introduction of this pagan religion by Jezebel, Baal became a great god of idolatry for the people of Israel. King Ahab, who used to worship only the true Jehovah God, came to worship Baal because of his marriage to this Gentile woman. Many

Israelites followed his footsteps, abandoning their true God and instead committing idolatry with their Baal worship. They thus brought to themselves the wrath of God.

God rebuked the servant of the Church of Thyatira for allowing the faith of the false prophetess Jezebel into the Church. Commanding Jezebel and her followers to repent, God warned that He would bring great tribulation and destruction upon them if they disobey.

This means that the true church of God cannot allow wealth and material possessions to dominate its concerns. It means that today's believers cannot worship the world as their god, as the Israelites worshipped Baal, the god of the sun, for fertility and prosperity.

3 John 1:2 states, *“Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.”* When we look at the Apostle John's faith, we see that his first concern was spiritual prosperity. Prosperity for all other things followed,

not preceded, John's concern for the souls' prosperity. How, then, has this faith changed in today's world? It has been corrupted to a faith that only seeks the blessings of the flesh, putting worldly prosperity at the forefront of faith and disregarding any other concern for spiritual well-being. Many believe in Jesus not to enrich their souls, but only to enrich their flesh first.

There are many religious cults around us, as poisonous as drugs, that claim to give wealth and health to their followers in return for their worship. Jezebel's Baal-worship was like this. People followed such cults to pursue only the prosperity and fertility of their own flesh.

In today's born-again churches, some might resort to accommodate the faith of Jezebel to expand their congregations. But its logic is akin to having idols in the Temple of God.

Jezebel brought the pagan god Baal not only into Israel but even into the very Temple of Jehovah. This kind faith that pursues the prosperity of the flesh and

worldly gains while remaining oblivious to the redemption of sin in Jesus is as wrong a faith as worshipping idols right before God's very own eyes.

Today's churches throughout the world preach from John 1:29 saying, "All your sins have ended, for Jesus took them away on the Cross." They have turned the baptism of Jesus into a mere accessory, claiming that salvation is attained just by believing in Jesus somehow, even if one does not believe in His baptism. But the baptism that Christ received from John, the baptism with which He took upon all the sins of the world onto Himself, is not something optional that we can arbitrarily include or exclude. Treating and preaching Jesus' baptism as a mere accessory of the gospel are akin to worshipping Baal.

Why, then, do these people preach the gospel without the baptism of Jesus? They do so because their hope is found not in the Kingdom of God, but in their worldly wealth on this earth. People who have this kind of faith are exactly the same as those who worshipped the pagan god of Baal.

Those who, having believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit before, are now preaching only the blood of the Cross, must realize that they are committing a sin as grave as that of idolatry of Baal-worship.

No one can properly minister by setting his/her goal on the material gains of this world. Were the pastors to leave out the baptism of Jesus and preach only His blood on the Cross, they may be able to accumulate earthly gains of this world. But they must realize that neither is such faith the true faith, nor is such preaching the true preaching.

Looking at the passage of Revelation, we can see that the leader of the Church of Thyatira worshipped Baal in his Church, just as Jezebel had worshipped Baal.

If people do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then the Holy Spirit can neither dwell in their hearts nor work in them. As the Apostle Paul tells us, "*if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His,*" whether or not one is the child of God

is determined by whether or not he/she has the Spirit of Christ in the heart. The Bible tells us that those who do not have the Spirit of Christ are the abandoned.

Those Who Know and Preach the Baptism of Jesus

When one believes in the baptism (water) of Jesus, with which He took upon all the sins of the world on Himself, and in His blood on the Cross, then the Holy Spirit can dwell in his/her heart.

But if one does not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, then even if he/she were to be martyred for Jesus, this would not be the true martyrdom, but only trying to establish his/her own righteousness. Some people, believing only in the blood of the Cross, go to the remotest corner of the world to preach the gospel, spending their whole

lives dedicated to mission, and at times even being martyred for their faith.

Inspired by the love of Christ, people can thus be martyred even if they believe only in Christ's blood on the Cross. But as Matthew 7:23 tells us, what good would it be if the Lord Himself refuses to recognize all their works and sacrifices? It does not matter how eagerly and faithfully they spread the gospel—as, for instance, the Mormon missionaries do. Because they did not preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit, their faith and all their efforts would be in vain.

God rebuked the servant of the Church of Thyatira because he had allowed the followers of Jezebel's faith to spring forth in the Church and tolerated their growth. There are many religious leaders in today's world who are just like this, who seek to deceive souls. In the birth of Christ, His baptism, His crucifixion, His death, His resurrection, and His ascension—in all these things, the true church of God must have the right faith and spread the right gospel.

Their faith would be useless otherwise.

The false prophets claim that to be saved, it is enough to believe only in Christ's blood on the Cross without realizing the importance of His baptism. Because they left out the truth of the water, Christianity has been corrupted and turned into but one of the many religions of the world. This is why Christianity could no longer bring salvation to all the people of the world.

Without the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross, Christianity has turned into a mere religion that emphasizes the ethics and morals of the world. In Europe and North America, where an absolute majority of the population had been Christians, Eastern religions have now become quite popular. Why? Because such religion-oriented Christianity couldn't give the remission of sins and true faith in God, and thus many people have been drawn by the mystical nature of the Eastern religions and think that they offer better alternatives to the Western religions. But Christianity is neither a Western nor an Eastern

religion.

Now is the time for us to reconsider the gospel of the water and the Spirit and the state of today's Christianity. We need to ask and ponder why the Christianity of truth has been corrupted into what it is today, and why today's Christianity has become so worthless and bothersome to so many people's eyes. The answer is found in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Believing in Jesus without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit is like worshipping Baal right before God's very own eyes. What is the most evil before God is refusing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit as the truth of real salvation.

Today's Christianity is mesmerized not by the beauty of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, but by the beauty of the world. The seven churches in Asia had served the Lord by believing in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross. But, as shown in the Bible, they, too, in part succumbed to the world, as the gospel of the water and the Spirit was

increasingly pushed out, and in its place came the world to occupy more and more of the people's hearts.

What would happen if a church does not preach the truth of salvation, the gospel of being born again by water and the Spirit, and instead preaches only the blood of the Cross? I raise this question because even the church of God, if it pursues the world, will soon be corrupted by the world, and not long after start claiming that it's okay to be ignorant of Jesus' baptism to be saved. This is why I am reexamining and reiterating this important point through the Word of God.

The Difference between the Gospel with Jesus' Baptism and the Gospel without His Baptism

You and I, we have received the remission of all

our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This gospel of the water and the Spirit is the Lord's truth, while the baptism of Jesus, His blood on the Cross, and the Holy Spirit are the evidences of our salvation.

1 John 5:5-7 and 1 Peter 3:21 tell us that the "water"—baptism, that is—is the mark of our salvation, and this is the same Word of salvation that appears in Matthew 3:15 where Jesus took upon all the sins of the mankind on Himself with His baptism. When Jesus' baptism is this important, how can ignoring Christ's baptism and preaching only His blood on the Cross lead us to the whole and perfect salvation? Those who are delivered from sin must draw a clear line of salvation by believing in the Word. They must remind themselves over and over so that this line would become even clearer.

If one cannot draw the clear line of demarcation for his/her salvation, then this can only mean that the person has not been saved yet. It is wrong to think that our deliverance from sin is only an advanced

stage of our faith. Deliverance from sin is not a stage of spiritual confirmation, but it is the very foundation of our faith, the most important step in building our house of faith on the rock.

Also, we must not think of the issue of salvation merely as a matter of “doctrinal positions” of different denominations. Doctrines may differ from denomination to denomination, but the truth of the Bible, the truth that Jesus took upon all our sins on Himself with His baptism, cannot differ from faith to faith. This is why we cannot leave out the crucial importance of Jesus’ baptism when we are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We cannot leave out the baptism of Christ and only preach Jesus as “the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world,” or to preach that people can be saved by believing in just the blood of the Cross. We must receive the remission of our sins by believing in both the baptism of Jesus Christ and His blood on the Cross. How could anyone have all his/her sins disappear just by believing in Christ’s

blood on the Cross without also believing in His baptism? When people believe only in the blood of the Cross, do the sins of their conscience disappear also? Of course not!

Through the Bible, Jesus bears witness to the righteousness of God, our sins, and their judgment. The true faith that we must have is the faith in this true knowledge of Christ’s testament. What do I mean by true knowledge? I mean having a clear understanding of what are our sins to be judged by God, what is His righteousness, and what is the kind of faith that is doomed before God. Only by knowing these can the true faith spring forth from our true knowledge.

If, in preach the gospel, we leave out either the baptism of Jesus or His blood on the Cross, then what we preach would not be the gospel of the water and the Spirit. If we treat the truth of God in our own human terms and preach that everyone can become sinless just by believing in Jesus, then both those who preach and those who hear it would all remain

as sinners. The difference between whether we preach the baptism of Jesus or not makes all the difference in saving souls.

When we look at the apostles' faith, we see that they did not preach only the blood of the Cross. They all believed both in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross as a single work of salvation. Arguing that Jesus took care of all our sins on the Cross without believing that He first took them upon Himself with His baptism is not only illogical in human reasoning, but it also does not fit into the truth of the water and the Spirit. Those who believe in such half-filled gospel cannot be delivered from their sins.

The Works of the Preacher of the Gospel

Biblically speaking, the spiritual matchmakers are

those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The matchmakers of spiritual salvation must mediate between the Lord and His brides. First thing that they must do is preaching to the sinners what the Lord has done for them. They must teach them that Jesus was baptized to take upon their sins on Himself, and that He was judged for all these sins on the Cross. They must also discern accurately whether or not the brides believe in this, and when the brides do believe, then the matchmakers' role is all fulfilled.

To achieve this, it is very important for the matchmakers to explain to the brides who the bridegroom is and what He has done for them, so that the brides may easily understand it. When the hearts of the brides realize what the bridegroom has done for them, then the matchmakers must teach them the fact that the bridegroom has taken away all their sins with His water and blood.

When the brides thus accept all the things that the bridegroom has done for them, then they become and are called as the brides of Christ. Those who have

become the brides of Jesus Christ must realize that the bridegroom bought them with the ransom of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They must realize that, to make them His, the bridegroom has cleansed away all their sins with His water and blood, turning them as white as snow, and accepted them as His brides.

Only then can the brides respect and recognize the bridegroom forever. Those who have received the remission of all their sins are the righteous, the righteous are sinless, and the sinless are the brides of Jesus Christ. When the brides have such faith, they can be married to the bridegroom, and the bridegroom can accept them into His arms. As such, only when the spiritual matchmakers prepare the brides with the Word of truth can they successfully arrange their wedding.

To be successful, the matchmakers of spiritual salvation must know what kind of brides the bridegroom wants. Jesus, our bridegroom, has no sin. He is holy. This is why Jesus wants sinless brides

without blemish. And this is why the matchmakers use the bridegroom's works to clean and adorn the brides. This adornment of the brides means that they would be brought to the bridegroom only after their sins are completely cleansed away by the gospel of the water and the Spirit fulfilled by the bridegroom. If they were brought to Him when their sins are only half-cleansed, the bridegroom would not receive them, for He wants His brides to be completely sinless. The servants of God who play this role are the matchmakers of spiritual salvation.

The servants of God, therefore, must continue to prepare the brides for their spiritual salvation. At the same time, we must also realize that in today's Christianity there are many matchmakers of the flesh who exploit and extort for their material gains everywhere. These matchmakers of the flesh will be stricken by both Jesus Christ and the rejected brides. We must not become the matchmakers of the flesh.

Knowing the Depth of Satan

Even among the servants and people of God, there are many who do not know the depth of Satan's trickery. There are many, in other words, who do not realize just how hard Satan tries to stumble us. Too many servants of God have failed to realize how Satan has changed and corrupted the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and how he has tricked believers into following his false faith. As a result, many believers in Jesus have ended up with a corrupted gospel instead of the true gospel of the water and the Spirit, and their souls, contrary to God's wish, have also been destroyed.

God tells us, "Do not follow the doctrine of Jezebel. Believe and preach steadfastly your gospel of the water and the Spirit until my return. I will then give you power over the nations." But those who are deceived by Jezebel's faith, God also tells us, He will throw them into tribulation and forge them again.

When the time of Christ's return comes, we will

see those who had believed in and preached salvation by just the blood of Jesus betray their faith. These people are prone to boast of their faith, always feeling superior to the rest whose faith differs from them. But God distinguishes and discriminates between their faith and the faith of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit: "*And he who overcomes, and keeps My works until the end, to him I will give power over the nations—'He shall rule them with a rod of iron; They shall be dashed to pieces like the potter's vessels'—as I also have received from My Father.*"

When our Lord returns to this earth, there will be many Christians who would have to meet the Lord without having been born again. Because they did not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, they will meet the Lord with sin in their hearts. But those whose hearts have been forgiven of their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, in contrast, will be transformed with the coming of the Lord, and reign with Him. As it is said here, the

power of the Lord and His people is like the power of an iron rod shattering the potter's vessels.

God will most assuredly give power over the nations to those who defend their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the end. Our Lord tells us that this power is the same as the power that He has received from the Father. We must fight against and overcome the false prophets like Jezebel and Balaam, so that we would reign eternally with this power over the nations that the Lord would give us.

The Clear Salvation of Truth!

To save the sinners, our Lord had to come to this earth, and to take upon all the sins of the mankind on Himself, He had to be baptized by John. Because the Lord was baptized to take upon our sins, He could carry these sins to the Cross, die on it, and rise again from the dead. He had done these righteous acts for us, because He could no longer bear to see the

mankind continue to commit and struggle with their sins. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the truth that can deliver you from all your sins.

And our Lord could become the Savior for all those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Because the Lord had to be baptized by John, He could bear fruit to this amazing result testified in John 1:29 and John 19:30: *“Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* and *“It is finished!”* Those who have the conviction of their redemption through this Word of God are able to have strong faith in Him because they know that Jesus took care of all their sins with His baptism. We must sincerely look into our own hearts, for if we do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, our sins are bound to continue their presence in our hearts.

When we take a close look at the hearts of those who ignore the baptism of Jesus and believe only in His blood on the Cross, we see that the existence of sin in their hearts cannot be denied. We must pay

particular attention to the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist and believe in it even more strongly, for we cannot add or subtract our own thoughts to the Word of God. We must all fight the false gospels, as they can destroy the faith of those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Jesus Himself has told us, *“Take heed and beware of the leaven of the Pharisees.”* The “leaven” here does not refer to the kind that is used to make liquors or bread, but to the gospel that does not have the baptism of Jesus. We must know and believe in the fact that Jesus carried the sins of the world to the Cross by taking them upon Himself with His baptism, and that He has become our true Savior by being crucified on the Cross and rising from the dead again.

On His part, Jesus received all the sins of the world with His baptism by John, and made them all disappear with His blood on the Cross. But on the people’s side, because they do not believe in the baptism that Jesus received from John, their sins can only continue to exist. Without believing in the truth

that Jesus was baptized by John to hand over all the sins of the world onto Himself, their sins cannot fundamentally be blotted out. The gospel of the water and the Spirit is the gospel of power that cleanses away all our sins and makes us as white as snow when we believe in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross in one.

Let Us Be Those Who Overcome

From this main passage, we have seen the Word of God spoken to the Church of Thyatira. God promised to the servant of the Church of Thyatira that He will give him power over the nations. Every born-again saint lives on a spiritual battleground engaged in a spiritual battle. We must always triumph in this spiritual battlefield with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This spiritual battle begins from the very moment one believes in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit must overcome Satan in their struggle against him. Some of us fight against Satan and will overcome the false gospels until the very day they stand before God. Those who overcome believe that our Lord has taken away all our sins by coming to this earth, being baptized, dying on the Cross, and rising again from the dead. No matter what others say, they are unwavering in their faith that the place of the cleansing of their sins is the Jordan River, and that all their sins were handed over to Jesus through the baptism that He received from John.

Our Lord has commanded us to fight and overcome Satan. Our flesh may labor hard and tire at times, but our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can never lose its war against the false gospels.

The Lord tells us, *“Enter by the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it”*

(Matthew 7:13-14). The Old Testament’s Prophet Elijah fought and won over more than 850 priests of Baal.

The Apostle Paul also said that there was no other gospel but the one that He spread (Galatians 1:7). This gospel of Paul was no other than the faith in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross. Those who believe in this gospel, while they may still have some shortcomings even after they are born again, forever have no sin whatsoever in their hearts. Our Lord has cleansed away all our sins with His water and received all judgment for them with His blood. The baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross have brought eternal redemption to those who believe.

To those who are saved, the Lord gives the power to defend their faith, to fight and to overcome to the end. ☒

CHAPTER

3



CONTENTS



Letter to The Church of Sardis

< Revelation 3:1-6 >

“And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: ‘I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead. Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy. He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not

blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Exegesis

Verse 1: “And to the angel of the church in Sardis write, ‘These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.’”

The Lord has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars. The Church of Sardis had many shortcomings in its life of faith. God therefore admonished the Church to live by faith. God said here to the servant of the church of Sardis, “you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead.” By this, God meant that the faith of the servant of the Church of Sardis was dead for all practical purposes.

Verse 2: “Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die, for I have not found your works perfect before God.”

The Lord no longer permitted the angel of the Church of Sardis to continue in faithlessness. He rebuked this Church because it had lived without the whole faith in the Word of God. For the saints not to live their lives by wholeheartedly believing in all of the written Word of God is akin to living while committing sin before God’s presence.

Even when they are weak, if the saints live by their faith in the Word of God, they will be raised high before both God and men. To become such saints whose faith is whole, we must live our lives by faithfully believing in and following the Word of God that has made the saints whole.

Verse 3: “Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon

you.”

The saints and servants of the Early Church had to pay immeasurable sacrifices to hear and keep the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord therefore told them not to lose their faith in this precious gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel that took so many sacrifices and even their lives for them to receive. Believers must clearly demonstrate their faith and its deeds to God by holding fast to this gospel of the perfect salvation of the water and the Spirit.

Those who are saved must always remember how they first heard and believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, living their lives in thankfulness for the grace of salvation. The born-again saints and servants must always dwell on how great and blessed the gospel that they received from the Lord is. If not, they will then stand in the place of the fools, not knowing when the Lord will come back to this earth.

Verse 4: “You have a few names even in Sardis

who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.”

Nonetheless, the Lord tells us here that the Church of Sardis still had a few believers who, not having defiled their garments, were holding fast to their faith. The Lord also says that these faithful saints will live as the servants of God, who, clothed in His righteousness, will walk with the Lord. They could walk with the Lord because their faith was worthy of walking with Him.

The saints whose faith is approved by God follow the Lord wherever He may lead them. The fact that they have not defiled their garments means that they did not, trusting in the Word of the Lord, surrender to the things of the world. Those who have been clothed in the garments of the righteous by the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord hold steadfast to His Word and do not compromise with the world. They draw, in other words, a clear line of separation from the false gospels.

Those who have been clothed in white by

believing in the Lord’s gospel labor for His gospel and live a life in this world that walks with Him. This is why the Lord is always with them, for they have always followed Him by believing in His Word.

Verse 5: “He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”

Those who overcome the world by believing in the Word of God will live eternally, clothed in the righteousness of God as His saints and serving the Lord’s works. The Lord will also approve their faith and write their names in the Book of Life, and these names will not be blotted out forever.

Our Lord’s Word of promise tells us that those who have the true faith will surely triumph in their struggle of faith against God’s enemies. *“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments.”* The white garments here mean victory in the battle of faith against God’s enemies. The winners of faith are

given the blessing by which their names are not blotted out from the Book of Life forever. And their names will also be written in the New Jerusalem. *“I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”* By “confess” here, it means that the Lord will approve their faith.

Verse 6: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Those who have the true faith always hear what the Holy Spirit says to them through His churches. As such, they live with God, and are constantly guided by the Holy Spirit. ☒

Those Who Did Not Defile Their White Garments

< Revelation 3:1-6 >

The passage here says, “You have a few names even in Sardis who have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with Me in white, for they are worthy.” Walking in “white” means that they have defended their faith in the righteousness of God.

God walks with those who keep the chastity of their faith. He never leaves them alone, but is always with them and blesses them.

There are the righteous on this earth who walk with the Holy Spirit. God has written their names in the Book of Life and permitted them eternal life to live forever. By clothing the righteous in white and being with them always, God has made it possible for them to always overcome Satan in their struggle

against him.

To Be the One Who Overcomes Satan

To be the one who overcomes Satan, we must first believe in the Word of redemption that the Lord has given us. As such, let us turn to the Word and see how the Lord has saved us with the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Let's begin by looking at Luke 10:25-35. “*And behold, a certain lawyer stood up and tested Him, saying, “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” He said to him, “What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?” So he answered and said, “‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’” And He said to him, “You have answered*

rightly; do this and you will live.” But he, wanting to justify himself, said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Then Jesus answered and said: “A certain man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell among thieves, who stripped him of his clothing, wounded him, and departed, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a certain priest came down that road. And when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. Likewise a Levite, when he arrived at the place, came and looked, and passed by on the other side. But a certain Samaritan, as he journeyed, came where he was. And when he saw him, he had compassion. So he went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine; and he set him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. On the next day, when he departed, he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said to him, ‘Take care of him; and whatever more you spend, when I come again, I will repay you.’”

We see two protagonists in this passage: Jesus and a lawyer. This lawyer, to boast of his faithfulness to

the Law, asked Jesus: “*Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?*” What kind of impression do you get from this question?

The lawyer in question mistakenly thought that he could keep the Law by obeying it in the literal level. But God gave His Law to the mankind so that people would be able to recognize the sins of their hearts. The Law of God speaks of and discloses the sins that are fundamental to people’s hearts. In their hearts are found evil thoughts, immoral minds, murderous minds, minds that steal, minds that bear false testimony, minds of madness, and more. To point out the sins of the lawyer’s heart, therefore, our Lord asked him in return, “*What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?*”

Our Lord wanted the lawyer to recognize the fundamental presence of sin in his heart. But pompously asking Jesus “what shall I do to inherit eternal life?,” the lawyer instead boasted of his own righteousness. From his words, we can see what the lawyer thought: “I’ve kept the Law well so far, and I

sure can keep it in the future.”

But we must realize that the Law given by God can be kept only by God Himself, and that there is no one else, not even a single person, who can wholly keep His Law. Therefore, for a man to try to keep the Law of God only shows his foolhardiness and arrogance before the Lord. We must only recognize that we are sinners who can never keep God’s Law.

For all of us, how we read the Word of God is very important. When we read the Word of God, we must read with an awareness of the purpose that God has intended for us. If we read the Bible without this awareness of the Lord’s intention, our faith may flow in the opposite direction of His will. This is why there are so many different denominations, and why those whose faith is united with God are so often rejected.

When those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit read the Bible, they can understand exactly what the purpose of God is. But when one reads the Bible without believing in the gospel of the

water and the Spirit given by God, then this can only cause great misunderstandings, and such a person can never have biblically sound faith no matter how hard he/she studies the Bible.

What Does the Law Say?

We continue with the passage from Luke: *“He said to him, ‘What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?’ So he answered and said, ‘You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind,’ and ‘your neighbor as yourself.’”*

Romans 3:20 says, *“By the law is the knowledge of sin.”* The Bible also tells us, *“For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse (Galatians 3:10).”*

The Law not just makes us, who were already born as sinners, into even greater sinners, but it also reveals only the shortcomings of our deeds. This is

why “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse.”

Some people say that one can enter Heaven if he/she believes in God and observes the Law well, and that one must try hard to keep the Law. So these people, even as they believe in Jesus, spend their entire lives trying to keep the Law. But they are in fact under the curse of the Law. Those who have not been saved from their sins even as they believe in Jesus are unable to escape from the confines of their faith that tries to keep the Law in vain. They may believe in Jesus, but they will remain as sinners before God, and sinners before God can only face His fearful judgment. This is why Jesus, who is God, came to us as our Savior and became the Redeemer of sinners. To elaborate further, in other words, Jesus took care of all our sins by being baptized in the Jordan River.

Do you know that baptism is the mark of salvation that cleanses away all our sins? Jesus’ baptism was the only method that God established to cleanse away

all our sins.

The Bible tells us, in Matthew 3:15, “*Permit it to be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness.*” The word “for thus” here means, in its original language, “the most appropriate,” or “the most fitting.” In other words, it was most appropriate and fitting that Jesus would take upon all our sins on Himself through His baptism by John. The baptism of Jesus Christ, in short, took care of all our sins. Jesus Christ delivered us from our sins by being baptized and dying on the Cross. When people know this exact truth and fight the lies, God calls them as those who overcome.

Whom Must the born-again Fight against?

The born-again must fight against and overcome the legalism. In religious terms, the leaders of the

Law may appear to be good, but deep inside they are challengers against God. Thus their words, while they may appear as virtuous, are in fact the words of Satan that keep their followers under the curse of sin. This is why the saints must fight and overcome these religionists.

The religionists claim that salvation comes by believing in Jesus, but they also claim that one can enter Heaven when he/she lives a virtuous life before the Law. Can such faith be called as the faith that leads one to be saved? Of course not!

So, the Lord used a parable to enlighten the legalist and us on this matter. The story goes something like this: A certain man who was going down to Jericho from Jerusalem was attacked by robbers who beat and left him half dead. A priest also happened to be on his way to Jericho from Jerusalem, and came by this beaten man. But the priest did not help him, and instead passed by on the other side. Another person, this time a Levite, came upon the victim, but he, too, pretended not to hear the poor

man's cries for help and simply went around him.

Then, a third person came by, this time a Samaritan. Unlike the priest or the Levite, the Samaritan actually bandaged his wounds, poured oil and wine, carried him to an inn on his animal, and took care of him. He even gave money to the innkeeper, saying, "Take good care of him. I'll stop by on my return; if you end up spending more than what I gave you to heal him, I'll repay you on my way back. So do whatever you can to help this man."

Who among these three is good? The Samaritan, of course. This Samaritan refers to Jesus. What has saved sinners like us is neither the Law of God, nor its teachers, nor its leaders, far less our own strength, effort, or prayers of repentance. Only Jesus who came to this earth to cleanse away our sins is the real Savior. Jesus has "thus (Matthew 3:15)" delivered all the sinners. The baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross are the mark of the sinner's salvation (1 Peter 3:21). All the sinners of this world are saved by Jesus' baptism and Cross. Those who believe in the

baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River and His blood on the Cross as their salvation are wholly and completely delivered from all their sins.

Jesus has given us the strength to fight against and overcome the false doctrines of untruth. When people claim, “We believe in Jesus, but if you keep God’s Law and your deeds are good, then you will be delivered from all your sins,” they are only showing their obstinacy and propagating lies. If you add or subtract anything at all to the truth of our salvation by Jesus, then this would no longer be the truth. Jesus has given us the strength to fight against and overcome such false doctrines of untruth.

Today’s leaders of the Law talk loud before the people, as if they observe the Law well. But we often witness that they cannot act on their words when they face a situation where, though difficult, they must nonetheless observe what the Law demands of them. They realize themselves that though they want to do good in their hearts, they cannot do it because of the weakness of their flesh. By hiding their weaknesses

and cloaking themselves in religious formalities, they deceive others and weigh them down with the same burden.

As the priest and the Levite in the above passage, today’s legalists also carry a double standard of simply passing by the other side whenever their commitment requires their sacrifice. This is the powerlessness of man before the Law of God. People hide this by cloaking it in a beautiful garment called religion. But all those who hide themselves before the Lord cannot be saved. Only those who recognize their sinfulness by revealing their true selves with the measure of the Law can be delivered from all their sins by the Word of the truth of the water and the Spirit.

Only Jesus does not pass by the dying sinners and only He saves them by finding and meeting them. He shifted all our sins to Himself by being baptized in person, and He delivered the dying sinners from all their sins by paying their wages with the sacrifice of His own body. This is how Jesus has become the

Savior for all the sinners.

Those Who Overcome Will Be Clothed in White

The passage here tells us that those who overcome will be clothed in white. This means that we must fight and overcome the liars within the Christian world. Even as we speak now, these liars are teaching people to believe in Jesus and live in goodness. Living in goodness, of course, is the right thing to do. But fundamentally, people's hearts are filled with all kinds of filthy things, from murder to adultery, theft, and jealousy; and so saying to these people to live in goodness, though the saying itself is right, is akin to confining them to a mere religion and suffocating them to death. Telling the people whose sins are piling up to their throat to "live in goodness" is to push them into self-condemnation.

As such, what they really need is for us to help them to be delivered from all their sins by teaching them the truth of the water and the Spirit that can save them from their fundamental sins. This is the right lesson, and after this teaching comes the admonishment to live a life of goodness in God. To put it differently, the most immediate priority for those standing outside Christ as sinners is to make them righteous by preaching to them the gospel of the water and the Spirit first.

The Degrading of Christianity into a Worldly Religion

We must not be deceived by the worldly religions. Only when we fight and overcome the worldly religions that spread lies can we enter Heaven. Because we are incapable of keeping the Law of God, we need the grace of salvation that Jesus has given us,

and only by believing in this grace can we meet the Lord.

But many in Christendom, although they believe in Jesus, are being dragged to hell, deceived and misguided by those who spread lies. They are deceived by the seductive notion that people can and must be good. But because we are fundamentally born with sin, we can never be good no matter how hard we try. As such, we can be saved only by believing in the gospel of the truth that Jesus has saved us by His water and Spirit. We can live a new life only when we recognize that we have become sinless by believing in this truth.

The Pharisees of the Bible and most of today's Christians who are not cleansed of their sins by not believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are all the same—they are all heretics. The Pharisees believed in God, the resurrection of souls, and the afterlife as recorded in the Scripture. But they did not believe in Jesus as their Messiah. Moreover, they trampled on and ignored Christ's baptism and His

blood on the Cross.

Today, there are many Christians who are just like these Pharisees. They have a tendency to give more recognition to Christian doctrines than the Bible itself. This is why there are so many heresies sprouting out endlessly nowadays. In Titus 3:10-11, God tells us about the heretics saying, *“Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition, knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned.”* Those who belong to heresies trust, believe, and follow their religious leaders more than the Bible, and as a result, they are all to be destroyed.

Now as before, there are many false prophets springing in this world. Through the Word of the main passage, God thus told us that everyone must fight and overcome these false prophets. He also said only those who overcome will be clothed in the garments of righteousness.

In Luke 18 is found “the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector.” A Pharisee went up to the Temple, raised his hands, and prayed in pride: “God,

I fast twice a week and I give tithes of all that I earn.” The tax collector, in contrast, could not even raise his face when he prayed: “God, I can’t do what he does. I’m a sinner with many shortcomings, who can’t fast twice a week and who can’t even give you tithe. Not only that, I’ve also deceived people, stolen from them, and have done many other evil things. I’m a worthless man. Have mercy on me, God. Have mercy and save me please.”

The Bible tells us that it was the tax collector who was justified by God rather than the Pharisee. This is shown well in the question, “who can possibly be forgiven of sin?” It is none other than those who realize their own shortcomings. Those who know that they are sinners, the souls that recognize that they are undoubtedly bound to hell were the Law or the righteous judgment of God to be applied to them—these are the ones who receive the salvation of redemption from Jesus.

Matthew 3:15 records what Jesus spoke just before He was baptized. “Thus” in this verse means

that Jesus’ baptism was the most appropriate way to save sinners—that is, saving them by making their sins disappear with the baptism of Jesus, which handed over all sins to Him.

Do you believe in the fact that Jesus has “thus” saved you from your sins? The Lord took upon all your sins on Himself when He was “thus” baptized. He then carried all the sins of the world to the Cross and paid the wages of all these sins with His own blood. You must believe in this for your soul to live. When you believe this, your soul is atoned, and you are born again as a child of God.

Yet there are many in this world who deny this truth of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of salvation. This is why we must fight spiritual battles. I am not saying that we should do more wrong deeds to recognize our sin, but that we should be clothed in God’s grace by recognizing ourselves as someone who is fundamentally bound to sin and to be judged spiritually. You must accept the fact that Jesus is your Savior. Everyone who wants to be saved must believe

in the Jesus of redemption who took upon all our sins on Himself and was judged in our place. Only then can there no longer be any sin left in one's heart.

Is there sin in your heart right now? Those who think there is sin in their hearts must know the Law of God first. By God's Law, the wages of sin is death. If you have sin, then you must die. If you die without being atoned for your sins, you will be judged and sent to hell. Because everyone in this world cannot help but sin, everyone cannot avoid but be sent to hell before the Law of God. This is why God, having mercy on us, saved us by sending His only begotten Son Jesus Christ to this earth, having Him "thus (Matthew 3:15)" take upon all the sins of the world on Himself with His baptism in the Jordan River, and judging Him on the Cross in our stead—all so that He could send us to Heaven.

We cannot be saved because of our good deeds. People may have different levels of hypocrisy, but everyone is a hypocrite nonetheless, and no one can completely reach perfect goodness. Therefore, people

can be delivered from all their sins wholly only when they are forgiven of all their sins by believing in the salvation of Christ's atonement. This is the core truth of the Bible.

Describing how he was before he met the Lord, Paul confessed, "*For the good that I will to do, I do not do; but the evil I will not to do, that I practice*" (Romans 7:19). Why was Paul like this? Because the mankind is simply incapable of doing any good. Everyone knows that doing good is the right thing to do, but no one is fundamentally able to do so. This is something wholly different in degree and dimension from the desires of the flesh that even the righteous have. This is why people are saved only by believing in the gospel of truth that the Lord has given them.

How did the righteous and sinless God accept such unclean and filthy beings as we? God saved and embraced us because of our Lord Jesus. He took upon all the sins of the mankind with His baptism by John, the High Priest of the mankind, carried these sins to the Cross, and was judged in our place. Do

you believe in Jesus? Believing in Jesus is believing in what He has done for us.

The Way to Stand before God

Cain and Abel were born between Adam and Eve, the first parents of the mankind. When Adam and Eve sinned, God killed an animal instead and clothed them in its skin. This teaches the mankind two laws of God. One is God's law of justice, where "the wages of sin is death," and the other is His law of love, where sacrifices are used to cover the sinners' shameful sins. Adam and Eve, deceived by Satan, sinned against God. Regardless of how they ended up sinning, they had to be put to death, for the wages of sin is death before the Law of God. But God killed an animal instead and clothed them in its skin. This was the foreshadowing symbol of the sacrificial atonement to come.

After committing their sin, Adam and Eve sewed

fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. But these fig leaves could not last long, as they dried out in the sun, breaking and falling apart with their movement, and thus unable to cover their blemish. So on behalf of Adam and Eve who tried to cover their shame with fig leaves in vain, God killed an animal, made tunics of skin, and clothed them. Through the sacrificial offering, in other words, God covered all the shame of sinners.

This speaks to us of God's love for us and His just salvation. Adam and Eve realized that God killed the animal instead of them, and that He Himself covered all their shame and saved them. They then passed on this faith to their children.

Adam had two sons, Cain and Abel. Cain, the first son, offered to God the produce of his own effort and strength as his offerings, while Abel's offering was a slaughtered lamb in accordance to God's law of atonement. Which one did God accept? These two offerings were one of the key landmark events of the Old Testament that showed the contrast between the

offering of faith and the offering of human thought. God accepted Abel's offering. The Bible tells us that God did not accept Cain's offering of the fruit of the ground and of his sweat and labor, but instead accepted Abel's offering of the firstborn of his flock and their fat.

“Abel also brought of the firstborn of his flock and of their fat. And the Lord respected Abel and his offering,” says the Bible. God received Abel's offering and his sacrifice in joy. From this Word, we must be able to read what God's heart wants from us.

How would God accept us? Everyday we come so short before Him; how could we ever stand before God? There is only one way in which we can go to God, only one way that God has set for us. This is no other than through “offering”—not the offering of our “deeds,” but the offering of our “faith.” This is what God accepts.

What was the faith that Adam and Eve passed onto their children? This was the faith of “tunics of skin.” Put differently, it was the faith that believed in

atonement through sacrificial offering. Today, this is the faith in the gospel of the water and the blood of Jesus: “I believe that all my sins were taken away by Jesus' baptism and blood, and that He was judged in my place. I give this faith as my offering. I believe that the Lord took away all my sins when He was baptized. I believe that all my sins were passed onto Jesus. As God promised in the Old Testament, Jesus Christ made me sinless by being the sacrificial lamb and dying for me. I believe in this salvation.”

When we stand before God, believing that the Lord has thus saved us, God accepts the offering of this faith and embraces us. Why? Because just by His “sacrificial offering,” and nothing else, we have become sinless and righteous before God.

God accepted us because we gave Him the offering of our faith that believes in Jesus as our Savior. When God accepted Jesus' sacrifice, in other words, He also accepted us in Christ. The reason is because all our sins were passed onto the offering. Because the judgment for our sins was handed on this

offering, we have become sinless. This is the justice of God and His righteousness. This is also the love of God and His perfect salvation.

We, Too, Offer Abel's Faith

The Bible tells us that God accepted Abel's offering of faith with joy. What, then, is the offering of faith that God would accept from us today? When we believe in our hearts that Jesus is our Savior, and that He took care of all our sins and was judged for us, and when we give this faith to God, God accepts us by the offering of this faith. Regardless of how short our deeds have come, because all our sins were passed onto Jesus, and because Jesus was judged in our place, God the Father found our sins in His Son, not in us. God thus passed all our sins to His Son, judged Him in our stead, raised Him from the dead in three days, and have sat Him on His right hand.

God has saved all those who believe in this. He

has accepted our offering of faith. Without Jesus Christ, we can never stand before God. But because Jesus became our assured Savior, we can go to God with the offering of this faith, and because of this offering, God can accept us. Is our faith in this truth whole? Of course it is!

We have now become actually sinless. Because our sins were passed onto Jesus, God clothed us, who have become sinless, in white garments. He made us righteous. As our Lord promised, "*He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life,*" He will confess our names before His angels.

In God's Church of Sardis, there were a few who walked with the Lord in white. None other than these were the servants of God, His children and saints.

God accepted Abel's offering. And He also accepted Abel. But God does not accept offerings if they are not whole. God thus did not accept Cain and his offering. Why did God not accept Cain and his offering? He did not accept them because Cain's

offering was not the offering of life prepared with the atoning blood. The Bible tells us that Cain gave the fruits of the ground, the produce of his own effort, as his offering. Put simply, he offered his crops. These might have been watermelon, corn, or potato, or whatever, no doubt all cleaned and well prepared. But God did not accept this kind of offering.

This offering of Cain has an important meaning that today's Christians must all understand to be saved. But few really knows the heart of God in today's world, for many of them have no idea, not even in their dreams, that they are actually giving Cain's offering to God.

When one stands before God, he/she must first recognize oneself as bound to death and hell because of his/her sins. Do you recognize this before God, that you are doomed and bound to hell because of your sins? If you do not acknowledge this, then there is no need for you believe in Jesus, for Jesus is the Savior of sinners. The Lord told us, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are

sick." Our Lord is needed by the souls that are suffering under the yoke of sin, not by those who do not realize their own sins and who claim to be sinless when they are yet to be born again.

Everyone is fundamentally a sinner. God therefore has to judge the mankind, and the mankind is bound to face this judgment of God's wrath. You and I, in other words, are all doomed to be destroyed. But to avoid sending us to this hell of destruction, the Lord took away all our sins with His baptism in the Jordan River and received God's judgment in our place. Because of this, the Lord could wholly save all of us before God. Therefore, only those who actually commit sin before God and acknowledge themselves as sinners need to believe in God, and to only these has God become the Savior.

Faith that Clothes Us in the White Garment of Salvation

As the Bible tells us, *“For the life of the flesh is in the blood,”* the life of a man is also in his blood. Because of our sins, we must surely die. Why, then, did Jesus die on the Cross? He died on the Cross because He took upon all our sins on Himself, and, because the wages of sin is death, Jesus shed His blood of life to pay the wages and died in our place. To bear witness to this truth, He was crucified, bled and died on the Cross instead of us.

As the Bible tells us, *“He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities,”* Jesus really died because of our transgressions and iniquities. His death, therefore, is our death, and His resurrection is our resurrection. Do you believe in this?

Jesus came to this earth to save us and was baptized to make our sins disappear. Jesus was also

crucified. People despised Him, robbing Him of his clothes, spitting at Him, and slapping His face. Why did Jesus, who is God, face this humiliation of being slapped and spat at? Our Lord was despised because of our sins.

The death and resurrection of the Lord, therefore, are the death and resurrection of each and everyone of us. No religious leader of the world took care of our sins. Neither Mohammed, nor Buddha, nor anyone else in this world gave up his life for our sins.

But Jesus Christ, the Son of God, came to this earth and took upon our sins with His baptism in the Jordan River and made us sinless. And to deliver us from our death, judgment, destruction and curse, He gave up His own life.

Therefore, as the Bible tells us, *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ,”* our faith must be clothed in the garment of righteousness, atoned for our sins, by believing in the baptism of Jesus that took away all our sins from us. This faith in Jesus’ baptism thus includes faith in our

death and resurrection.

God has made us His children by looking at this faith of ours that believes in His Son. This is the receiving. God receives us by looking at the offering of our faith that we bring before Him. He does not receive us by looking at our deeds, but He receives us as His children by looking at our faith in the Son of God as the Savior of all, who bore our sins, was judged in our place, and rose from the dead again.

This, my beloved brothers and sisters, is the true faith. We are saved not by our own deeds, but we are clothed in white garments by the works of Jesus Christ. No man's deed can be 100 percent clean. For our hearts to become sinless, we must give up our own futile effort, and instead only believe in the Lord as our Savior. By believing this and this alone can we be clothed in white garments.

Our names will then be written in the Book of Life, and we will be approved by God before the angels. Jesus Himself will recognize us as the children of God, saying, "I have saved you; you are righteous

because I have made your sins all disappear." This is the exact meaning of the main passage from Revelation that we have been discussing so far. We can be atoned only when we come into the church of God, and the atoned are found only in His church.

God the Father has received us by looking at our faith in His Son. Though in our infirmities and shortcomings we cannot help but go astray on a daily basis and constantly fall into weaknesses, God looked at our faith in His Son, and because of this faith He has received us as He has received His own Son. Our Lord has saved us.

And He has clothed us in white garments. Faith in the sinlessness of our hearts is the evidence of our clothing in white garments. The Lord has promised us that, when we stand before Him with our hearts first clothed in white garments, He will turn our flesh into godly bodies.

In this world, there are God's churches where the righteous and the servants of God can be found. There are those who are clothed in white garments in

these churches, and God works through His churches and His servants.

Let us turn to Revelation 3:5 again: *“He who overcomes shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not blot out his name from the Book of Life; but I will confess his name before My Father and before His angels.”*

One precondition that God gave us in the above passage is that He will clothe in white garments only “he who overcomes.” We must overcome. But those who, though they believe in Jesus, also believe that their daily sins must be forgiven by their daily confessions are not the ones who overcame Satan in their fight against him, but the ones who were defeated. People with such faith can never be clothed in white garments. They can never become the righteous.

Only those who overcome believe in the Lord’s perfect work of salvation. The Lord has already given you the faith that can overcome such false doctrines as the doctrines of sanctification or justification. God

has also saved us with His true gospel, the gospel of the baptism and the blood, so that we may fight and overcome the false gospels that do not bring us the perfect salvation and be freed from Satan.

We must only hand over our sins in faith, concretely recognizing in our hearts that all our sins have indeed been passed onto Jesus. And we must believe that we died when Jesus died, and that His death was vicarious one in our place. We must also believe that Jesus rose from the dead to let us live again. When we have this concrete faith of truth, God, looking at our faith, approves us as the righteous.

This, put differently, is the meaning of the Word, *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name” (John 1:12)*. People do not become God’s children just by saying with their mouths, “I believe in Jesus,” when in fact they do not even have any proper knowledge of Jesus at all.

The Word of God continues, *“who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of*

man, but of God.” That’s right. Becoming God’s children is possible only by faith. For this, we must therefore fight against and overcome the liars. Those who have received the remission of sin by thus overcoming the liars must walk with God by also overcoming the desires of their flesh. They must live, in other words, by the will of God.

What, then, is the will of God? God’s will is for those who have been clothed in white garments to unite together and serve His gospel. His will is for the righteous, though they may live apart, to gather together to worship, serve, and praise God, and to spread the gospel to sinners so that they, too, may be clothed in white garments. This life of working for the salvation of souls is the life of the people of God, the life of His servants.

When we live such a life, God not only clothes us in His “righteousness,” but He also gives us all the blessings of both the prosperity on this earth and the spiritual blessings of Heaven. By making us preach this gospel to those around us, He clothes them also

in white garments. God has clothed all the righteous and those around them in white. God has allowed us to overcome in our fight against the untruth by believing in the Word of truth. And He has given the blessing of being clothed in white garments to the righteous who thus overcome in this spiritual struggle. Praise the Lord! ☒

Letter to The Church of Philadelphia

< Revelation 3:7-13 >

“And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, ‘He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens: I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name. Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you. Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the

earth. Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown. He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Exegesis

Verse 7: “And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write, ‘These things says He who is holy, He who is true, “He who has the key of David, He who opens and no one shuts, and shuts and no one opens:”

The Lord reigns over the Kingdom of Heaven as the King of all. He is God with absolute authority and

power—what He opens no one can shut, and what He shuts no one can open. The Lord is the perfect God who came to this earth and delivered sinners from all their sins with the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The gate of Heaven can be opened only with the key of the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord. Nothing else can open it, for everything that belongs to this Kingdom all depends on our Lord God.

Verse 8: “I know your works. See, I have set before you an open door, and no one can shut it; for you have a little strength, have kept My word, and have not denied My name.”

The Lord has opened the door of evangelism through the church of God. As such, no one can shut the door without the Lord’s permission. The saints must therefore hold fast to their first faith until the very end, when the Lord makes his return. This is the kind of faith that the servants of God and His saints must have. Their faith must not be the kind whose

beginning is big but whose eventual end is dead. They must hold on to their first, unchanging faith that the Lord had given them.

The faith of the saints is the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the faith that believes in the fact that the Kingdom of our Lord will come to both this earth and the New Heaven and Earth, and that we will all live in this Kingdom forever. The saints must hold fast to this faith until the day they will meet the coming Lord.

The servant and the saints of the Church of Philadelphia had only a little strength. They also had many shortcomings. However, most importantly, they kept the Word of God and did not deny the name of the Lord.

Verse 9: “Indeed I will make those of the synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not, but lie—indeed I will make them come and worship before your feet, and to know that I have loved you.”

God said that He will bring down some of the false believers to their knees so that they would know how much God really loved the Church of Philadelphia, a church of His.

“The synagogue of Satan, who say they are Jews and are not” refers to the Jews who considered themselves to be glorifying to God with their faith. But many of them, in fact, were not. On the contrary, they had become the servants of Satan and were hindering the church of God and His saints.

We need to realize that today, as before, many of those who call upon the name of Jesus and worship Him have also turned into Satan’s servants, being used by the Devil as his instrument. God showed particular love for the servant of the Church of Philadelphia whom He loved and used as His vessel of honor.

Verse 10: “Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those

who dwell on the earth.”

In particular, the Lord commended the servant of the Church of Philadelphia for keeping His command to persevere. Without this kind of special patience, in fact, we cannot wait for the fulfillment of all the Word of God’s promises. To keep His command to persevere, we must therefore have absolute faith in the Word of God. For its perseverance, the Lord gave the Church of Philadelphia a special reward. This special reward came in the form of keeping the Church of Philadelphia from the hour of trial. The hour of trial here refers to the hindrance of the Antichrist.

Verse 11: “Behold, I am coming quickly! Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown.”

Because the return of the Lord is imminent, the saints must defend and keep their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. They must also believe and wait in their hope for the New Heaven and Earth promised by the Lord. The servants of God must be

with the saints and keep them from losing their faith, so that their reward from God would not be stolen.

Verse 12: “He who overcomes, I will make him a pillar in the temple of My God, and he shall go out no more. I will write on him the name of My God and the name of the city of My God, the New Jerusalem, which comes down out of heaven from My God. And I will write on him My new name.”

Those who overcome Satan will join the column of martyrs. Their names will also be written in the Holy Temple of the Kingdom of God. Even as now, they are being used as the great workers of God’s church, and they will continue to be used as such instruments by the Lord.

Verse 13: “He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Those who have the ear to hear the Word of God are the servants of God and His saints. They hear what the Spirit says to them through God’s church. As such,

the servants of God and His saints must remain within the church that God has permitted them, and they must protect and defend this church. ☒

The Servants and Saints of God Who Please His Heart

< **Revelation 3:7-13** >

There Still Are Churches Like the Philadelphian Church in This World

God tells us here that among the seven churches in Asia, the church most commended and loved by the Lord was the Church of Philadelphia.

In today's era also, we can see that God, who spoke to the seven churches in Asia, wants His churches to be like the Church of Philadelphia, to work through them and be pleased by them. Even in today's time, the churches that are commended by God are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Now as then, the saints who are faithful to God, even if their ability is limited, belong to the churches that spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God is pleased by such workers. None of them may be able to drive out the demons with the laying on of their hands or to prophesy. Neither may anyone of them be particularly gifted with their speaking, nor endowed with the power of persuasion. The only thing that they do is that they believe and are preaching that Jesus alone has cleansed away all our sins once and for all by taking upon the sins of the mankind on Himself with His baptism received from John, and that all our judgment of sin was passed onto Christ with His blood on the Cross.

These workers are no more than the believers who follow the Lord, worship Him, and obey His will with their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those who preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit are not materially rich. Nor do they have any other gift. All that they have is their faith and passion for preaching the gospel of the water and the

Spirit. They believe that doing this work of spreading the gospel is what pleases the Lord's heart, for the Lord was indeed baptized by John, crucified on the Cross, and rose from the dead again to make all our sins disappear. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit only thank the Lord and follow Him alone.

All that we want is for this gospel of the water and the Spirit to be spread to everyone, and for everyone to be delivered from all their sins. God has wondrously allowed us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world, and He has blessed us so that many fruits would be born. And He has also given us the faith with which we can embrace our martyrdom in the end times, and the blessing of our rapture and life in the Millennial Kingdom. God has allowed us to be martyred for the Lord, and He has allowed us to take part in the first resurrection and be clothed in the glory of Heaven.

Those of us who are now dedicated to the preaching of the gospel of the water and the Spirit

belong to God's beloved church.

Let us think about how we can spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world. God told His churches that the door to the preaching of the gospel has already been opened. Because no one can stop what God has set, He will most certainly fulfill everything.

God has allowed those of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to preach this gospel of His baptism to the entire world. Even today, His churches are still blessed to work for the spreading of the gospel of the water and the Spirit on this earth. When looking at their individual ability, they may be full of shortcomings. But because in their hearts is found their love for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, God holds them steadfast and works through them.

That there are still churches like these in this world is a great hope for the world. To them God has entrusted the work of spreading the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and He has also made sure that

no one can stop what they do. They are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to everywhere in the world, and this gospel is thus being spread throughout the entire world. God strengthens them, protects them, and works with them. We will now see that God blesses those who unite themselves to this work and spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the nations of the world, both spiritually and physically.

We are preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to every corner of this world with our paper and electronic books. We do this to the end of this world, and the Lord will also continue to work through us until the Kingdom of Christ is fulfilled on this earth. God will enable us to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the 6.5 billion people of the world with our literature. May God bless us all!

For us to do the works that please God, we must always prepare for spiritual war. As such, I ask God that He holds strong and blesses all His servants. There is no one who is as faithful as our Lord. I

believe that there is no other truth in this world, not even one, that can bring to us the clear and perfect salvation that the true gospel that we believe in, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, has brought to us.

The Book of Revelation Is the Blessed Word of God Given to Those Who Overcome

God told us, “*to him who overcomes I will give to eat from the tree of life.*” This truth means that God will allow such people to live in His Millennial Kingdom. “*He who overcomes*” here refers to those who defend their faith by fighting against the Antichrist with the truth in the end times, and, for today’s times, those who fight against and overcome the followers of the false gospel with their faith in the Word of truth. We must overcome evil with good by preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit to the

whole world. We must struggle against and overcome all the liars and false doctrines by our faith in the Word of the water and the Spirit.

To fight against and overcome the liars, we must always ruminate on the gospel Word of the water and the Spirit. If we had believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now and were cleansed of all our sins, our struggle against the liars would thus have begun from this very moment. Those who believe in the true gospel fight against and overcome those who have the false gospel.

We must always preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit to such followers of the false gospel. Why? Because the power of the gospel of the water and the Spirit can destroy their false faith and bring to them new life. The Bible tells us to overcome evil with good. As such, we must never give up our good fight of spirituality that saves these souls from their sins.

In our spiritual fight is found the blessing of the salvation of souls. By always fighting against and

overcoming the liars with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we can give all the fruits of eternal life to God.

The Lord Told Us to Learn from the Parable of the Fig Tree

The fig tree symbolizes the nation of Israel. As each nation has its national flower or tree, for Israel it is the fig tree that symbolizes it. You must realize that when Israel grows thick in leaves, the end times would have come very near to the world. The Bible tells us that the Lord will return when the nation of Israel is rebuilt on this earth and becomes powerful.

In these days the newspapers are full of the stories covering the conflict between the Israelis and the Palestinians. Israel is now in possession of its historical territory and has become a great power. The future of Israel now all depends on God.

Whether Israel rises or falls in the future will all be fulfilled according to the Word of God. And when Israel disappears from this earth, you must realize that this is when the second coming of the Lord is fulfilled on this earth. As the Bible says that the Lord will return when the leaves of the fig tree grow thick, He foretells the end of this world through the restoration and prosperity of Israel. Also foretelling the end times will be the disasters that plague the natural environment of the world.

God told everyone to have and keep the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. All purposes of God are focused on the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. As such, those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are saved from all their sins. The Lord told us, *“Watch therefore, and pray always that you may be counted worthy to escape all these things that will come to pass, and to stand before the Son of Man” (Luke 21:36)*. With our own strength, we cannot escape from the Tribulation that is to come. But by believing in the Word of God,

we can overcome it. We now find ourselves in a situation where we must prepare our faith of martyrdom for the time of the Tribulation nearing us.

If Christians think that they themselves will not be in the Great Tribulation when the end times come, their faith is greatly mistaken. We must not believe in the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture. This doctrine departs from the truth of the Bible, for the Scripture, especially from the Book of Revelation, tells us that the martyrdom of the saints will come when the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Tribulation have passed. For the saints, to think that they will not enter into the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation will lead them to a very dangerous and misconceived faith. You must realize that those who believe in Jesus will be in the middle of the Great Tribulation.

In consideration of the overall Word of God, how long will the righteous remain in this world? They will remain on this earth until Satan demands the sinners to receive his mark and the saints are

martyred by the Antichrist's army. This is the truth revealed by God, and the proper faith.

The Great Spiritual Fight to Come in the End Times

The result of the righteous' faith is clearly demonstrated in the Great Tribulation permitted by God. You must realize that without your faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, you will not gain the true victory in your fight against Satan in the end times. But at the same time, you must also realize clearly that the final victory will belong to the righteous, as with their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit they will become the true winners even as the end of the world nears. As such, we must complete the work of preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit throughout the whole world before the arrival of the end times.

We must please our Lord by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We have with us the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the Word of faith that can give us the final victory. God is clearly foretelling the world of its demise. We must also realize that the Lord will return at that time, that He will lift up the saints to heaven, and that He will bring great woes to those who still remain in this world until then. As such, we must receive the end times by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, armed with the true faith. God has told those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit to wait for the Millennial Kingdom in faith, just as He said in Noah's time that the end of the world would come while people were eating and drinking.

Without believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, people cannot solve all the problems of the end times of the world. By all means, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. Those who do not believe in this gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot possibly be tolerated by God at

all. God will bring the most fearful plagues to this world in the final stage of the end times. Because those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit cannot escape from the righteous judgment of God, they must believe in this gospel now.

To avoid God's judgment, therefore, it is absolutely necessary for everyone to learn about the gospel of the water and the Spirit and believe in it with all his/her heart. The truth of salvation that is imperative for everyone is the gospel of the water and the Spirit. There is no other true gospel before God but this gospel of the water and the Spirit. More than ever before, this world now has the indispensable need for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, for it lives deep in sin with its culture of sin.

As there is no longer any guarantee for the future in this last era, people live everyday committing sins and pursuing only their pleasure. The true hope for the mankind is found in the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and only this Word can give us

our true hope. Yet this world has become a world that does not seek after God. As you are sinful and will soon be judged by God for your sins, you must believe with all your heart in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by Jesus. You will then be able to be delivered from the fearful judgment of God. The Bible is admonishing everyone to repent their sins, return to God, and received the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The end of the world is a time when people will, having eaten and slept in sin, enter into the lake of fire and brimstone without even realizing it.

People must receive their salvation from sin given by God, but without knowing the gospel of the water and the Spirit, how could they be delivered from their sins? Everyone must know that he/she is to receive the fearful judgment of God because of his/her sins, and realize that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the truth of redemption and the Word of blessing.

The Bible does not tell us on what exact day and hour the end of the world will come. Hiding the hour

of the world's demise is God's wisdom. Were God to reveal this hour of the end, it would bring great misfortunes. This is why God hid the judgment day from the people. But when the time set by God comes, everything will be fulfilled by Him, and a whole new world will begin.

God said in the main passage, *“Because you have kept My command to persevere, I also will keep you from the hour of trial which shall come upon the whole world, to test those who dwell on the earth.”* This Word is God's promise that He will deliver the saints from the seven plagues that will come to this world after their martyrdom. This does not mean, however, that He will exempt the saints from being martyred or persecuted by the Antichrist in the end times. A vast number of people will face the fearful judgment of God for not having believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and not having received the remission of their sins. As a result, their sinful souls will fall into hell. But God will allow martyrdom to the saints earlier, for this martyrdom is

what will deliver them from the terrifying plagues.

What Kind of Mark Will People Receive in the End Times of the Tribulation?

The Bible tells us that people will receive the mark bearing the name of the Antichrist. But the Word of Revelation also tells us that those who receive the mark of the Antichrist's name on their foreheads or right hands will be thrown in the lake of fire and brimstone. By receiving this mark of the Antichrist's name, they would have forever turned into the servants of Satan. The lake of fire and brimstone is reserved for those who have sin.

The era of grace, when people can be saved from their sins through faith, is now passing away. The Bible records that a countless number of martyrs will rise in the end times. Because the names of these

martyrs are written in the Book of Life, they will automatically reject the mark of the Antichrist's name.

God tells us that those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will all be martyred at this time. They will be martyred in their refusal to receive the mark of Satan. Those who have become righteous must not fear the martyrdom of the end times, but rather, they must thank God for the Millennial Kingdom that awaits them after their martyrdom.

Because receiving the mark of the Antichrist's name is a treasonous act that betrays our Lord, we must reject it. We can all rise to our martyrdom, for keeping our faith in God in this time is to give glory to God. Our Lord has told us that He will give the saints the strength to overcome all difficulties.

How and Until When Should the Church of God Preach the Gospel of the Water and the Spirit?

For how long has our Lord allowed us to spread the gospel of the water and the Spirit? The answer is until the time of our martyrdom in the Great Tribulation. God has flung the door of the preaching of the gospel wide open for the righteous, so that they may preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit until then. Until this time of their martyrdom, the righteous will continue to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This will then be followed by the terrifying plagues on this earth.

Right now, the righteous and the sinners alike live surrounded by the beautiful nature given by the Lord. Until the arrival of the Tribulation's time, the righteous must keep their faith pure and wait for the Lord, having preached all the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The righteous need to cultivate the farming

of the gospel.

In the end times, when the mark of the Beast is forced upon us, we must fight against and overcome the worldly people with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by our Lord. When we are martyred by the Antichrist in the end times, our faith would have triumphed. All lives of the righteous depend on the Lord. If they believe in the Word of the Lord, that He will keep them from the hour of trial, and preach the gospel until the end of the world, God will give them the life of victory. The righteous must preach the gospel of true salvation to everywhere, today and tomorrow.

We must all wait for the return of our Lord and be faithful to Him for the rewards that await us when the Millennial Kingdom is brought to us. When the Lord returns to this earth, the Millennial Kingdom will be given to the righteous. The righteous will then be clothed in the glory of God together with the Lord.

But for now, we must continue to preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit while on this earth,

until the very last moment when we no longer are able to do so. The gospel that saves sinners from their sins, the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is the gospel of the true redemption of sin.

Having lived until the end of the world while preaching the gospel of the water and the Spirit on this earth, the righteous will meet the Lord, reign for a thousand years, and when the Millennial Kingdom is over, enter into the eternal Kingdom of God and live with the Lord forever. I thank the Lord in faith. We should thank the Lord even more for giving us this hope.

The Church of Philadelphia Was the Lord's Especially Beloved Church That, Though Having Only a Little Strength, Did Not Deny the Name of Jesus and Followed the Will of God

God gave this Church of Philadelphia His special blessing of being spared from the hour of trial. This blessing is the blessing of the remission of sin, of living in the Millennial Kingdom, and of becoming the owners of the eternal Kingdom of God. Christians who still remain as sinners will be shut out from God's blessings. But the righteous will reign for a thousand years.

The Lord will lift up the saints from this earth through their martyrdom, and then pour down the utmost plagues of tribulations on this world. God will do so to discern the good from the evil, and judge and destroy the sinners. God loves the righteous, particularly those who, though with only a little

strength, keep His Word and preach the gospel until the end of the world. The saints who had such faith and who belonged to such churches were truly blessed. God was pleased by these righteous saints.

God says that He will reward those who fight against and overcome Satan by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit with all their hearts.

There are many Christians on this earth who claim to believe in Jesus and yet are deceived by Satan. The work of salvation, which delivered all the sinners from their sins with the coming of Jesus on this earth, was achieved by His two righteous works. The faith in these works of salvation believes that He took upon all the sins of the world on Himself with His baptism at the Jordan River, and that He completed this work of salvation by carrying these sins of the world to the Cross, being judged for these sins with His own blood. This is the gospel of salvation, the gospel of the remission of sin that has saved the sinners.

But those who lack in faith have become "the ones

who claim to be sinless without believing in the baptism of Jesus.” Such faith is false. Some people, on the other hand, claim that no one else loves Jesus as much as they do, but at the same time they describe themselves as sinners. But our Lord never allows anyone other than those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit into Heaven. He does not write the names of sinners in His Book of Life. Only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are written in the Lord’s Book of Life.

The salvation from sin given by God is not acquired by “what one does,” but rather it can only be acquired by “what one believes in.” In this faith, the first consideration is to believe that Jesus is the Son of God and our Savior, and secondly, to believe in the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross as the whole and indispensable acts for our salvation. And we must also believe in the resurrection of Christ and His second coming.

Matthew 7:21-23 say, *“Not everyone who says to*

Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’” Why will Jesus deny these people? Because those with sin cannot be written in the Lord’s Book of Life. Nowadays there are many who profess to believe in Jesus as their Savior, but many of them do not believe in the baptism that Jesus received from John.

As such, their names are not written in the Book of Life. Yet these sinners try to get into the Kingdom of the Lord even as they are carrying all their sins. They, however, cannot enter it. Some people are so brave that they believe they can enter Heaven even if they still have sin. Such people believe not in the salvation offered by God, but in their own version made up in their pride. Those whose faith is false do not believe that Jesus is God, neither in the fact that

Jesus took upon the sins of the world on Himself with His baptism, nor that He carried all these sins to the Cross. These people merely consider and believe Jesus as only one of the four great sages of the world. Such people are sinners even if they believe Jesus as their Savior. The Lord, however, does have something to give to these sinners. “But what?” you might ask. Well, none other than hell awaits them!

We the righteous, whose sins have been forgiven, must fight against and overcome the liars until the end of the world with our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. What the righteous believe in is not a corruptible truth. Until the day of the Lord’s return, we can never give up our faith in the true gospel with which we believe in our Lord, no matter what anyone says. The true Word in which the righteous believe is received from God personally. It is testified by the Word of God. God Himself spoke it in person. God personally promised the remission of our sin. The righteous was saved from all their sins and became whole by believing in the baptism of

Jesus and His Cross. Is there anything important or worthy in what the sinners are saying about us? None at all! The righteous must keep their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit by believing in the Word of God.

Now is the time of natural disasters, and in not too distant future, nuclear war will also come to this earth. And the natural disasters are set to span out in a far greater catastrophic scale. The servants of God must see clearly what is coming to this world and preach it. You must realize that the end of the world can come all of a sudden. When nuclear war breaks out in the world, natural disasters reach an unprecedented height, and the mark of the Beast is thrust upon us—that is, when the time for our martyrdom and resurrection, and of the building of the Millennial Kingdom comes—this is the time of Christ’s return to this earth. All things happen and are completed by the Lord.

No matter what anyone says, we must believe in

the Word of God until the end of the world and keep this faith. In following the Lord, regardless of the hardships, we must definitely keep and spread our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

Let us live our lives while hoping for the Lord's Day. Let us prepare the sinners for their forgiveness of sin with the gospel of the water and the Spirit! I believe that our Lord has already prepared all the blessings of Heaven reserved for the righteous and is waiting for us. We must prepare for that day before the resurrection of the dead and the transformation of the saints actually arrive. Stop complaining about how empty your life is, and instead believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When you already know the gospel of truth, how could you choose to end up in hell by refusing to believe in it? Instead of falling into despair over the emptiness of life, we must prepare for the Millennial Kingdom by being delivered from all our sins through the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. After having lived our lives with the kind of

faith that, just like that of the Church of Philadelphia, is commended by God, we will surely meet our Lord in the air! Hallelujah! ☒

Letter to The Church of Laodicea

< Revelation 3:14-22 >

“And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God: ‘I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth. Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may

see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me. To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne.’ He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

Exegesis

Verse 14: “And to the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write, ‘These things says the Amen, the Faithful and True Witness, the Beginning of the creation of God:’”

Our Lord came to this earth and obeyed God the Father to the point of His death to fulfill the will of God. In other words, He obeyed any command with an “Amen” if it was the Father’s will. Our Lord is the

faithful servant of the Kingdom of God the Father and the true witness who testified of Himself as the Son of God and the Savior. Our Lord is the God of the creation of the beginning.

Verse 15: “I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you were cold or hot.”

God rebuked the servant of the Church of Laodicea for his lukewarm faith. This servant deserved God’s wrath. If anyone’s faith is lukewarm before God, he/she must make one’s faith clear by making it either cold or hot. The faith that God demands from us is a clearly defined faith that is either cold or hot. This clear faith is also an absolute requirement in believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

When it comes to believing in God, there are two kinds of believers. On the one hand, we have those who believe that the gospel of the water and the Spirit is the true gospel, and that there is no other gospel but this gospel. On the other hand, we have

those who believe that there are other gospels, apart from the gospel of the water and the Spirit. And the faith of the later is only lukewarm.

They think that it is enough to believe in Jesus, and that there is no need to discern between the true gospel and the false gospels. Some of them even think that Jesus is not the only Savior, but that salvation can be found in other religions of this world as well. Like their faith, the faith of the servant of the Laodicean Church was also lukewarm, without any clear separation between the true and the false gospels—that there is no other gospel but the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is why this servant brought worries to God and garnered His wrath.

Verse 16: “So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.”

Our Lord God demanded a clear faith from His servant. We must realize that God does not appreciate a faith that is neither hot nor cold. When we believe

in the Lord, therefore, we must clearly and unambiguously set our hearts by measuring them to the Word of God and stand firm on His will by believing in it. Those who have thus been born again must also clearly stand at the side of the biblical gospel of the water and the Spirit, and uncompromisingly face against those who spread other gospels apart from this true gospel. God tells us that if the righteous do not stand at the clear side of faith, He will vomit them out. Where, then, is your faith standing now?

Verse 17: “Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—”

Those whose faith in the Lord is lukewarm believe their faith to be just fine, and so they remain oblivious to the poverty of their faith. Because the servant of the Church of Laodicea was also satisfied with his lukewarm faith, he, too, failed to realize just

how wretched he actually was. To have clear and definitive faith, therefore, he needed to face trials and persecution for the truth, and go through the battle of faith against the liars. Only then could he find out just how faithless, poor, and naked he really had been. We must all have clear faith before the Lord.

Verse 18: “I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”

God told the angel of the Church of Laodicea to get his faith refined. The servant of the Laodicean Church must rebuild the foundation of his faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and be clothed in the garment of the whole righteousness. He must also see himself, return, and redefine his faith clearly. He must keep his faith in perseverance, and learn and fulfill his hope by the refinement of his faith.

You, too, must go through heavy oppression and

persecution for the gospel of the water and the Spirit, the gospel of truth given by God. Only then can you realize how precious the truth of this gospel of the water and the Spirit is. Have you ever broken your own righteousness of man to keep the righteousness of God earned through the gospel of the water and the Spirit? Those who have broken the righteousness of man know how precious and blessed God's righteousness is. You must realize that without your faith that trusts in the Lord, your life of faith would simply turn miserable. Therefore, you must learn from the faith the Lord gave to His foregoing servants before us, and cover the shame of your faithlessness.

We must not forget the fact that it takes sacrifice to learn the true faith. Because the true faith is learnt by following the walk of faith of the spiritual precursors step by step, we must pay the price of sacrifice. We must also be ready to lose the things of the world for the sake of the construction of the Lord's Kingdom and the advancement of our faith,

and to throw away everything for the Lord.

Verse 19: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent."

The Lord rebukes and chastens those who know and believe in His love, if their faith is without works. Those who are loved by the Lord, therefore, must work hard for Him and follow Him with true faith.

Verse 20: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and dine with him, and he with Me."

Those who have become the servants of God share their lives with Him both in joy and in sorrow. Those who work for the Lord live by always believing in the Word of the Lord, and, through their faith, our Lord always fulfills all His works.

Verse 21: "To him who overcomes I will grant to sit with Me on My throne, as I also overcame and sat down with My Father on His throne."

True faith is gained or lost depending on whether one is ready to embrace martyrdom or not. Those who fight against Satan by believing in the Word of the Lord will gain victory and be glorified with the Lord. The saints and God's servants are always engaged in a spiritual battle against Satan. In this battle, they can always overcome by believing in the Word of the Lord. Those who thus overcome in their fight against Satan will be glorified with the Lord.

Verse 22: "He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches."

The saints must always listen to the voice of God and follow the lead of the Holy Spirit. When they do, their faith becomes one that walks with the Holy Spirit, and spiritual victory will always be theirs. ☒

True Faith for The Life of Discipleship

< Revelation 3:14-22 >

The faith of the Church of Laodicea was one that deserved to be vomited out by the Lord. The Lord therefore counseled it to buy from Him gold refined in the fire so that they may become rich in their faith. This lukewarm faith can also make its appearance among the righteous of this age. Because they received their faith for free, they do not realize just how precious their faith is. God thus spoke His Word of rebuke and counsel to the righteous, to give them faith that is like gold refined in the fire. We can also find out from the passage that the Lord wanted all the seven churches in Asia to have the same, one faith. The Lord commanded all those who have an ear to hear what the Holy Spirit says to His churches.

From 3:17, we see that the Laodicean Church was trapped deep in its own self-deception, thinking that its material abundance was the same as God's spiritual blessings and that it was owing to their faith. To this deluded congregation, God sharply pointed out their spiritual poverty and misery.

The Church of Laodicea might have appeared as rich in faith, but in fact it was a faithless, poor church. Its faith was lukewarm, it was filled by spiritual arrogance, and it loved the world more than Jesus.

Revelation 3:14-22 speak of the life of a disciple. The true disciples of Jesus are those who obey and follow the Word of Christ. All those who are born again by believing in Jesus Christ are qualified to become His disciples. The Lord wants all of us to live the life of a disciple. We must realize that this disciple's life has actually been given to us.

In the passage, the Lord said that He will vomit out the saints who do not live the life of a disciple. As it is recorded in verses 15-16, *"I know your works, that you are neither cold nor hot. I could wish you*

were cold or hot. So then, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will vomit you out of My mouth.” If the saved are neither cold nor hot before the Lord, this can only indicate their spiritual poverty. Also, such people do not know about the life of a disciple yet. But whosoever is born-again must all live the life of a disciple. We have been redeemed of our sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. This is our salvation.

What, then, were we given after our salvation and we were born again? We were given a life that tries to become like the Lord, follows and obeys His commands, and seeks after His Word. This is the life of a disciple. Demanding this discipleship from His saints, God rebuked the Church of Laodicea by saying that it was “neither cold nor hot.”

Faith that is neither cold nor hot is lukewarm faith. What kind of faith, then, is this lukewarm faith that offers so much comfort to the mankind by being neither cold nor hot? It is the faith that tries to have it both ways, to have the cake and eat it too. It is the

faith that does not live the life of a disciple. Those whose faith is lukewarm are those who, though they have been saved, do not follow the will of Jesus. They may appear to be following Jesus, but they do not in fact—the faith of those who saddle on both sides of the fence, in other words, is called as lukewarm faith.

The world describes such faith as being wise. This faith may be wise in worldly terms, but it is the kind of faith that causes the Lord to vomit. What is lukewarm makes the Lord vomit. You should have a fairly good idea of what this faith that is neither cold nor hot looks like. Those whose faith is lukewarm neither unites with nor separates from the works of God’s churches; they do and they do not all at the same time. Their lives of faith is such that if the cut off mark is, say, at 60, then they adjust themselves to be exactly at 60, no more and no less.

Those whose life of faith is like this are spiritually poor. As the verses 17-18 say, *“Because you say, ‘I am rich, have become wealthy, and have need of*

nothing’—and do not know that you are wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked—I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”

Those whose faith is lukewarm take their worldly prosperity as their spiritual abundance. Though they feel that they are actually wretched, tired, and poor, they do not fully realize it. These are the people who do not know themselves. They think to themselves, “I’m alright. I’m sincere, smart, and approved by the others, and so it’s okay for me to live like this, though I’ve been saved,” and live their lives by their own standard. These people are faithful to the world, but they are not faithful to the church of God. Their faith is only lukewarm. God therefore says that He will vomit them out.

They come to the church with no higher aim than to avoid flunking out. They only sit through the

church service and leave as soon as the service is over. They never participate in the works of the church voluntarily, and if they do, they make sure that it is the smallest participation. They do but they don’t, they don’t but they do. These are spiritually poor people.

The Lord had the following counsel for such people: *“I counsel you to buy from Me gold refined in the fire, that you may be rich; and white garments, that you may be clothed, that the shame of your nakedness may not be revealed; and anoint your eyes with eye salve, that you may see.”* He told them to buy gold refined in the fire to be rich.

If you really want to follow the Lord, and if you really want Him to commend you for your faith, you must learn your faith. How, then, can you learn faith? You must learn it by paying the price of sacrifice and believing in the Word. The passage tells us to buy gold refined in the fire. This means that there are many trials and tribulations for us when it comes to following the Word of God. But all such trials and

tribulations can be overcome by believing and following the Word of God. By doing so, our hearts become refined, giving us the faith that recognizes the Word of God as the truth and believes in it wholeheartedly. This is the faith that is like pure gold.

To gain true faith, we must thus pay the price of sacrifice, for without paying the price of sacrifice, we cannot learn faith. In other words, we can never learn faith without going through hardships. If we really want to become the people of faith, live the life of the Lord's disciple, and be blessed for our faith, then we must pay the price of sacrifice. Without sacrifice, this can never be attained.

Who has the strong faith from the beginning? No one. It is because people are ignorant of faith that the church teaches them about the Word and guides them with it. We must obey what the church guides us and follow it in faith. But doing so entails hardship; at times patience is needed. This is why becoming the people of faith by receiving the guidance of the Word, fellowship, and teaching is accompanied by sacrifice.

But because people do not want to sacrifice, though they want to learn faith, they cannot have the true faith of refinement. This is why the Lord tells us to buy from Him gold refined by the fire so that we may be rich in faith.

You can understand what this Word means only when you learn from the faith of the foregoing saints and follow their lives. If you hear the Word only in theory and do not actually follow what it commands of you, and if you participate in witnessing, prayers, or gatherings but do not actually put them in practice, you cannot learn faith. Because you have little faith, you measure your faith to be not that bad by your own standard of the world. You think to yourself, "I've been saved, I have money, and I'm doing okay in secular terms, and so I must be better than the others. Yeah, I sure am better than these people."

If you really want to learn the true faith that is like gold, you must pay the price of sacrifice. Is it easy to obey and follow? It takes sacrifice to obey. Is it easy to sacrifice? Of course not. But if you want to avoid

being vomited out, you must obey by sacrificing.

But those who, not having learnt the true faith, are spiritually poor never want to sacrifice. To obey, one must break his/her mind first. Not being able to do so, their hearts continue to be in their spiritual wretchedness, even as time goes by. Not realizing their own lack of faith, they only end up blaming the saints who went before them in faith from their back. You must learn the true faith. When you enter into spiritual battles and fight on God's side, your faith will be refined as you gain spiritual spoils and realize what it takes to live the life of spiritual victory. You can know this faith only when you actually experience it.

God rebuked the servant of the Church of Laodicea by writing, "You know neither your nakedness nor your poverty. You have been saved, but your faith is lukewarm—neither this nor that. The only thing that you have is your salvation, which you stuffed it away. Other than this, you have nothing else."

Did the servants of God or our spiritual precursors become our predecessors of faith just with passing time, without living the life of discipleship? Of course not! They went through all kinds of trouble for the Lord, both in joy and in sorrow. God guides you by having those before you go through all the things that you, too, will eventually go through. You must therefore believe in the fact that God teaches and guides you through those who followed the way of faith before you. ☒

CHAPTER

4



CONTENTS



Look at Jesus Who Sits on God's Throne

< Revelation 4:1-11 >

“After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’ Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne. And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads. And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were

burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God. Before the throne there was a sea of glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back. The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle. The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying:

‘Holy, holy, holy,
Lord God Almighty,
Who was and is and is to come!’

Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:

**‘You are worthy, O Lord,
To receive glory and honor and power;
For You created all things,
And by Your will they exist and were created.’”**

Exegesis

Verse 1: “After these things I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven. And the first voice which I heard was like a trumpet speaking with me, saying, ‘Come up here, and I will show you things which must take place after this.’”

The gate of Heaven had been closed before. But this gate was flung open when Jesus delivered sinners from their iniquities by coming to this earth, being baptized by John, dying on the Cross, and rising from the dead again. Through his angels, God revealed to the Apostle John what awaits the world in the end times.

Verse 2: “Immediately I was in the Spirit; and behold, a throne set in heaven, and One sat on the throne.”

Through the open gate of Heaven, John saw that there was another throne prepared in Heaven, and that the One who sat on it was Jesus Christ. Around the throne were four living creatures, 24 elders, and the seven Spirits of God.

The Lord received the throne of God from the Father for the completion of His work of saving sinners from the sins of the world. While on this earth, the Lord took upon all the sins of the world on Himself by receiving baptism from John the Baptist, and delivered all the sinners from their iniquities by dying on the Cross and rising again from the dead. This is why God the Father permitted this throne in Heaven for His Son.

There is a tendency to see Jesus in a somewhat limited scope, recognizing Him as the Son of God and the Savior, but no more. But Jesus Christ now sits on the throne of God as the sovereign King who

reigns over Heaven.

This does not mean, of course, that Jesus contended against the Father for His throne. God the Father's throne is still there. He permitted another throne in Heaven for His Son, crowning Him as the King of Heaven and establishing Him as the Judge of all those who stand against God. The Father raised Jesus Christ high above everyone else in Heaven and earth as God. Jesus Christ is now God, coequal to the Father. We must therefore praise and worship Jesus, who is our Savior and God.

Verse 3: "And He who sat there was like a jasper and a sardius stone in appearance; and there was a rainbow around the throne, in appearance like an emerald."

This verse describes the glory of God sitting on the new throne.

Verse 4: "Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and on the thrones I saw twenty-four elders

sitting, clothed in white robes; and they had crowns of gold on their heads."

Around the throne of Jesus Christ our God sat His ministers. It says here that the throne of God was surrounded by 24 more thrones, and that on these thrones sat 24 elders with crowns of gold on their heads. It was a great blessing of God for these elders to sit on the 24 thrones. These elders are those who, while on this earth, labored and were martyred for the Lord's Kingdom. This Word tells us that the Kingdom of Heaven has now become the Kingdom of our Lord God, exiting eternally under His reign.

Verse 5: "And from the throne proceeded lightnings, thunderings, and voices. Seven lamps of fire were burning before the throne, which are the seven Spirits of God."

God is the One who creates and reigns over all spirits.

Verse 6: "Before the throne there was a sea of

glass, like crystal. And in the midst of the throne, and around the throne, were four living creatures full of eyes in front and in back."

The four living creatures are, along with the 24 elders, the ministers of the Kingdom of God. They always seek the will of God and praise His holiness and glory. And they are the ones who implement God's will in obedience.

Verse 7: "The first living creature was like a lion, the second living creature like a calf, the third living creature had a face like a man, and the fourth living creature was like a flying eagle."

The four living creatures are God's ministers devoted to the different tasks given to each, who faithfully serve all His purposes.

Verse 8: "The four living creatures, each having six wings, were full of eyes around and within. And they do not rest day or night, saying: 'Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty, Who was and is and is to

come!'"

Just as God does not sleep, the four living creatures also are always awake by His side, constantly praising Him for His glory and holiness. They praise the holiness of God who became the Lamb and His almighty power. They praise God as the One who was, is, and is to come. The One being thus praised by them is God the Father and Jesus Christ, who is God.

Verse 9: "Whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, who lives forever and ever,"

God's ministers thus give glory, honor, and thanks to Him who sits on the throne forever and ever.

Verse 10: "the twenty-four elders fall down before Him who sits on the throne and worship Him who lives forever and ever, and cast their crowns before the throne, saying:"

When the four living creatures were praising God,

the elders sitting on the 24 thrones also cast their crowns before God and praised Him, “You are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power.”

Verse 11: “You are worthy, O Lord, To receive glory and honor and power; For You created all things, And by Your will they exist and were created.”

The praise that the 24 elders gave to God came from their faith that God was worthy to receive all glory, honor, and power, for He created all things and all things exist by Him. ☒

Jesus is God

< Revelation 4:1-11 >

Through the Word of Revelation 4, we can find out what kind of God our Jesus is, and with this knowledge our faith is strengthened. When the knowledge gained through the Word changes into faith and is planted in our hearts, we can fight and overcome Satan with strong faith in the Lord when the time of His return gets near and the Antichrist emerges and threatens us.

We are nurturing our faith now so that we can prepare for the trials of the first three and a half years of the Great Tribulation. If we meet that day without this nurturing, we will certainly lose our faith. But if we prepare solid faith, we can boldly declare, even if we are to die the very next moment, that the One who has saved us is God, and that we are the children of

God the Almighty who is so much higher than Satan who is no match for Him.

But to do so, we must first believe deep in our hearts that the Lord is the Almighty, and that we are His children. How low did our Lord, who is equal to God the Father, stoop when He came to this earth to save us from all our sins? He came to this earth in the flesh of man, in the form of a servant, lower than even us, His own creation. What would have happened had the Lord come not in such humility but with power and authority at par with the rulers of the world? It is only natural for the powerful to befriend only the powerful and to yield their power to the lowly, the blemished, and the weak. But the Lord came to this earth in a form lower than even us, befriended the lowly and the weak, and has made them His people by delivering them from their sins.

This is why God is the Good Shepherd and the merciful Lord. And this is why, to this merciful Good Shepherd, we cannot help but give praise for the glory of making us His children. We thus praise the

Lord with our hearts for His grace and blessings while on this earth, and we will continue to praise Him for His power and glory when we enter His Kingdom. To join in the praise of the Lord with our own voice is a great blessing, for only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can praise the Lord. We have been given this great blessing bestowed upon only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We must never forget that we have become the people of such majestic God and His servants.

Some people say that Jesus is the Son of God, but He Himself is not God. But as humans give birth to humans and beasts give birth to beasts, the Son of God is God. Just as humans cannot give birth to a dog, the Son of the Almighty God cannot be a man, a mere creature of His. Those who do not recognize that Jesus is God are those who do not know that He has saved us with His water and Spirit.

We must believe that Jesus is God (John 1:1). When God the Father prepared a throne for Jesus

Christ and passed all His power to Him, Jesus—who was, is, is to come in the judgment day, and will be forever—sat on His throne with God’s power to reign over all and with the majesty of the God of Creation, of Salvation, and of Judgment. Because we have become His people by believing in the Lord, we will enter His Kingdom and live forever. Jesus in whom we believe is this God, and we are the ones who have become the children of God by receiving from Him our salvation.

The saints, workers, and servants of God, who are the born-again, must have pride. Though we have little possession in this world, we must have king’s pride as the children of God who will reign over the whole universe. I thank the Almighty God for delivering us from the sins of the world and making us His children!

The praise that the 24 elders in Heaven gave to God was for what He had done on this earth. Their praise was that God was worthy to receive all glory, honor, and power, for all things were created by Him

and they exist by His will.

What we absolutely must realize here is that the One sitting on the throne is Jesus Christ, and that He is God. This Jesus Christ in whom we believe is the real God who has saved us. In the Kingdom of Heaven, all authority belongs to Jesus Christ our God. The last judgment is also given by Jesus Christ our Savior God. When Christ judges us from His throne, those whose names are written in the Book of Life will enter the New Heaven and Earth, and those whose names are not found in this Book will be cast out into the fire.

Therefore, not believing in Jesus is the same as not believing in God, and not believing in God is the same as standing against God. This is why those who do not believe that Jesus is God, that He is the Savior, and that He is the King of Heaven, will face fearful judgment before God.

Among those who believe in God, there is this group called the Jehovah's Witnesses, who mistakenly believe that Jesus, although He is the Son

of God, is Himself not God. But were Jesus not God, He could not have delivered us from our sins, for only He who is perfect can also give us perfect salvation.

We are so weak that our hearts easily change with the shifting circumstances. The reason why we can praise Jesus Christ our God forever, despite our infirmities, is because Jesus, He who lives forever and is forever perfect, has become the Savior of sinners. Only those who have been saved through Jesus Christ, the perfect God who has made all sins disappear, can praise the Lord. Our faith in Jesus Christ, in our thoughts and minds, must never be like that of the worldly religions. When we know and think of Jesus as God and our faith in Him is proper, we can experience the real God.

We must live in our faith that believes in Jesus Christ as our Savior God, and with this faith we can fight and overcome our enemies. When we believe in Jesus our God, in other words, this faith will make Satan tremble in fear, and thus enable us to stand

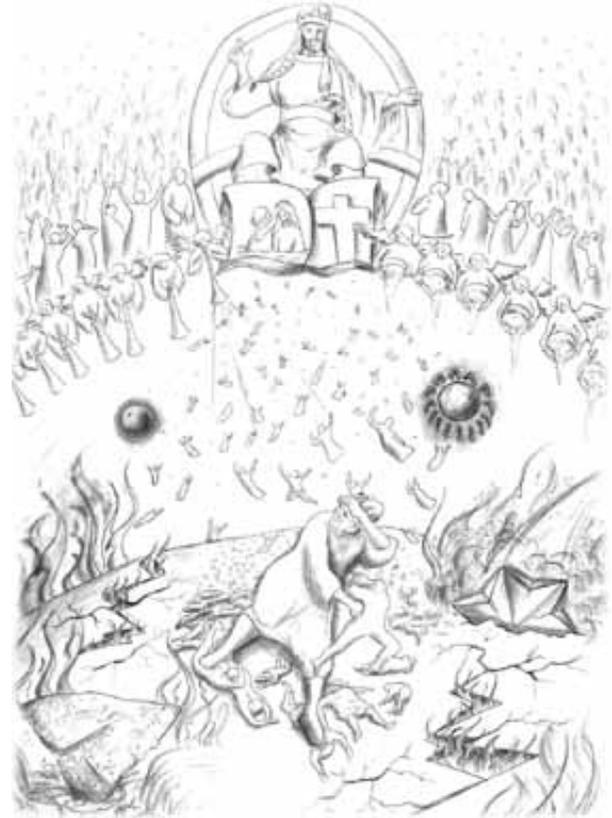
firm and overcome the trials and tribulations of the end times. If, on the other hand, we do not believe in Jesus as our God, Satan will laugh at us and tear us away from our faith.

Having received His throne from God the Father, Jesus sits on this throne as our God. Through the Word of Revelation, we realize that Jesus is the Almighty God who reigns over everything in the whole universe, because He has received all authority and power of God from the Father.

Your faith in this truth will enable you to boldly overcome Satan. Because we have God's omnipotent power at our back as His children, none can suppress, and we can all overcome the end times confidently and unshakably. I thank and praise God for everything that He has done for us! ☒

CHAPTER

5



CONTENTS



Jesus Who Is Enthroned as The Representative of God the Father

< Revelation 5:1-14 >

“And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals. Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it. But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’ And I looked, and behold, in the midst of

the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth. Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne. Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints. And they sang a new song, saying:

‘You are worthy to take the scroll,
And to open its seals;
For You were slain,
And have redeemed us to God by Your blood
Out of every tribe and tongue and people and
nation,
And have made us kings and priests to our
God;
And we shall reign on the earth.’
Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many

angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice:

‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain

To receive power and riches and wisdom,

And strength and honor and glory and blessing!’

And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying:

‘Blessing and honor and glory and power

Be to Him who sits on the throne,

And to the Lamb, forever and ever!’

**Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’
And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.”**

Exegesis

Verse 1: “And I saw in the right hand of Him who sat on the throne a scroll written inside and on the back, sealed with seven seals.”

It says here that God the Father had a scroll sealed with seven seals in His right hand. Our Lord Jesus Christ took this scroll held in the right hand of the Father, meaning that Jesus was given all authority of Heaven.

Verses 2-4: “Then I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, ‘Who is worthy to open the scroll and to loose its seals?’ And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it. So I wept much, because no one was found worthy to open and read the scroll, or to look at it.”

There was no one, except Jesus, who could judge the world, create the New Heaven and Earth, and live in it with the saints as the representative of God the

Father.

Verse 5: “But one of the elders said to me, ‘Do not weep. Behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has prevailed to open the scroll and to loose its seven seals.’”

Here, the phrase “*the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David,*” underscores the fact that Jesus Christ is the Almighty God and the King of kings who is worthy and capable of completely fulfilling the Father’s plan. Jesus Christ is God Himself and the representative of God who will fulfill the Father’s plan.

Verse 6: “And I looked, and behold, in the midst of the throne and of the four living creatures, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as though it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven Spirits of God sent out into all the earth.”

Jesus Christ, having received all authority over

heaven and earth from God the Father, is the Almighty God who created all things. He is the One who came to this earth in the flesh of man, received all the sins of the world, and died for these sins to redeem us from all our sins.

Verse 7: “Then He came and took the scroll out of the right hand of Him who sat on the throne.”

Because Jesus Christ was qualified as God, He could take the scroll from the Father. This means that from then on, our Lord would carry out all the works of God.

Verse 8: “Now when He had taken the scroll, the four living creatures and the twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb, each having a harp, and golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints.”

This means that Jesus Christ will act for the Father as God, whose first task is to hear the prayers of the saints proffered by the 24 elders and the four living

creatures was the prayers of the saints.

Verse 9: “And they sang a new song, saying: ‘You are worthy to take the scroll, And to open its seals; For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation,’”

Here, Jesus Christ is being praised by the ministers of Heaven after becoming God’s representative. The ministers of Heaven praised Jesus Christ for saving sinners on this earth from the world’s sins. While on this earth, Jesus was baptized by John and died on the Cross to save sinners from all the sins of the world, and He ransomed these sinners for the Father by paying the wages of sin with His own blood. This is why the ministers of Heaven are praising the righteous works of the One who has become their God.

Verse 10: “And have made us kings and priests to our God; And we shall reign on the earth.”

Jesus Christ, who became the representative of God the Father, turned the saints into the people and priests of the Kingdom of God, and made them reign over it. He was thus even more worthy to receive all glory and praise from the ministers of Heaven.

Verses 11-12: “Then I looked, and I heard the voice of many angels around the throne, the living creatures, and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice: ‘Worthy is the Lamb who was slain To receive power and riches and wisdom, And strength and honor and glory and blessing!’”

Because Jesus had taken upon all the sins of the world on His body with His baptism by John, He could bleed on the Cross, and for this He is worthy of receiving power, riches, wisdom, strength, honor, glory, and blessing from all creatures in Heaven as the One who represents the Father. Surrounded by the ministers of Heaven and its angels, He receives all

their praise and worship. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Around the throne of God were the four living creatures and the 24 elders. They praised God who delivered all the souls from sin, for His glory is endless.

Verse 13-14: “And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power Be to Him who sits on the throne, And to the Lamb, forever and ever!’ Then the four living creatures said, ‘Amen!’ And the twenty-four elders fell down and worshiped Him who lives forever and ever.”

Finally, Jesus Christ who became the representative of God was raised as the One worthy of receiving all praise and worship from the ministers of Heaven. All the ministers of Heaven gave Him blessing, honor, and glory forever and ever, for it was the most amazing and thankful that God would be so

worthy. All the saints both in Heaven and on earth must give glory and honor to Him who is enthroned as the representative of God the Father. ☒

The Lamb Who Sits on the Throne

< Revelation 5:1-14 >

We just went through Revelation 5. Here, the Word of God tells us that the Lord is the One who will both save and judge the mankind in the end times. Who is this Lord in whom we believe? The Word tells us that Jesus Christ is the Savior for those who believe in Him, the Judge of all mankind, and the King of kings.

We often think of Jesus as a limited Lord. But our Lord is the Judge of all creation.

The Lord delivered us from all our sins, judgment, and destruction by giving us the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The Lord therefore became our true Savior and true God. At the same time, our Lord is the King and the Judge of all mankind. Today, let us

awaken our thankful hearts for the Lord in whom we believe and on whom we rely.

From verse 1 and on, we see that at the right hand of Him who sat on the throne was a scroll, and that the Lamb—Jesus Christ, that is—shortly took this scroll. We also see in the last verse that the Lord sat on this throne. This Word tells us that the Lord will soon be the Judge of all mankind, both the believers and the unbelievers alike. We can therefore know and believe that Jesus is God who has become the Judge of all.

Our Lord does not limit His rewards and punishments to only us who are born again, but He is the true Judge and the King of kings for every mankind and all things in the universe. People often say that we have now entered the 21st century. This could be the time for the Lord's return. When we say that Lord's return is imminent, it also means that the destruction of the world is imminent as well.

What we can find out from the Word here is that the Lord has the authority to be the Judge of all. Our

Lord came to this earth in the flesh of man, and at the age of 30, He took upon all the sins of the mankind on Himself with His baptism all at once. And by being crucified to death, He was judged for all the sins of the mankind.

Only God the Father can receive honor and worship from every mankind and every creature in heaven and on earth. But the Son of God, Jesus Christ, was given the right to be receive honor and worship along with the Father for obeying and fulfilling the will of God the Father. Christ therefore could inherit from the Father all His jurisdiction.

Jesus Christ was given the right to judge every mankind, and every mankind is saved and judged only by Him. It is very beneficial for us to know who exactly the Lord that has saved us is. This knowledge is essential for us to keep our faith strong in the end times as well. When we believe in the Lord with a clear knowledge of just what kind of power He has, this knowledge becomes a great strength for us.

The Lord who has saved us is the One who has the

authority to judge everyone for good and evil. We must realize and believe that this Lord is worthy to receive the same worship as God the Father. The passage tells us that our Lord came to this earth and was slain, that with His blood He ransomed men for God from every tribe, tongue, people and nation, and that He made them to be kings and priests in the presence of our God to reign on the earth.

The passage then tells us that there was the voice of angels in Heaven, who numbered ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands, praising and worshiping the Lord with a loud voice: *“Worthy is the Lamb who was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom, and strength and honor and glory and blessing!”* John continues with his testimony of what he saw and heard in verse 13: *“And every creature which is in heaven and on the earth and under the earth and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, I heard saying: ‘Blessing and honor and glory and power be to Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb, forever and ever!’”*

To whom, then, does every creature give all glory? It is to the Lamb who sits on the throne that all blessing, honor, glory and power are given, forever and ever.

Glory, praise, and worship from the mankind used to be reserved for only God, the Father of Jesus Christ. But because Jesus Christ now has the same authority as the Father by coming to this earth and delivering the mankind from its sins, destruction, and judgment, for this salvation of atonement He was given all glory along with the Father and became our Savior worthy of all worship.

Just thinking about this, that the Lord who sits on the throne, who is the Lord and the Judge of all, is our Savior brings us great glory that fills our hearts. That's right—the Lord is the King of kings, the God of creation by whom everything in the universe was created.

Because our Lord is the God of creation, who came to this earth and saved us by His water and blood, He is worthy for every mankind and everything in this universe to kneel before His throne

and give all worship, praise, glory and honor to Him. Our faith is greatly strengthened and our hearts are greatly encouraged by the knowledge that this Lord is the One who sits on the throne of glory as the Judge of all.

Some people think of Jesus as just one of the four great sages, but the Lord is by no means a man. The Lord is our God who has created, made, and saved us. We can therefore never compare the Lord of our own creation to mere human beings. Neither Socrates, nor Confucius, nor Buddha, nor any other human being can be compared to our Lord. Jesus only lived as a man for just 33 years to save us. But His substance is the same as God. This may not be such a good metaphor, but as human beings give birth to human beings, Jesus Christ is God as He is the Son of God the Father.

Jesus therefore is God Himself, our God of creation. But the Lord came to this earth to save us. Because He saved us, He is worthy of receiving all glory from us, and we must firmly believe in our

hearts that Jesus is not a creature, but the Creator. How joyful and thankful we are!

Our Lord Who Can Complete God's Plan

No one but the Lord can open the scroll sealed with seven seals. This scroll sealed with seven seals is God's scroll of promise. God created all things in the universe, including us, in Jesus Christ. Even before the creation, God has set a plan in Jesus Christ to make us His children. Our Lord received this sealed scroll to fulfill God's purpose of creation and His plan to save us and to judge the mankind.

The Word of God tells us, "*And no one in heaven or on the earth or under the earth was able to open the scroll, or to look at it.*" There was no one, in other words, who was able to finally complete God's plan. Only Jesus Christ can do this. Why? Because

God has planned everything through His Son.

This also means that the Lord has the authority of judgment to open the scroll sealed with seven seals, the plan of God the Father. With this authority, Jesus completed every aspect of the plane of the Triune God by taking upon all our sins on Himself with His baptism and saving us by being punished for these sins on the Cross in our stead. The Lord has made us His priests before God by delivering us from sin through His sacrifice and the price of His own life.

Jesus Christ has also made those who believe in His salvation to reign with Him. As the Word of God tells us, "We shall reign on the earth," when the Lord actually returns to this earth, He will conquer all things again and bring the Millennial Kingdom to its realization on the earth. ☒

CHAPTER

6

The Seven Eras Set by God

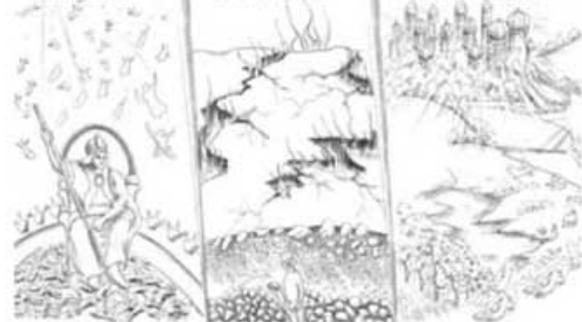
The first era The second era The third era The fourth era



The fifth era

The sixth era

The seventh era



- The first era: the era of the white horse
- The second era: the era of the red horse
- The third era: the era of the black horse
- The fourth era: the era of the pale horse
- The fifth era: the era of the saints' resurrection and rapture
- The sixth era: the era of the destruction of the first world
- The seventh era: the era of the Millennial Kingdom and the Kingdom of Heaven



CONTENTS



The Seven Eras Set by God

< Revelation 6:1-17 >

“Now I saw when the Lamb opened one of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’ And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer. When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword. When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the

four living creatures saying, ‘A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.’ When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth. When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed. I

looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair, and the moon became like blood. And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind. Then the sky receded as a scroll when it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place. And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains, and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb! For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?’”

Exegesis

Verse 1: “Now I saw when the Lamb opened one

of the seals; and I heard one of the four living creatures saying with a voice like thunder, ‘Come and see.’”

This verse tells us that Jesus opens the first plan of the scroll received from the Father, which records God’s entire plan for the mankind.

Verse 2: “And I looked, and behold, a white horse. He who sat on it had a bow; and a crown was given to him, and he went out conquering and to conquer.”

The first seal of God speaks of the establishment of the gospel of the water and the Spirit in Jesus Christ as God’s plan to deliver the mankind from sin, and of the victory of this plan. God the Father’s plan to make the mankind into His people by saving them from their sins began with gospel of the water and the Spirit in Jesus Christ—that is, with the deliverance of the mankind from sin through the baptism of Jesus and His blood on the Cross.

God has delivered souls from all the sins of the world with the gospel of the water and the Spirit, and

He continues do so even as we speak now. This is the first plan that God has set for the mankind. This first plan of God is for the salvation of the mankind through the coming of Jesus Christ to this earth, His baptism, crucifixion, and resurrection.

This era of the white horse refers to God's victory in the righteous war of the gospel that He fulfilled to deliver the mankind from all its sins. This also tells us that the gospel of the water and the Spirit will continue to triumph.

Verses 3-4: "When He opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature saying, 'Come and see.' Another horse, fiery red, went out. And it was granted to the one who sat on it to take peace from the earth, and that people should kill one another; and there was given to him a great sword."

This tells us that during the second era set by God, the world will turn into Satan's world. The appearance of the red horse here means that the world would come under the dominion of Satan.

Satan has brought war to this world, taking away its peace. Because of him, the world went through the two world wars, countless people lost their lives as a result, and those who survived have lived in precarious, broken peace. Even now, nations and states all over the world mistrust each other and wage war against one another, shattering peace in many places. This era is the era of war and genocide.

Verses 5-6: "When He opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature say, 'Come and see.' So I looked, and behold, a black horse, and he who sat on it had a pair of scales in his hand. And I heard a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, 'A quart of wheat for a denarius, and three quarts of barley for a denarius; and do not harm the oil and the wine.'"

The third era that God speaks of is the era of the black horse, the era of physical and spiritual famine for the mankind. Throughout the world today, many people have not been saved because of their spiritual

famine, and as many are also dying from physical starvation. We must remember that we are now living in this third era. With the passing of this era, the era of the pale horse will arrive.

Verses 7-8: “When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.”

The fourth era set by God is the era of the pale horse. The Bible tells us that it is during this period that the Antichrist will begin his activities, and that this era is also the era of martyrdom for the saints. This is the time when the Antichrist will, to rob the saints of their true faith, persecute and kill those who do not worship him or do not received his mark. From then on, the world will come under the plight

of the plagues of the seven trumpets. At this time, the martyrdom of the saints is unavoidable.

Verses 9-11: “When He opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the testimony which they held. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, ‘How long, O Lord, holy and true, until You judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?’ Then a white robe was given to each of them; and it was said to them that they should rest a little while longer, until both the number of their fellow servants and their brethren, who would be killed as they were, was completed.”

The fifth era of God is the era of the saints’ resurrection and rapture. After this era will begin the Millennial Kingdom. The passage tells us that we must all believe in the martyrdom, resurrection, and rapture that await us, and that we must live by our faith and hope in the New Heaven and Earth that God has promised us.

Verse 12: “I looked when He opened the sixth seal, and behold, there was a great earthquake; and the sun became black as sackcloth of hair; and the moon became like blood.”

The sixth era of God is the era of the destruction of the first world that God had created. It is at this time that the plagues of the seven bowls will descend upon the world, when the sun, the moon, and the stars will lose their light, and the earth will sink under water from earthquakes.

Verse 13: “And the stars of heaven fell to the earth, as a fig tree drops its late figs when it is shaken by a mighty wind.”

During this sixth era, the destruction of the universe created by God will occur by the plagues of the seven bowls. A great confusion will engulf the world as the stars fall from the sky and the earth is turned over.

Verse 14: “Then the sky receded as a scroll when

it is rolled up, and every mountain and island was moved out of its place.”

This verse tells us that when the plagues of the seven bowls are poured, the sky will disappear as if it were a scroll being rolled up, and all the mountains and islands will be moved out of their places—disasters that indicate earth-shattering changes that will alter the very physical structure of the world.

Verse 15: “And the kings of the earth, the great men, the rich men, the commanders, the mighty men, every slave and every free man, hid themselves in the caves and in the rocks of the mountains,”

During this era of the sixth seal, when God pours the plagues of the seven bowls, there will be no one living on this earth, neither kings nor the powerful, who will not tremble in fear at the wrath of the Lamb.

Verse 16: “and said to the mountains and rocks, ‘Fall on us and hide us from the face of Him who sits on the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb!’”

The wrath of God will be so great that all mankind will tremble in fear. This will be the first and the last time that every mankind will be struck by fear.

Verse 17: “For the great day of His wrath has come, and who is able to stand?”

When the plagues of the seven bowls are poured, everyone, regardless of how powerful or strong, will tremble in fear of the great disasters that will descend upon them from the wrath of God above. There is no one who can stand before the wrath of God without fear.

What, then, is the seventh era? The seventh era set by God is the era in which the saints will live in the Millennial Kingdom, to be followed by the New Heaven and Earth in which they will live forever. ☒

The Eras of the Seven Seals

< Revelation 6:1-17 >

The theme for each chapter of Revelation can be succinctly summarized as the following:

Chapter 1 – The prologue of the Word of Revelation

Chapters 2-3 – Letters to the seven churches in Asia

Chapter 4 – Jesus who sits on the throne of God

Chapter 5 – Jesus Who Is Enthroned as the Representative of God the Father

Chapter 6 – The seven eras set by God

Chapter 7 – Those who will be saved during the Great Tribulation

Chapter 8 – The trumpets that sound the seven plagues

Chapter 9 – The plagues of the bottomless pit

Chapter 10 – When will the rapture happen?

Chapter 11 – Who are the two olive trees and the two prophets?

Chapter 12 – The Church of God that will face great suffering

Chapter 13 – The emergence of the Antichrist and the martyrdom of the saints

Chapter 14 – The saints' resurrection and rapture, and their praise of God in the air

Chapter 15-16 – The beginning of the plagues of the seven bowls

Chapter 17 – The judgment of the great harlot who sits on many waters

Chapter 18 – The fall of Babylon

Chapter 19 – A Kingdom ruled by the Almighty

Chapter 20 – The Millennial Kingdom

Chapter 21 – The holy city from heaven

Chapter 22 – The New Heaven and Earth, where the water of life flows

Beginning from the first chapter, each chapter of

the Word of Revelation has a theme, and when unfolded they all connect with each other to the very last chapter. Just as in Romans, where chapter 1 is introduction, chapter 2 is God's Word to the Jews, and chapter 3 is His Word to the Gentiles, the Book of Revelation also proceeds with a theme for each chapter.

The reason why I am explaining Revelation based on the entire Word is because too many people have discussed Revelation with all kinds of hypotheses, and if you read Revelation through the focus of these assumptions, you will not escape from making serious mistakes.

Because the Bible was written through the people of God inspired by the Holy Spirit, it has absolutely nothing that needs correction. In contrast, secular books have errors and require many corrections, no matter how good and knowledgeable the authors' writing might be. But the Word of God has not changed at all, even as it has been passed down for thousands of years. Despite the many years of its

passing, the Word of God remains faultless, for it was written through the servants of God whose hearts were inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Because what God wants to tell us is hidden in the Bible, many of us have remained rather ignorant of the Scripture. But since the very creation, the Bible has never changed, not even once. Yet because many people had a poor understanding of the Word of God and His plan, they started to interpret the Scripture with their own thoughts.

Since God does not reveal its secrets to just anyone, those who do not worship Him and do not believe according to the Word, who only try to fill their own greed by taking God's name in vain, can never see the truth. People who have sin, in other words, can never understand the Word of Revelation no matter how hard they try. It is because of their inability to understand the Word that all kinds of mistakes are made—some end up believing in worthless illusions about the end times, study them, and even announce the time of the second coming of

Jesus, while others interpret the Bible at their own whim, making all kinds of Scriptural mistakes in the process.

Representative of them, among the theologians that we know of, are Abraham Kuyper and Louis Berkhof, who advocated amillennialism, as well as C. I. Scofield, who espoused the theory of pre-tribulation rapture. But the hypotheses advocated by these scholars are all erroneous teachings merely based on their own thoughts.

First of all, the doctrine of amillennialism advocated by the conservatives argues that there is no separate Millennial Kingdom, and that this Kingdom is instead fulfilled in the hearts of the saints living on this earth now. Amillennialism denies the actual establishment of the Millennial Kingdom in the future. This ‘hypothesis’ interprets the Millennial Kingdom in symbolical terms, treating the period during which the saints live until the return of Jesus Christ as the period of the millennial reign. But the interpretation offered by amillennialism, that the

Millennial Kingdom is already actualized in the hearts of the saints now without the Great Tribulation, is deeply mistaken.

Even more widespread throughout the world than amillennialism, however, is the theory of pre-tribulation rapture expounded by Scofield. But this “dispensationalism” has ended up altering God’s plan itself. God planned seven eras even before His creation of the universe, and He has fulfilled everything according to His plan as time has gone by. But people who are ignorant of God’s plan revealed in Revelation 6 have produced this faulty theory of pre-tribulation rapture. They argue that the born-again among the Gentiles will be raptured before the onset of the Great Tribulation, and that some of the people of Israel will be saved during the Tribulation’s seven-year period.

This theory remains as a doctrine that has thrown many people into great confusion. Were the rapture of the saints to occur before the Great Tribulation, as claimed by the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, there

would be neither the persecution of the saints nor their martyrdom as recorded in Revelation 13. Believers in Jesus must therefore get out of this doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture and prepare their faith by believing in the fact that their rapture will come in the midst of the Great Tribulation.

The Word of Revelation reveals to us how God will lead the world according to the dispensation of His seven eras. We must see through the focus of the plan of the seven eras set by God as discussed throughout Revelation 6. People are confused and their faith is shaky because they do not know the truth of these seven eras of the Scripture. We must, therefore, believe in what is written in Revelation 6 as it appears. To do so, we must believe in the secret Word of the seven eras testified by the whole Bible, rather than thinking of it in partial terms by looking at only small, disjointed parts of the Scripture.

Just as the gospel of the water and the Spirit had been hidden from the people, so have the seven eras of God. Although biblical scholars have tried to

understand the Word of Revelation and proposed many theories by focusing on their own thoughts, the Word of Revelation still remains very difficult to comprehend. This is akin to the fact that the gospel of the water and the Spirit had been hidden until now. But the theories that the scholars have so far come up with on Christ's return, the saint's rapture, or the Millennial Kingdom have brought no benefit to those who believe in Jesus.

For us to understand the Word of Revelation, it is absolutely critical that we understand chapter 6. This chapter is the key to solve and understand all of the Word of Revelation. But before we try to comprehend the whole Word of Revelation, there is one thing that we must remind ourselves: it is impossible to understand Revelation without having realized and believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. You must realize that the truth of God can be comprehended only when you first know and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

It is "*when He opened the seventh seal,*" as

recorded in Revelation 8, that the plagues of the seven trumpets will descend upon the world. This explains the events that will unfold during the fourth era recorded in Revelation 6, the era of the pale horse. Without first understanding the seven eras set by God, therefore, you cannot understand the plagues of the seven trumpets, either. To understand the Word of Revelation in its entirety, we must first understand and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that God has given us.

The Word of God in Revelation 6 provides an outline of the overall design that God drew when He created the mankind. God has divided the beginning and the end of the mankind into seven different eras.

These are: first, the era of the white horse; second, the era of the red horse; third the era of the black horse; fourth, the era of the pale horse; fifth, the era of the saints' martyrdom and rapture; sixth, the era of the destruction of the world; and seventh, the era of the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth. We believe and obey that God has thus divided

his plan for the mankind into these seven eras. At present, the world is in the era of the black horse, having passed through the eras of the white and red horses.

The Scripture tells us that the era in which we are now living is the era of famine. But the era of the pale horse is near us also. With the arrival of the era of the pale horse will begin the era of the saints' martyrdom, entering the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. This era of the tribulations and martyrdom is the era of the pale horse.

“When He opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature saying, ‘Come and see.’ So I looked, and behold, a pale horse. And the name of him who sat on it was Death, and Hades followed with him. And power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, with hunger, with death, and by the beasts of the earth.” The passage here, *“power was given to them over a fourth of the earth, to kill... by the beasts of the earth,”* indicates that the Antichrist will emerge

during the era of the pale horse and make martyrs out of the saints.

The events that will unfold during the era of the pale horse are recorded in Revelation 8:1-7. As it is written: *“When He opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven for about half an hour. And I saw the seven angels who stand before God, and to them were given seven trumpets. Then another angel, having a golden censer, came and stood at the altar. He was given much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, with the prayers of the saints, ascended before God from the angel’s hand. Then the angel took the censer, filled it with fire from the altar, and threw it to the earth. And there were noises, thunderings, lightnings, and an earthquake. So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees*

were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.”

The above discussion of the plagues of the seven trumpets in Revelation 8 provides a detailed reiteration of the truth of the era of the pale horse recorded in Revelation 6. This Word records in detail the emergence of the Antichrist and the plagues of the seven trumpets and the seven bowls that will unfold during the era of the pale horse.

Chapters 4 and 5, on the other hand, tell us that Jesus Christ will reign over the world and all that are to come as God, and that the Father’s entire plan will be fulfilled by Jesus Christ as God. We thus discover, through Revelation 4 and 5, just how powerful and what an Almighty God Jesus Christ really is.

Revelation 8 tells us: *“So the seven angels who had the seven trumpets prepared themselves to sound. The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.”* When the era of the pale horse comes, one-third of the world’s forests

will be burnt down, and this disaster will be followed by even more plagues.

The plague of the first trumpet is a disaster that will burn down a third of the trees and all grass. When this disaster strikes the world, the remaining forests will also be devastated by the smog effects of the huge fire raging through a third of the world, with its smoke blocking the sun from the earth. Crops will fail, and the whole world will be thrown into great famine and starvation.

In this era of famine, the wage of a day's work will buy only a quart of wheat or three quarts of barley. The world is now facing the imminent arrival of this extraordinary famine and starvation. This world's famine will come in both physical and spiritual ways. Spiritual famine already exists in today's world.

Today's churches are filled with only nominal Christians, incapable of sharing the spiritual bread and the life of the gospel of the water and the Spirit with the world. People all around the world, from

Europe to Asia to the American continent, are now all living in the era of their destruction. Few in today's Christianity provide the spiritual bread to feed the hungry souls.

We describe the era of the pale horse as the era of the Antichrist's emergence. During this period, natural disasters will turn bread and water into scarce commodities, where everyone will barely manage to survive through the great famine. Although the world will continue with its scientific progress, the standard of living will nevertheless fall to extreme poverty, the kind of which it had never seen before. Would people living in such a world have any desire left in them to continue on with their lives?

In this time of the Tribulation, we must all embrace our martyrdom and glorify God by believing in the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. The saints who thus believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will give all glory to God with their martyrdom. God, in turn, will then lift up to heaven those who were martyred to defend their faith and

invite them to the marriage supper of the Lamb.

The Apostle Paul said that he became His servant for the Kingdom of God. The apostles preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit so that many may enter the Millennial Kingdom.

During the time of the Great Tribulation, there will be people among the Israelites who will also be martyred and raptured for believing in Jesus. The saints will thus belong to the period of the Great Tribulation during the era of the pale horse. When the Great Tribulation comes, everyone in this world will be looking for someone who can bring order to the disaster-stricken world. They will yearn for someone who can solve the problems brought by the catastrophic natural disasters, and who can resolve the numerous political, economic, and religious problems that they face. This is when the Antichrist will emerge.

Recently a Japanese author wrote a series of books entitled *The Story of the Romans*, which had nothing but praise for the Roman emperors. The author's

main argument was that the world would soon need a leader who can yield absolute power. Many people also agreed with her. During the Great Tribulation, people will want a powerful ruler who can rule over the world with an iron fist—not the many rulers, each with his/her own domain, but a single, powerful ruler of the whole world.

At present, the world is divided into many nation-states, and each has its own leader. But in the end times, people will want a charismatic world leader who can completely resolve all their problems. The world now awaits this leader, the Antichrist who will reign over the entire world.

The Bible tells us that when the era of the pale horse arrives, the Antichrist will emerge with great power and subjugate everyone in the world under his rule. The Bible also tell us that when this era of the pale horse comes, fire will rain on the earth and burn down a third of the world's forests. And when this era comes, the Antichrist will rule over the world, and no one will be able to buy or sell anything without his

mark. At this time, the saints will be martyred for refusing to receive the mark and worship the idol, and then be resurrected and raptured. When the era of the pale horse thus ends, the era of the Millennial Kingdom will open.

The Lord told us that the destruction of this world and the Great Tribulation would come as a thief. We must now, therefore, prepare the faith that can overcome all the trials of the Great Tribulation and destruction. This preparation is possible only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. But for those who do not thus prepare, all the plagues and destruction will fall on those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

As such, we must clearly understand and believe that today's era is the era of the black horse. Before that final day arrives, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and prepare for the future.

Those who now believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be raptured with their martyrdom. Those who are rich will not continue to live in

comfort, nor will those who are poor continue to live in their poverty. Therefore, we must be neither sad nor boastful over the things that are happening to us now, for we believe that the era of the pale horse is imminent, and that all the saints will then be possibly martyred.

From time to time, we see some people around us who cause great confusion by analyzing the timing of Christ's return on their own, declaring their own day and hour for the second coming of the Lord, and misleading many others with such claims. But Christ's return, according to the Bible, will not happen until the seventh trumpet sounds. Therefore, we must never make the mistake of calculating the Word of Bible and coming up with our own date for the Lord's return.

We must also be wary of those who claim to have seen the date of Christ's return in their dreams or visions. Their dreams are no more than just dreams. But because God tells us when exactly the timing of rapture is through His Word, we must instead believe

in the Word.

When the era of the pale horse, the fourth era in Revelation 6, arrives, martyrs will arise with the plagues of the seven trumpets, and the resurrection and rapture of the saints will come.

It is important for us to realize that we are now living in the third era of the seven eras set by God. We must realize that today's era is the era of the black horse. When we do so, we can sow the seeds of the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, and by planting the seeds now we will be able to harvest when the era of the pale horse comes.

In the world of nature created by God, there are some plants that can sprout, flower, and bear fruits in just a week. Like these plants of desert, when the era of the pale horse arrives, those who are saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are preach now will also be martyred, joining us in our resurrection and rapture that the Lord has permitted to us. In the era of the Tribulation, there will be more people who believe in the gospel of the

water and the Spirit than now. There will be more people, in other words, who will be martyred for their faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

The Word of Revelation does not limit its discussion to the salvation of the people of Israel. If anyone believes that the age of Revelation is reserved only for the Israelites, he/she is making a serious mistake. Why? Because when the times of Revelation come, so many Gentiles will be saved by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and be martyred to defend their faith. Whether your knowledge of the Word of Revelation is correct or not, as such, can make a huge difference in your faith.

You must realize, therefore, that it is simply wrong for today's Christians to believe in the doctrine of pre-tribulation rapture. The Bible tells us that the martyrdom of the saints will come at slightly past the midpoint of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation, and that their rapture will happen shortly after this. We must solve the Word of Revelation as it is written, chapter by chapter and verse by verse, and

within the gospel of the water and the Spirit. By doing so, we can have the correct knowledge of the Word of Revelation.

Revelation 7 tells us that countless people among the Gentiles will also receive salvation by their faith and be martyred for their faith. We must believe the Bible as it is written—not in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, nor in post-tribulation rapture, nor in amillennialism, but in the seven eras set by God.

Chapter 1 of the Word of Revelation is the introduction, chapters 2 and 3 discuss the martyrdom of the saints, and chapter 4 tells us that Jesus Christ is God and that He sits on the throne of God. Chapter 5 shows us how Jesus will fulfill all of God the Father's plan, and chapter 6 provides the overall blueprint of the seven eras planned by God. All these plans are solved within the Word of Revelation.

As the Word of Revelation tells us, *"Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on,"* from now on, the saints live in the hope of resurrection and the Millennial Kingdom.

Revelation 8:10-11 describes another plague: *"Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water. The name of the star is Wormwood. A third of the waters became wormwood, and many men died from the water, because it was made bitter."* It says here that this time a great star burning like a torch fell on the rivers and the springs. This great star burning like a torch refers to a comet. As heaven is shaken, in other words, stars would collide with one another and their broken pieces would fall on the earth.

Revelation 8:12-13 continues with another plague: *"Then the fourth angel sounded: And a third of the sun was struck, a third of the moon, and a third of the stars, so that a third of them were darkened. A third of the day did not shine, and likewise the night. And I looked, and I heard an angel flying through the midst of heaven, saying with a loud voice, 'Woe, woe, woe to the inhabitants of the earth, because of the remaining blasts of the trumpet of the three angels"*

who are about to sound!” This tells us that a third of the world will be darkened as days turn into nights.

When the plagues of the seven trumpets thus begin, you and I will most certainly be living in them. But the living saints will soon be martyred, and they will overcome Satan with their faith.

If you clearly know the seven eras revealed in Revelation 6, you will also have a clear knowledge of what you must do and what kind of faith you need in today’s era. Because those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are to be martyred in the era of Revelation, they must meet this era with their hope for the Kingdom of God. While living in this world, the saints must prepare for their martyrdom in the end times with their faith, and they must labor hard to expand the Kingdom of God by spreading this faith.

Do you know and believe in the seven eras set by God? Can you discern that we are now living in the era of the black horse? If you neither know nor believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now,

you will not be able to escape from the tribulations that will descend on the earth. You must therefore prepare right now. To have the faith that can overcome the tribulations, you must first of all be atoned of all your sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and prepare to enter and live in the Millennial Kingdom by receiving the Holy Spirit as your gift.

Prepare now. If you intend to postpone and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit only when the plagues of the seven trumpets arrive, you will face many tribulations. It is my hope and prayer that you would believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit at this very moment, to be born again and to prepare your future as the people of God.

The seven eras set by God:

1. White horse: The era of the beginning and continuation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit.
2. Red horse: The shattering of peace with the advent of Satan’s era.

3. Black horse: The era of physical and spiritual famine. The present era.
4. Pale horse: The era of the saints' martyrdom with the emergence of the Antichrist.
5. The era of the saints' resurrection and rapture, and of the marriage supper of the Lamb.
6. The era of the destruction of the first world.
7. The era of the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth reigned by the Lord and His saints.

These are the seven eras set by God. Those who know these eras clearly and believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the ones who have prepared their faith to live in the end times. I hope and pray that you, too, will be able to discern these eras of the true faith set by God. ☒

CHAPTER

7



CONTENTS



Who Will Be Saved during The Great Tribulation?

< Revelation 7:1-17 >

“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree. Then I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, ‘Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.’ And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:

of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed;

of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed.

After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all

nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’ All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God, saying:

‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom,
Thanksgiving and honor and power and might,
Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’

Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?’ And I said to him, Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among

them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat; for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.’”

Exegesis

Verse 1: “After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.”

This shows us that whether the wind of tribulations blows or not entirely depends on God’s permission. God has decided that He would save 144,000 from the tribes of Israel and make them His people before allowing the Great Tribulation on this earth.

Verses 2-3: “Then I saw another angel ascending

from the east, having the seal of the living God. And he cried with a loud voice to the four angels to whom it was granted to harm the earth and the sea, saying, 'Do not harm the earth, the sea, or the trees till we have sealed the servants of our God on their foreheads.'"

Here, God commands the four angels who were granted to harm the earth and the seas not to harm the world until 144,000 Israelites are sealed. God told them, in other words, not to harm until 12,000 are chosen from each tribe of Israel and their foreheads are sealed with God's living seal. This was God's special command showing His particular care for the people of Israel.

Verse 4: "And I heard the number of those who were sealed. One hundred and forty-four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel were sealed:"

Those who are sealed by God will receive special protection from God and His blessing of salvation even during the Great Tribulation of the end times.

Verses 5-9: "of the tribe of Judah twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Reuben twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Gad twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Asher twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Naphtali twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Manasseh twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Simeon twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Levi twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Issachar twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Zebulun twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Joseph twelve thousand were sealed; of the tribe of Benjamin twelve thousand were sealed. After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands,"

This verse tells us the number of the sealed among the people of Israel—12,000 from each tribe of Israel will be sealed as the recipients of God's special grace.

God will give salvation to 12,000 from each tribe of Israel and make them His people; this special grace will be bestowed on each tribe equally.

As God loved each tribe of Israel equally, He gave all of them the same blessing of becoming His people. God clothed the Israelites with this grace to fulfill His Word of promise given to Abraham and his descendants. As can thus be seen, God fulfills everything that He has promised and planned for the mankind.

This tells us that a great number of the Gentiles will also be saved during the Great Tribulation and become the people of God. There will be, in other words, a countless multitude among the Gentiles also who will be delivered from their sins by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit and be martyred with their faith in the end times. We must therefore remember that God works to make the Gentiles His people even until the very last days.

Verses 10-11: “and crying out with a loud voice,

saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’ All the angels stood around the throne and the elders and the four living creatures, and fell on their faces before the throne and worshiped God,”

God bestows His grace of salvation even in the end times to both the Israelites and us, the Gentiles. Our Lord therefore is worthy to receive all worship, praise, and glory. For the saints, no one else but God alone is the object of all their worship.

Verse 12: “saying: ‘Amen! Blessing and glory and wisdom, Thanksgiving and honor and power and might, Be to our God forever and ever. Amen.’”

All the ministers of God give praise to the Lord who is God. It is only proper that God would so receive all these praise and honor.

Verses 13-14: “Then one of the elders answered, saying to me, ‘Who are these arrayed in white robes, and where did they come from?’ And I said to him,

‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”

God will gather His last harvest after He raises the wind of the Great Tribulation to make the saints overcome their glorious martyrdom and defend their true faith.

When the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation pass, the saints will be harshly persecuted by the Antichrist and be martyred to defend their faith. This Tribulation of martyrdom is of a different dimension from any other tribulations that had proceeded in Church History; it will make an absolute demand for the faith of the saints who believe in God on this earth. Martyrdom is a great honor for the saints. Through their martyrdom, the saints can most clearly reveal their true faith in God. In the end times of the Great Tribulation, all the saints will defend their faith through their martyrdom, take part in their

resurrection and rapture, and stand before the throne of God.

Verses 15-16: “Therefore they are before the throne of God, and serve Him day and night in His temple. And He who sits on the throne will dwell among them. They shall neither hunger anymore nor thirst anymore; the sun shall not strike them, nor any heat;”

Those who have the true faith before God will be martyred in the end times of the Great Tribulation to defend their faith in the salvation of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. God will therefore give the saints with such faith His special protection and blessing, and embrace them into His arms.

Having fought the Antichrist and been martyred and resurrected, the saints will never again die or suffer sadness in the Kingdom of God. They will forever live in the blessings given to the children of God. Those who live embraced in the arms of God will lack nothing, nor will they ever again suffer any

harm or anguish from the evil. All that awaits them now is God's special reward, love, and glory that will be bestowed on them forever.

Verse 17: "for the Lamb who is in the midst of the throne will shepherd them and lead them to living fountains of waters. And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes."

God will be the eternal Shepherd of the saints and give them His eternal blessings. To reward for all the sufferings and martyrdom that the saints went through for the sake of the Lord while on this earth, God will lead them to the fountains of living water, allow them to break bread with the Lord before the throne of God, and clothe them eternally in His blessing to join Him in all His glory. Because the saints, while on this earth, had believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, lived a life of service for the glory of God, and were martyred for His name, God will allow those who thus defended their faith to live forever in the midst of His glory in the New Heaven and Kingdom. Hallelujah!

Praise our Lord! ☒

Let Us Have Faith That Battles

< Revelation 7:1-17 >

Christians of today must know the truth of the Bible correctly. In particular, through the Word of Revelation, we must have a proper understanding of the rapture of the saints and live with proper faith.

First of all, we must realize that the rapture will happen at the midpoint of the Great Tribulation, slightly past the first three and a half years of the seven-year period. The churches and the saints must therefore have a battling faith in the end times, to fulfill the will of God to deliver the mankind from sin and give eternal life as He has planned in Jesus Christ.

God permitted the activities of the Antichrist to fulfill this will of His. The period during which the

Antichrist will be active is the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. God allowed the Antichrist to vigorously pursue his ends during this period. Why? Because to fulfill His great purposes planned for us, God must bind Satan in the bottomless pit, and to do so the Lord Himself must return to this earth in person. This is why our God permitted the Antichrist to powerfully carry out his activities during the first three and a half years of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation.

God gave everyone His Word of deliverance from sin and of eternal life, and to fulfill this Word He planned the Great Tribulation. In the main passage, it is written, *“I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.”* God has also planned to deliver 144,000 of the people of Israel from their destruction, for He had promised to Abraham that He would be his God and the God of his descendants. To

fulfill this promise, God will bestow His grace of salvation on Israel and deliver 144,000 of Abraham's descendants in the end times.

To give the saints His Millennial Kingdom and the eternal New Heaven and Earth, God will certainly permit the Great Tribulation to come to this earth. After allowing the era of the Antichrist during the Great Tribulation, God will then seize Satan and shut him up in the bottomless pit. The reason why God allows the appearance of the Antichrist and the Great Tribulation is to fulfill His promise of saving Israel and to bestow His grace of giving eternal life to the Gentiles, who will be clothed in white through the Great Tribulation.

As such, the Great Tribulation and the reign of the Antichrist are the stages that we must infallibly go through. We must realize that all these things that God has allowed are a part of His plan to save all of us and clothe us in His grace of eternal life in the Kingdom of Christ. We must therefore clearly discern exactly in what era we are now living, and ask

ourselves what kind of faith we must have to live on. Our faith, in short, must be clear and certain.

We believe in the Word of God. And we also believe that this Word will all be fulfilled, both physically and spiritually. Today's era is an era that is running toward the end times. When the Antichrist and his many followers emerge in the end times, we must fight against them to defend our faith, even at the cost of giving up our own lives in martyrdom. This era is fast approaching us. If we believe in the Word, we must fight against the Antichrist, the great enemy, and his followers. This is the faith that battles.

Battle means to fight. But by fighting, I do not mean physical violence, hitting and smashing. Rather, battle here means to defend faith without capitulating under the Antichrist, the servant of Satan who will stand against the gospel of salvation that the Lord has given us, and who will persecute the believers. Those who are martyred in the end times are the ones who have the testimony of Jesus and who have kept the Word of God. What they testify is Jesus who came

through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

To battle is to defend the faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit. To defend this gospel, those who were born again by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord must unite with the other born-again saints in the born-again churches of God. And we must be resolved to bravely enter the battle with an unbending determination to spread our faith to others and save their souls. To be completely battle-ready means to defend our faith and to also save other souls; this faith of the church is the road to victory that pleases God. The servants of God and His saints must always keep their battling faith.

How is today's era, in which we must live with battle-ready minds and faith? The present era is clearly going through many changes. Many "theories" on the rapture and the second coming of Christ have appeared and disappeared, and along with them people's faith have also been changing accordingly.

Before a new theory of rapture was advocated in the early 1800s, everyone believed in and preached the doctrine of post-tribulation rapture, which argues that Christ will return after the saints go through all of the Great Tribulation, and that their rapture and resurrection will happen at this time of Christ's return. But the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, which gradually gained its currency in the early 1800s, completely overturned the theory of post-tribulation rapture.

The theory of pre-tribulation rapture argues that the believers in Jesus will be lifted up to heaven before the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation begins. Although this theory was initially rejected by many, now virtually everyone have ended up believing in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, with only a few exceptions. But the theory of pre-tribulation rapture not only does not fit with the Word of God at all, but it even renders God's Word and His plan meaningless. Yet in the thoughts and the minds of those who are ignorant of the Bible, this theory of

pre-tribulation rapture has already been firmly planted.

The apostles of the old times divided God's eras into two eras. These were the first era of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ, and the second era of the Great Tribulation that follows the passing of the first era. Today's scholars say that while they understand the first era of salvation by faith in Jesus, the second era of the Great Tribulation, the era of the return of Christ and the rapture of the saints, is too difficult to comprehend.

Most Christians who believe in the theory of pre-tribulation rapture in their ignorance of the times cannot but have wrong faith. Pretentiously predicting their own day and time of Christ's return, or letting their faith stagnate idly thinking that they will be raptured before the Great Tribulation—these are all the result of believing in this theory of pre-tribulation rapture. So many Christians have fallen into spiritual indolence, thinking to themselves, "Who cares if the world faces hardship? I'll be raptured long before the

Great Tribulation comes, and so everything is just fine." All this confusion has been brought by their lack of the exact, biblically sound knowledge of the rapture.

Scofield advocated the theory of pre-tribulation rapture, and the results was that the minds of those who believed in this theory have ended up drifting in the direction of their own comforts, thinking, "We'll be raptured before the Great Tribulation comes to this earth, and so let's just try to live as comfortably as possible for now." Their faith has thus become idle.

But what does the Bible say about the Great Tribulation and the rapture? The Bible speaks of mid-tribulation rapture. It tells us that both the Gentiles and the Israelites who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by Jesus will also suffer persecutions from the Antichrist as they go through the first three and a half years of the Great Tribulation during the era of the pale horse.

It tells us that after the first three and a half years of the Great Tribulation, the Antichrist will kill the

saints—that is, the saints will be martyred. It tells us also that all the saints, both those who were martyred and those who were not, will be resurrected into glorious bodies, and simultaneous to their resurrection, they will be lifted to the air in rapture. When the saints are raptured in the middle of the Great Tribulation, this world will come to its end with the pouring of the plagues of the seven bowls. The Lord will then return to this earth to judge Satan, the Antichrist, and his followers.

Revelation 13 tells us that those whose names are not written in the Book of Life will all surrender to the Antichrist and his idols. Only those whose names are written in the Book of Life, in other words, will not yield to the Antichrist and his followers. Those whose names are not written in the Book of Life by refusing to believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit in their hearts will all end up worshipping and surrendering to Satan and his idols.

This is why the Bible tells us that the saints will remain on the earth during the Great Tribulation, and

that slightly past the midpoint of the Tribulation, they will all be lifted up to the air with their rapture. Those who surrender to Satan and receive the mark of the Antichrist during the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation will all be cast out into the lake of fire and brimstone, but those whose names are written in the Book of Life and who did not surrender to the idol will be raptured in the middle of the Great Tribulation.

The true rapture will happen slightly past the midpoint of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. Detailed biblical cross-references for the time of rapture will be addressed in this book's second volume to follow. Yet there are plenty of people who, scheduling the rapture too soon, speak of pre-tribulation rapture, or otherwise schedule it too loosely and speak of post-tribulation rapture. Scholars talk of the theory of pre-tribulation rapture even when they themselves are not convinced of its merit, and yet many churchgoers hold fast onto this theory and believe in it. Some people even donate all

their possessions to their churches, or wait in fanaticism for the arbitrarily determined date of the supposed return of Christ.

A while ago, members of a certain denomination once picked a date and believed that Christ will return on this date of their choosing. So they all climbed up a mountain, tied their bodies together with ropes, and waited for their rapture into the midnight. Time went by, but no matter how eagerly they waited, Jesus did not return. So they finally gave up, freed themselves of the ropes, and climbed down the mountain in shame. This kind of fiasco, unfortunately, has now become quite common in the Christian world. Such absurd events are not limited to only Korea, but they frequently occur all around the world, in Europe, America, Asia, everywhere.

What we must know precisely, therefore, is that God will expressly allow the Great Tribulation even to His saints of faith. This is God's plan. The reason why God permits the Great Tribulation to the saints is to fulfill all His promises—to throw, through the

Tribulation, Satan into the eternal fire, to change this earth into a new world by establish the Kingdom of Christ for a thousand years, where the saints will reign with Him, and to grant the New Heaven and Earth to the believers in Jesus. This is the will of God that has allowed the Great Tribulation to come to us on purpose.

The seven-year period of the Great Tribulation has not begun yet. If we assume that the natural disasters that we have suffered so far can be compared to the run-of-the-mill fires that the firefighters can easily extinguish, the disasters that await the world in the Great Tribulation are extraordinary, comparable to the fire that would burn down a third of the world's forests.

To not be shaken and to persevere when such disasters and plagues strike the world, the servants and saints of God must all have faith that battles. Because we will remain on this earth until the middle of the Great Tribulation, we must live the end times with the kind of faith that never surrenders to the

Antichrist and his followers. With the determined heart of a soldier entering a battle, you must preach the gospel of the water and the Spirit all over the world to save one more soul, including your own family.

The world will not always be this peaceful. But even when confusion reigns the world and hardship abounds in our lives, we must always live in faithfulness, believing that God will protect us until the very last day. The religions of the world and Satan deceive people with all kinds of coaxing words, stealing from them and ultimately plunging their souls into hell.

Even as now, countless people and those who belong to big denominations believe in Scofield's theory of pre-tribulation rapture, leading many others astray to their wrong faith. Those who believe that they will be raptured before the Great Tribulation see no need to prepare their faith to persevere through the Great Tribulation. They think all that they have to do is just be faithful in their present lives and simply be

lifted up to the air when the Lord calls. But the rapture of the saints will in fact happen past the first three and a half years of the Great Tribulation, and so they must prepare their faith for the Tribulation regardless of when Christ makes His return. We must believe that God will save the people of Israel and many of the Gentiles during the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation.

Verse 14 tells us, *“These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”* This refers to martyrdom. Martyrdom means dying for the righteous work according to one's faith. The most correct faith for the saints who have been delivered from sin is to believe in the gospel, that the Lord has made all our sins disappear, and to keep this faith. But Satan always tries to tear down the saints' faith. We must therefore wage a war of faith against Satan.

If we surrender to Satan in this fight, we will be thrown into hell along with the Devil as his servants, but if we fight and defend our faith even at the cost

of our own lives, we will be martyred and enter the Kingdom of God by this faith of martyrdom. Because we are waging this war of faith to defend our faith, our death will be righteous and glorious.

We must, therefore, have the faith that fights for the righteous works. We must believe that we are engaged in a battle for the sake of others to save their souls, and we must defend our faith until the end and triumph in this war to send these souls to Heaven. Until we receive the crown of victory, we must overcome Satan in our battle against him with the sword of the Word of our Lord.

People are born once and they die once. No matter how much progress medical sciences have made, everyone eventually dies. Whether people die at the age of 10 or 80, they will all face the judgment of sin from God. Those who die without having believed in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by the Lord while on this earth will meet their judgement and be condemned to be cast out into the eternal fire. Though all their sins were washed away by the water

and the blood of Jesus, making them as white as snow, because their sin of not believing in this truth was not forgiven, these unbelievers will be judged for all the sins that they committed before God and men while on this earth and pay their price.

To avoid being condemned to the fire of hell before God, we must believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit given by Jesus that redeems us of all our sins. The gospel of the water and the Spirit that atones us for all our sins is different from the gospel that believes only in the blood of the Cross. I have always preached the gospel of the water and the Spirit, whether in ordinary times or otherwise. Only by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can we receive the Holy Spirit and be bestowed with the blessing of becoming God's children. When we believe in Jesus, we must stay away from and not believe in the false gospel made of only the blood of the Cross.

The Old Testament speaks of the true gospel by the laying on of hands and the laver. In the New

Testament, the Word of God tells us that our sins were passed onto Jesus all at once through the baptism that Christ received. The laver of the Old Testament and the baptism of the New Testament both refer to the same faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has saved us from all our sins—through the baptism of Jesus that handed over all our sins onto Him, His death on the Cross, and His resurrection. No one can be saved but by this gospel of the water and the Spirit.

We must continue to live by our faith in the gospel of the water and the Spirit until we reach the middle of the Great Tribulation. We must discern this age, and live these last few remaining days as God want us to, preaching the Kingdom of God and bringing good news to all. The Lord told us that many people would be saved even during these last days.

Few plants can survive in a desert, as there is no water, but only sand and burning sunlight. But even in this desolated desert filled by only hot and dry dust and sand, when rain brings water, plants can sprout,

flower, and bear fruits in just a week. All that the desert lacks is water; the seeds buried underneath the sand, though unable to sprout yet, are not dead but still alive, waiting for rain. And when moisture makes its way to these dry seeds, they sprout immediately. The seeds sprout in a day, grow the next day, and flower and bear fruit in the third day. And in their last day these plants drop their seeds on the ground, and the hardened seeds once again hide beneath the sand.

Just as plants in a desert that seems impossible to sustain not even a single tiller or sprout can still manage to grow when water is supplied, we believe that in the end times, there will also be souls around the desert-like world that will sprout, blossom, and bear fruits if they come into even the slightest contact with the water of the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We believe that when the plagues of the seven trumpets actually materialize, many who heard of the Great Tribulation before through the Word will realize the gospel planted in them, keep it, and in no

time grow the faith of martyrdom.

As such, when you and I are martyred to defend our faith, there will be many other people of faith, rising like the desert plants that instantly grow even on dry grounds, who will join us in our martyrdom for refusing to receive the mark and worship the idol. This gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are spreading now will enable many people to grow their faith in a short period of time to embrace martyrdom, and turn them into the workers of God who will fight on.

From children to the elderly, we are all soldiers in the army of the Lord. Always preparing our hearts for battle, we must live with the right faith, undeceived by any lies, as the people of Christ. To those of us who win the battle, God will give us the crown of victory and unspeakable rewards. We must therefore live our lives serving the righteous works of God, with the faith that fights against Satan, all His lies, and all the evilness of the world.

God Will Give Us Bold Faith in the Time of Tribulation

When the era of the pale horse arrives, God will give us its signs. Verse 1 says, *“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.”* The wind here refers to the wind of tribulation that God will raise. Revelation 7:1-8 tells us that to save the people of Israel, God will seal them and thus hold the wind for a short while. But when the time comes—that is, when the era of the black horse, the era of famine among the seven eras of God, passes—God will open the era of the pale horse. The four winds of the earth will then be raised, bringing the wind of tribulation to the world.

When it is time to open the era of the pale horse, the fearful wind of tribulation will begin to blow, and many Israelites will be killed, and many Gentiles,

including us, will also be killed. When this era of the pale horse comes, the era of tribulation will infallibly begin.

Because now is the era of the black horse, the wind of famine is blowing around the world. When this era is over, the era of the pale horse will begin, raising the wind of tribulation. The wind of tribulation marks the full-scale beginning of the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. When God brings the Great Tribulation to this world for the first time since His creation of the universe and the beginning of human history—that is, when the wind of tribulation blows with the opening of the era of the pale horse—everything will end, and everything will also be renewed and start again.

We must realize that when the era of the pale horse comes, the era of tribulation also opens. As the rulers around the world unite, certain politicians will seize absolute power, and those who do not obey their command and rules will be thrown into tribulations and death. People will find it very hard to

live through the era of the pale horse as they will be facing great difficulties from the natural disasters unleashed by the plagues of the seven trumpets, but compounding this hardship will be the political circumstances of the time that will also be very threatening. But even in this situation, God will continue to work among the people, leading a countless number of the Gentiles to their salvation.

When the wind of tribulation blows in the era of the pale horse, hope can be found in only one place. As the Word tells us, *that “salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb,”* this only hope is found in our God the Father and Jesus Christ. When the fearful wind of tribulation is raised, the Antichrist will emerge on this earth, uniting not only the political sphere of the world but also all social spheres, from economy to culture to religion, in global integration. Tribulation means going through terrifying persecution. This is the wind that will be raised. And all these things will happen all of a sudden.

The wind of economic integration is blowing throughout today's world. There is a strong movement toward free trade, eliminating tariff walls among the member countries of various trade organizations. Under a protectionist trading system, it used to be difficult for the products of one country to maintain their price-competitiveness in another country, because tariffs imposed during the export and import processes would raise their prices higher, regardless of how low the initial prices of the exports might have been.

But such tariff walls are falling down. A good example can be found in Europe, where tariffs have been phased out. Among the member countries of the European Union (EU), for instance, there is no tariff anymore. This is the beginning of a greater integration to come, indicating the rise of political and cultural unity. This is an amazing development. Without tariffs, a country can sell its products in any other country. This is a groundbreaking transformation of the global economic environment.

If the EU successfully completes its economic integration, global economic integration will also accelerate even more.

Recently, Korea, China, and Japan reached an agreement to provide emergency loans to each other in the event of a future financial crisis in Asia, like the one that engulfed the region in 1997. In the Asian crisis of 1997, financial support was provided by the United States. But with this agreement, the three countries involved have pledged to provide financial support to each other if a signatory country faces a currency or economic crisis. This means forming an economic alliance. Just as the European countries have eliminated tariffs and pursued economic integration through the EU to seek greater prosperity for its member countries, the three countries of the Far East are also pooling their resources together. Such integration of individual countries and its organizational development will eventually lead to political integration.

Economic integration through tariff removal

means de facto integration of individual countries into a supranational entity. When natural disasters of the seven plagues strike and chaos runs rampant throughout the world, the representatives of such international organizations and institutions will unite to select an absolute leader. They will try, in other words, to bring order to the chaotic world by organizing the world into a single political entity and raising a ruler with absolute power.

The wind of tribulation will blow in the midst of this process. Instead of respecting individual rights, trampling on the rights of the few for the sake of the greater majority will become not only acceptable, but expected. This wind will blow when the era of the pale horse comes. The groundwork for such events is laid during the era of the black horse, and their actual realization will come in the era of the pale horse.

When Korea was struck by the financial crisis of 1997 and subjected under the tutelage of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), it was engulfed in devastating economic calamities. Real estate prices

plunged, people lost their jobs over night, and the middle class was pushed out into the streets. Such economic catastrophes have become so common throughout the world that hardly a day goes by without hearing about yet another financial crisis in yet another country. This wind is the wind of famine. We are in this era of famine, the kind of era when your life becomes worthless if you have no money. In the near future, this wind of famine will shortly be followed by the full-blown wind of tribulation.

God held the winds of the four corners of the earth for a while and sealed 144,000 among the people of Israel. After preventing any harm to them, He then released the wind of tribulation. When this wind of tribulation leaves the hands of the angels, the wind of the Great Tribulation will blow. The wind of tribulation will unite the world, which, with the rise of the Antichrist, will wholly become Satan's dominion, and go through the seven-year period of great natural disasters from the plagues of the seven trumpets. These plagues of the seven trumpets will

then be followed by the plagues of the seven bowls.

During this era of the Antichrist's tyrannical rule and of the disappeared freedom of faith, famine and starvation will reach the worst level, forcing people to survive only on government-distributed food. Everyone in the world will face this era. The Word of Revelation 7 provides us with an overall picture of such things to come.

What else awaits us in this era? The era of the pale horse will also be marked by the countless martyrdom of both the Israelites and the Gentiles. When the Great Tribulation comes, there is only hope left. Verse 10 tells us, "*and crying out with a loud voice, saying, 'Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!'*" Our salvation, in other words, is found only in our God who sits on the throne, and in the Lamb. As we can see from chapter 4, which tells us that a throne was prepared for Jesus Christ, the One who sits on the throne is Jesus Christ, not as a weak, but as the Son of God, the Almighty God, and the Judge of all. God the Father still sits on

His throne. So when we speak of the Triune God, God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are all the same God. Our actual salvation thus belongs to our God and the Lamb—Jesus Christ, in short.

Where could we find hope when the fearful Tribulation comes? When the Antichrist rises during the Great Tribulation, he will make an image after himself, and threaten to kill all who refuse to worship the image, as well as all who do not receive the mark of his name on their hands or foreheads (Revelation 13).

In terms of the environment, the natural conditions will also reach the worst level possible, as fire and hail rain from the sky, earthquakes strike, and other plagues follow. No place in this earth will remain untouched by the plagues. In this worst environmental situation, where the earth splits open with quakes, the sun, the moon, and the star lose their light, and the seas and rivers die from the plagues, the political situation of the time will also be the worst of its kind. The Antichrist will reign with the

most tyrannical rule possible, as he assumes absolute power and subjugates all other leaders of the world under his domination.

Why Does the Antichrist Emerge?

Because Satan will briefly give his power to the Antichrist in an attempt to fulfill his last wish—that is, to satisfy his desire to be called as God by the people to be raised above the true God. But Satan himself knows that this wish will not be fulfilled. Yet for the last time, he will still try to be glorified through the mankind, killing all those who do not obey him. Such is the worst of all woes that will befall on the saints. At this time, the saints will have no other choice but to die, because the only One in whom they can trust and place their hope is the God of our salvation, Jesus Christ our God, who has saved us through the gospel of the water and the Spirit. We can rely only on this God, and only by believing in

Him can we be delivered from death in the midst of these horrible plagues and tribulations.

In these last days, our only hope belongs to “*our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb of God.*” By believing in our God, the saints will be martyred, and by their faith in Him, they will be delivered from the terrifying plagues and death. Revelation 7 thus provides us with the contours of all that will happen during the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation.

Let’s continue with the events that the wind of tribulation will bring. Verses 9-10 tell us, “*After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, and crying out with a loud voice, saying, ‘Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!’*” When asked who this multitude of all tribes and tongues clothed in white and praising the Lord were, one the 24 elders answered, “*These are the ones who come out of the*

great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.”

This tells us that a countless number of people will be saved in the midst of the Great Tribulation, when innumerable martyrs will rise from the people of all nations, tribes, and tongues. There will be, in other words, a flood of those who believe in God as their only Savior from all the tribulations and plagues of the time. It means, in short, that salvation is found only in the God of Trinity.

Because God gave us the gospel of the water and the Spirit that has saved us from our sins, and because we believe in this gospel, when the Antichrist appears and demands us with threats to surrender to him and call him as God, we will not yield to him. Moreover, even if some of us were to surrender to the Antichrist, there would be no guarantee for their survival, for they will have to go through the disastrous plagues and the last-ditch fanaticism of Satan. Nothing is guaranteed at this time.

We thus have no other choice but to believe in God who has saved us. We will boldly embrace our martyrdom by believing in God, who will give us His Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth, for He will raised us again from the dead, rapture us, and give us all the glory and blessing of the New Heaven and Earth. This is why there will be so many people who are clothed in white robes washed in the blood of the Lamb.

There will truly be many martyrs who die for their faith in God. The saints and all those who are martyred during this time, from every nation of the world, will give up their lives for their faith in God. Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit that we are now preaching will embrace their martyrdom by believing in God, that He will deliver them from all the horrors of the tribulations and plagues of the time. Only God can deliver us from these terrifying plagues.

I am telling you all the significant events that will happen during seven-year period of the Great

Tribulation. When the wind of tribulation blows in this world, there will be no hope left on this earth. The world as we now know will no longer exist, with heaven and earth disappearing as a scroll is rolled up.

God will then create a new earth on this earth, have the martyrs of faith reign over it for a thousand years, and when this millennium is over, move them to His eternal Kingdom. There is only our God who has delivered us from our sins, who will save us from the death and destruction of the Great Tribulation, and who can give us hope. When the time of martyrdom comes, you and I, as well as the people all over the world who heard and believed in the gospel, will be bravely martyred for believing in God who has saved us from our sins. We will embrace our martyrdom with our bold faith and in hope. The One who will deliver us from the terrifying plagues and tribulations is our God who sits on the throne.

As such, we cannot be martyred without believing that God who has saved us from our sins is also God who will deliver us from these terrifying plagues.

The martyrs of this time are those whose names are written in the Book of Life of the Lamb. But no one whose name is not found in the Book of Life will be able to be martyred.

This gospel will infallibly be preached throughout the whole world, and everyone around the world will surely hear and know it. Because we are ceaselessly spreading this gospel now, the gospel of the water and the Spirit is being testified throughout the world. There are many souls in this world who, when the Great Tribulation comes, will place their hope only in the Lamb, believe in God even at the risk of their own lives, and be able to embrace their martyrdom. And the gospel of the water and the Spirit, which enables its believers' names to be written in the Book of Life, will continue to be preached.

Those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will be martyred in the end times. Revelation 13:8 tells us, *“All who dwell on the earth will worship him, whose names have not been written in the Book of Life of the Lamb slain from the*

foundation of the world.” It is the absolute truth that everyone whose name is not written in the Book of Life will surrender to the Beast, without any exception.

Only Jesus Christ and God His Father can deliver us from the Great Tribulation of the last days. The Holy Spirit now dwells in our hearts. I believe that we are saved by God, and even if we are put to death for His sake, God will raise us from the dead again, lift us up to the air with rapture, renew every and all things on the earth, and allow us to live in His Millennial Kingdom.

This era of the pale horse ravaged by such wind of tribulation is fast approaching us. The era of the black horse is running fast. When it runs its course, the pale horse will appear. From then on, the whole world will enter into the seven-year period of the Great Tribulation. Lasting no more and no less than seven years, this period of the Great Tribulation will certainly be fulfilled, for it is God’s plan.

Let’s assume for a moment that the Great

Tribulation has indeed begun. Trees and grass around us and throughout the world are burning, the sky is filled by smoke, the sun is hidden behind thick smog clouds leaving the world in darkness even during daytime, people are dying everywhere, and we even hear the voice of people who are pursuing us. Whom would we trust? Would you trust in God, who has saved us from all our sins, and who has promised to make the martyrs who did not surrender to the Antichrist live again, to return to this earth again to resurrect and rapture us, and to take us to His New Heaven and Earth, or would you rather not trust in Him? Of course we would trust in God! God alone is our only hope! Neither adulation of the Antichrist nor reliance on ourselves can deliver us; nor would hiding in caves, nor even leaving the earth and escaping to a space station—nothing, but nothing will ever deliver us but God!

When comets hit this planet, all the debris will fall on the earth, destroying the whole planet. Everything that God first created will be destroyed. True hope

will then spring up in our hearts. Whom can we place our hope in such a desperate situation? God is the only One whom we can look toward and seek help, no one but God who has saved us!

Because we have been saved by believing in the Word of the gospel of the water and the Spirit, we thank and praise God for this salvation. But when the Great Tribulation comes, we will thank and praise God with everything we have for also delivering us from the terrifying plagues and death. Only God can deliver us from the hands of the Antichrist. There is no one else but God. Because we place our faith and hope in this God, and because we believe and hope that God will resurrect us and allow us to live in the Millennial Kingdom and the New Heaven and Earth in eternal happiness, we can withstand and overcome all the tribulations to come.

The time will come when the Antichrist will drag us before his image, demanding, “Bow before this image, and call me God. Jesus is not God. I am God, and I am the one who will save you.” When the

Antichrist thus demands us to worship him, we may be terrified, but none of us who have been born again can ever bow before his image. Why? Because after forcing us to take his mark, the Antichrist will make us into his slaves, use us to kill people, and in the end kill us also.

The time will come when this Antichrist will stand to declare himself as God. It is not too distant of a future when the Antichrist will build huge images after himself, demand everyone throughout the world to call him God, and build choirs to sing praises to him. If peace exists in this time and the natural environment is healthy and beautiful, one may even think that a new world has opened. But with the forest burnt down, the sun disappeared and the earth in darkness, people screaming as they die, and garbage and half-burnt corpses littering the streets, none of us can ever obey the Antichrist’s command to bow before his image and call him as our God. Every born-again believer will know at this time, that he is the Antichrist prophesized by the Word of God.

The Holy Spirit also teaches us. He gives us hearts that never surrender. He give us bold hearts, the kind that says, “Kill me if you must, but if I die the Lord will avenge my death on you, and He will resurrect me for sure!” We believe that just as our Lord rose from the dead in three days, we, too, will also be brought alive again. And the Lord will rapture us without fail.

The Righteous Will Never Surrender to the Antichrist

Those who heard this Word of promise, that God will destroy the first world and build the Millennial Kingdom in its place to let the righteous reign in it for a thousand years, and are born again by believing in it will never surrender to the Antichrist, for as the Holy Spirit dwells in their hearts, they will know everything. But those who have no Holy Spirit will beg for their lives and surrender to Satan, fearing that

their lives would be lost if they refuse to follow the dominant flow of what might first seem like a whole new world. When everyone thus fears death and becomes a slave to it, only the born-again will be free from this fear of death and boldly embrace their martyrdom, in an act as bright as the rising sun.

The born-again can do so because they have the hope that they will be resurrected into new bodies. This is why those dwelt by the Holy Spirit will not only have no fear of death, but they will actually stand against the Antichrist and throw him off his balance with the bold words flowing from the Holy Spirit. They may be timid now, but those who are sealed by the Holy Spirit by believing in the gospel of the water and the Spirit will, through the Holy Spirit, speak the words that their enemies cannot answer at all. We believe in this Word of God.

The Antichrist will be upset as the saints declare to him, “How dare you call yourself God! You were driven out of heaven, and soon you’ll be driven off the earth also! Your days are numbered now!” Not

just a few, but a countless multitude from all the nations of the world will rise and stand against the Antichrist. The Antichrist will then kill them all. At this time, the saints will never be servile even as they are put to death. As the Word of God tells us, that “Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!,” we will die in hope and great conviction of our faith flowing from the Holy Spirit.

As the Book of Acts bears witness, when Stephen was stoned to death, he looked up to heaven and saw in a vision the throne of God, and Jesus standing at His right hand waiting to receive him. Even as he was dying, Stephen prayed for the forgiveness of those who were stoning him, just as Jesus asked for the forgiveness of the people who crucified Him.

Just like Stephen, the martyred saints of the end times, being full of the Holy Spirit, will not waver but be bold. Though they may now seem timid and their faith weak, all those who hear this Word now will have the faith of boldness when this time comes.

Do not fear. There is nothing to fear, for all these

things, from the rise of the Antichrist to the wind of tribulation, will happen only by the permission of God and within His plan as manifested in Revelation 6.

Martyrdom does not come by our own strength of the flesh. Martyrdom is possible only by the power of the Holy Spirit and our faith in the truth. We can be martyred, in other words, by believing in God, in His Word of promise, and in the fact that the Almighty God is our God.

You must realize now that the martyrdom that God has permitted us within the seven eras of His plan is the providence of God. Let us not think of our martyrdom, a part of God’s plan for us, at our own whims, but instead believe it in our hearts according to the Will of God. Let us believe in the Word of God, that when the time comes for our martyrdom, God will give us more than enough strength to face it.

In every world there is an absolute ruler. The born-again are ruled by God, while those who have not been born again are ruled by the spirit of Satan.

When the end times come, the born-again, being ruled by God, will receive the strength from Him to bear with all trials and tribulations. In contrast, those who are ruled by Satan will have no choice but to follow his will, whether they want to or not, for they are under the dominion of Satan.

But whose power really is greater? Whether we are blessed or cursed is determined by whose power is greater between God and Satan. Who is ultimately saved in the end times is decided by whom we believe and follow, in whose words we trust. Those who have believed in God and His Word will be protected, blessed, and given eternal life by His almighty power and authority forever. But those who heard the words of Satan and surrendered to him will be thrown into hell along with him, who is powerless to deliver them from hell. This is why God gave His Word through Revelation 1-7.

From chapter 8 and on, Revelation records in detail what will happen during the era of the pale horse. First of all, the plagues of the seven trumpets

will descend on the earth. Of these seven plagues, let's turn to the first plague found in verse 7: *“The first angel sounded: And hail and fire followed, mingled with blood, and they were thrown to the earth. And a third of the trees were burned up, and all green grass was burned up.”* With the plague of the first trumpet, hail and fire mingled with blood will rain on the earth. This will not be the first time that fire would rain down on the earth, since the planet earth has been hit by meteors or comets on several occasions already.

So far, none of them has been catastrophic enough to bring devastation to the whole world, but when the era of the pale horse comes, the full-blown wind of tribulation will rage through the earth. When this wind rises as a tornado and sweeps away the nature, fire will rain on this earth and burn down a third of the trees and all grass, and everyone will rush out to put out the raging fire.

The Word of God tells us that after the forests of the world are burnt down by the first plague, a great

mountain burning with fire will fall into the sea—most likely to be a comet. This is elaborated further with the third plague: *“Then the third angel sounded: And a great star fell from heaven, burning like a torch, and it fell on a third of the rivers and on the springs of water.”* A comet, in other words, will collide with the earth. As in the movie *Deep Impact*, where a comet falls into the sea and raises huge tidal waves, the third plague will bring a similar disaster. The plague may not be as catastrophic as in this movie, but the meteors striking various places of the earth will bring significant damages to the planet earth. The tidal waves will kill off a third of the living creatures in the sea and destroy a third of the ships.

When such wind of tribulation begins to blow, we will recognize the arrival of the era of the pale horse. In the future, when you see breaking news flashing across your TV telling you that fire is raining from the sky and that a third of the world’s forests are up in smoke, you should realize that what was due has finally come. When governments mobilize everyone

from kids to the elderly to put out the fire, you should most certainly recognize that the beginning of the end has come at last.

For those of us who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit now, the hope of salvation that will deliver us from these terrifying plagues is found only in the Almighty God. When the Antichrist kills us, we will be martyred since we have no earthly power to match him, but we will nevertheless be martyred in great joy. The Almighty God will resurrect those of us who embrace martyrdom in the midst of this horrendous Tribulation in faith, and the Lord will become our Shepherd and lead us to the river of the water of life.

Having built the Kingdom of God, where we will never again suffer from fire, nor from thirst, nor from the harms of the sun, God will take us there. The Word tells us that God will live with us in this Kingdom, comfort us, wipe away our tears, and allow us to live in glory forever, so that we may never suffer again.

Stand Firm on the Word of Promise

When I dwell on the Bible, my heart gets filled by the Holy Spirit in hope, and I realize that God alone can deliver us from these terrifying plagues. “Come, Lord Jesus!” I believe in our Lord. I believe that He will deliver me from the horrible Tribulation, just as He has delivered me from all my sins. I believe that He will deliver my fellow saints as well. I believe that my salvation, even before the advent of the last days, belongs to our God who sits on the throne and to the Lamb, and I believe that your salvation, too, is found in God.

The world will soon be filled by plagues and disasters as the Great Tribulation arrives. But regardless how difficult this world turns, I believe that our God will deliver us from the tribulations and plagues of the time and the persecution of our enemies, for God has delivered us from all our sins, given us the right to become His children, and made us so.

Those who are not born again are far more wretched than us. How miserable would it be to have no God to place absolute trust, when everything is burning down and chaos runs rampant? Some people will no doubt hold desperately on to their own religion, whether be it Buddhism or Islam, but they will find no hope in them. Only despair and frustration will await them. There will be many people who end up facing their demise in such desperation. We, too, will face the same chaos and the same difficulties as these people. But our hearts are different from theirs. We who are preparing our faith now are different from the rest, for God has made us sinless through the gospel of the water and the Spirit.

John 1:12 tells us, *“But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name.”* God has sealed us, in other words, with the right to become His children, telling us, “You are My children.” He has given us this great and glorious right. We are God’s children.

When we believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit, is there any sin still left in our hearts? Of course not! Of all things, have we not become the children of God? Of course we have! If the children of God lack the knowledge of the Scripture and has many shortcomings, does this then mean that God would not protect them as their Father? Of course not! Just as parents devote more attention and care on their children who lack knowledge, God gives more strength and more protection to those of us who are weak.

When chaos runs rampant with the arrival of the time of the Antichrist, God will keep His children strong through the Holy Spirit, and give them faith, hope, and boldness. Because He will give us boldness, we will have no fear. There is nothing to fear except fear itself rising in our hearts. People can avoid what happens around them by escaping from it, but fear in their hearts cannot be shaken off no matter where they turn. Neither by hiding in bedrooms, nor in basements, nor in bomb shelters can they run away

from this fear that grapples their hearts.

The hearts of the saints, in contrast, have no fear but only boldness, and they can thus face their martyrdom with courage, saying to themselves, “What was due has finally come. It’s time for the Lord’s return! He’ll soon take us away!” This is when the rapture will happen—not in just a normal day like today, but when a third of the world is burning up in smoke. But before the Tribulation gets even worse, God will lift up the saints to the air.

Do you now believe that God has indeed set seven eras for you? Revelation 6 tells us that He did. As He has set, God will bring everything to bear on the saints exactly as is written. As such, those who have been atoned for their sins are greatly blessed, but those who have hesitated and not believed in the gospel are ill-fated, to end up in hell. God tells us that horrendous plagues will come in the future, and when these plagues are over, those who are not born again will be thrown into the lake of eternal fire and brimstone. This is why God has given us a peaceful

world now, and why He has entrusted us with His gospel in such a peaceful time.

God came to this earth about 2000 years ago in the flesh of a man. For our sake, He received baptism to take upon all our sins and died on the Cross, delivering us from all the sins of the world. As our Savior, He saved us. He bestowed us with His blessing that has allowed us to be saved by believing in God and His salvation. This is the grace of God. This is the gospel that has delivered us from all our sins and the judgement of God, by sending God's only begotten Son to us, passing all our sins onto Him, and judging His own Son in our place. By believing in this now, we become clothed in God's grace and receive eternal life from Him. Because we believe in this, we have become God's children, and because we have now become God's children, He will call us up and protect us when the Tribulation of the last days turns into its most severe stage.

At this time, the children of God and the children of Satan will be clearly distinguished from each other.

Their unmistakable differences will stand out obviously. This will be elaborated further with a more detailed discussion later on. What you must remember for now is that when the Great Tribulation comes to us and we are martyred, we will be resurrected and lifted up before God. It does not matter whether one believes in it or not; this will happen regardless, for God said that He will raise the winds and so bring all these things to pass.

Verse 1 tells us, *“After these things I saw four angels standing at the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, on the sea, or on any tree.”* God is withholding these winds so that they would not blow now. Put differently, this means that when God permits, these winds will blow from the four corners of the earth. When allowed by God, the angels of God will release these winds and usher in the era of the pale horse. When the wind of the Great Tribulation thus begins to blow, bringing natural disasters and wars to everywhere in the world,

everyone will be right in the middle of the whole calamities. But thus far, God has withheld these winds steady.

Countries around the world are investing heavily in arms production. Time may come when the great powers might have to devote as much as 30 percent of their GNP on military spending. Even as now, huge amounts of resources are being channeled to military spending in an effort to develop massive amounts of new, more deadly weapons, i.e., weapons of mass destruction. Whenever the economy recovers, its surpluses are spent in expanding military expenditure.

The United States, for instance, is now pushing to develop a missile defense system dubbed as the “Star War Plan.” When this system is fully developed, war will be fought not only on the earth, but in the space as well, with armed satellites shooting down air-born ballistic missiles with its own missiles outside the atmosphere. Air war will take on a whole new meaning then. Thus the question now being raised is

who will be the first to develop extra-atmospheric weapons and dominate the space for military use.

Looking at such developments, we can feel that when God allows, and when the terrifying plagues descend on the earth, the prophesized ruler with absolute power will soon emerge.

All these things, however, can happen only when God permits them. No matter how difficult the world turns, we believe that God will become our Shepherd, guide us to the living fountains of water, and wipe away all tears from our eyes. This is why the saved are so abundantly blessed.

When you believe in Jesus, you cannot believe in Him in whatever way that you might feel like. The true faith is the faith of those who believe in the Word of God.

Revelation 7:14 tells us, *“And I said to him, ‘Sir, you know.’ So he said to me, ‘These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.’”* By “washed their robes and made them

white in the blood of the Lamb,” it means that they were martyred for their faith in the Lord. Be careful in interpreting this verse; this does not refer to being saved by believing only in the blood of the Cross.

Rather, what you must realize is that those whose hearts are not dwelt by the Holy Spirit are not the children of God, and that those who do not believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit are the ones who do not believe in the gospel at all. Only those who believe in the gospel of the water and the Spirit can embrace their martyrdom, overcome the Tribulation, and thus give great glory to the Lord.

Because we believe in God, when the time of great hardship and suffering comes, we will not lose our faith, nor surrender to Satan, but boldly embrace our martyrdom with the strength received from God. We will then be resurrected by the Lord and protected by Him. The Lamb will become our Shepherd and wipe away all tears from our eyes, and we will neither hunger anymore, nor thirst, nor be harmed from heat, nor suffer from anything else at all.

Why? Because God will eliminate suffering forever, as we would have already gone through the Great Tribulation. This is how wonderful God’s world called Heaven is. Because it is such a wonderful place, people call it Paradise or Heaven, as the epitome of all that is good.

Paradise is a place of endless joy. In Buddhism, paradise is reserved for only those who have become a god, a Buddha. But is there really anyone who can turn into a Buddha, anyone who can become a god? Of course not! Siddhartha himself said on his deathbed, “Become a god; only by becoming a god can you escape from all the horrors of the world.” But it is simply impossible for anyone to escape from sin and overcome its fatal horrors on his/her own. Siddhartha himself failed to escape, and so has everyone else. As the Word tells us, “*Nor is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). Our salvation is given only by God, Jesus Christ who created the universe and us.

This truth, that Jesus Christ is the Savior who will also deliver us from the terrifying plagues, is what God is teaching us through the Holy Spirit.

Heaven is the most wonderful place. Do you want to live happily forever in honor and glory? Do you want to be recognized as precious and live in eternal happiness? Do you want to live in perfection and abundance, and lack nothing? The place that God will call us to live is such a place. It is Heaven. It lacks nothing, and no shortage can ever be found. You will never be ill again, nor be harmed from heat, nor shed any more tears.

When Jesus was crucified, He told the robber who was crucified at His side, *“today you will be with Me in Paradise.”* “Paradise” literally means a garden of joy. It is a place where one can delight in all joy and happiness. What makes us happy and rejoice on this earth are all overflowing in this place, where God will call us to live in. Believe in it, and make this Heaven, this Paradise, this Kingdom of God yours. The Kingdom of God is perfect and good, for no

imperfection of the kingdoms of this earth can ever be found in it.

Because God is almighty, He will give us this Kingdom. Because our Lord is the Almighty God, He will deliver His people and make them never again shed any more tear, nor suffer from anything. He will lead us to the fountains of living water. He will guide us to live in the midst of eternal life, eternal happiness, and eternal joy. All these things are possible, I believe, because His power is almighty.

If God who has saved us were powerless, then we would also be powerless. But God who has delivered us has the absolute, almighty power. He has made us sinless with His absolute power, and thus we are called His saints.

It does not matter what kind of life we have on this earth. Because we are God’s children and have the power of the King of kings, even if our lives are worse off than those who are not born again for now, when the era of the pale horse comes and the Lord returns, He will surely call us up and let us live in His

Paradise. We will lack nothing and reign with absolute power, where even the angels will be our servants. The saints will forever live in all splendor and glory.

The saints will never die again forever. This is what all religions dream of—to live eternally, to reign, and to enter Heaven. This blessing is not just for me, but God has equally bestowed it on you as well.

When the time comes, I believe, God will raise the wind of tribulations, and when this wind of tribulations blows, He will strengthen us to stand against the Devil, and ultimately take us away. And I also believe that He will let us live forever in happiness.

Did God not promise us all these things? Of course He has! He told us, *“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. In My Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will*

come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also” (John 14:1-3). This is what our Lord has promised us. All the Word of God in Revelation 20-22 are His Word of promise for us.

Halleluiah! I give all my thanks to God. ☒



USER GUIDE



How to Read

Easier Way to Read

Cover Page

|||||

HOW TO READ

|||||

PAGING THROUGH THE BOOK

Page by Page

Skipping to a Page



PAGE BY PAGE



• **KeyBoard**

1) Page Up / Page Down Key

Page Up = Previous Page,

Page Down = Next Page

2) Arrow Key

← or ↑ = Previous Page,

→ or ↓ = Next Page

• **Acrobat Reader Menu Button**

◀ = Previous Page,

▶ = Next Page

• **Link**

◀ = Previous Page,

▶ = Next Page

Contents = Go to Table of Contents



SKIPPING TO A PAGE



1) Key Board

Ctrl + N Key : The number of page you want to go to.

2) Acrobat Reader Scroll Bar

Click and drag in the scroll bar until the page number in the number field matches the page you want to go to.



|||||
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