

THE BOOK OF REVELATION

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[Unless in brackets, all of the message is by Bertrand L. Comparet.] We've been going through the Book of Revelation and we got past the first two of the woes – that is, we've covered nine chapters of Revelation so far. We saw that the first woe was the Saracen invasion. What we had studied last was the matter of the first and second woes in the 9th chapter of Revelation. You remember, there it was saying “woe, woe, woe, to the inhabitants of the earth by reason” of these things that were going to happen. We saw that the first of these woes was the Saracen Arab invasion which conquered and destroyed, as a political entity, a third of the Roman Empire, that being the southern third – North Africa, Egypt, Palestine, and indeed a good deal of Syria. [In other words, the Arab conquest took the entire southern portion of the Roman Empire, from Spain to Parthia.] Then we saw the second of these woes was the Turkish invasion which destroyed the northeastern third of the Roman Empire. The northwestern third – Rome and the northern and western European provinces – had fallen long before that. The tenth chapter of the Book of Revelation was thrown in as a little parenthesis, calling attention to something else. John had the vision of the angel standing, one foot on the sea, the other on the land, and having in his hand an opened book. Not just open, but the Greek says “having been opened”, implying it was previously closed, which obviously was the reference to the Bible which the Protestant movement had finally been able to get into print and available for “church” goers in general to read, and not just as a private monopoly for the priests.

Starting the eleventh chapter, a new thought is suddenly introduced here. Revelation chapter 11, verses 3 to 6: “And I will give *power* unto my two witnesses, and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth. These are the two olive trees, and the two candlesticks standing before the Sovereign of the earth. And if any man will hurt them, fire proceedeth out of their mouth, and devoureth their enemies: and if any man will hurt them, he must in this manner be killed. These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with every plague, as often as they desire.”

Probably few things, even in the Book of Revelation, have been the source of so much argument and disagreement as the identity of the two witnesses. And yet, I think the Bible gives the key to it pretty clearly. A few years ago there was some odd crank, up in the San Francisco bay area, who used to write very solemn letters to Wesley Swift. He'd say “I am one of the two witnesses, and I think you are the other.” Well, I can tell him he is mistaken. Now would you like to know that you will live to see the two witnesses, and what it says about them will come to pass? I'm going to be an old meanie and tell you “you can't do it” – no matter how long you live. The reason being: you are already four and one-half centuries too late. It has already happened. Now let's start analyzing this and see what proof we have of this.

So how about these two witnesses – the two olive trees and the two candlesticks? Well, the first vision of this sort that appears in the Bible – and remember, the only key to any symbolic statement in the Bible – the only key to it is in the Bible itself. Never will you find, anywhere else, that key. History will tell you whether you properly understand it because you can be sure that Yahweh's prophesies actually come to pass. So let's look back to Zechariah 4, verses 1 to 14. I'm leaving out a few verses that are just repetitious and don't get to our particular point:

"And the angel that talked with me came again, and wakened me, as a man that is wakened out of his sleep, And said unto me, What seest thou? And I said, I have seen, and behold a candlestick all of gold, with a bowl upon the top of it, and his seven lamps thereon, and seven pipes to each of the lamps, which are upon the top thereof: And two olive trees by it, one upon the right side of the bowl, and the other upon the left side thereof." Thus, he asked the angel, and he says: "Then answered I, and said unto him, What are these two olive trees upon the right side of the candlestick and upon the left side thereof? ... Then said he, these are the two anointed ones that stand by the Sovereign of the whole earth."

Your *King James Version*, whether it's Old Testament or New, says candlestick, and uniformly, Old Testament or New, it's wrong. That's part of the 27,000 odd mistranslations you find in it. The word is lampstand. You may have seen pictures of the ancient lamps. They looked like a rather shallow, flat teapot. Through the hole in the top, the bowl could be filled with oil. In the spout there was a string wick which was lighted so that the flame burned at the tip of the spout. These were not candleholders in which you put wax candles, but they were lampstands which had either a flat surface on which a lamp could be set, or a socket into which a projection on the bottom of the lamp could be fitted. In either case, they were to hold lamps. You next run into this in the first chapter of the Book of Revelation. At John's first vision, he said that (this is Revelation 1, verses 12 and 13): "And having turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And in the midst of the seven candlesticks one like unto the Son of man..." In other words, his vision was of Yahshua the Christ, in all his glory, standing beside these seven lampstands, and he said, "having in his hand seven stars." Then in verse 20, Yahshua the Christ gives them the explanation: "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks ... are the seven churches."

We went over this matter of the seven "churches" right at the beginning of this thing and we saw that these symbolized seven different periods in the history of the Christian "Church" – from the time of the resurrection of Yahshua the Christ on to our present day. Thus, these candlesticks or lampstands represent the Christian "Church", or actually, since we first pick up this symbolism in the Old Testament in Zechariah, it represents not only the Christian "Church", but it represents the Temple under the Old Testament. Remember, both the Old Testament Temple and the New Testament Christian "Church" each have passed through various periods of infiltration and corruption by the enemy in which they failed to carry out their light-giving purposes. But every once in a while, some good men got in, and they got back on the job. John was especially told that there were olive trees which were emptying out the olive oil through pipes into these lamps. Incidentally, it's worthy to note, Exodus 27, verse 20, and Leviticus 24, verse 2, that the only oil permitted to be used in the Temple for filling the lamps that were kept burning, (and especially the lamps that were never allowed to go out: always, in the Holy place, right in front of the veil that divided it from the innermost Holy of Holies, there always was a lamp burning), and the only oil permitted to be used was olive oil. Not that other oils wouldn't burn and give light, but remember, that the olive tree was symbolic of Yahweh's people, Israel.

We are told that the two witnesses are the olive trees and candlesticks. Who have been the great witnesses to the Word of Yahweh throughout all history? One class were the prophets

of the Old Testament and the apostles in the New Testament. Those who were able, not merely to repeat other's teachings but to be able to say that "I myself have heard it" – thus saith Yahweh – their witness was written down in the Scriptures. But besides the occasional prophet who came along in the Old Testament, you had a considerable Levitical priesthood who did not personally receive new revelations of their own but were to study the writings of the prophets and to teach the people, so that under the Old Testament, just as under the New Testament, you have had as one witness the written testimony of those who were directly inspired. And you had the further testimony of those who had studied the Scriptures. In John 5, verse 39, Yahshua the Christ reminded the Pharisees of this. You see, in those days, just as in the present day, you had a lot of people who were one-verse Bible authorities. Somebody had called their attention to one or two verses and they thought they knew the Bible. Whoever can found a belief in anything using a single verse is grossly ignorant of the Bible, because it isn't all there in any one verse.

So, Yahshua the Christ said to these Pharisees, "search the scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life, and these are they which are witnesses of me." At that time, the only Scripture they could study was the Old Testament. Then, in the first chapter of the Book of Acts, before Yahshua the Christ went back into heaven after His resurrection, He spoke to the people who were assembled. This included a lot more than the apostles who had furnished written Scripture in the Bible. He said: "Ye shall be witnesses unto me in Judea and throughout the world." Thus, you had the written witness and the spoken witness. Yahshua the Christ said "the seven candlesticks are the seven 'churches'," so you can be sure the symbolism will be the same when you come to the two candlesticks and the two olive trees. Lamps cannot burn and give their light without oil, so the olive trees of both the Old and New Testament furnish the oil. Remember, the Bible often uses oil as a symbol of the Spirit of Yahweh, from which comes all truth. The two olive trees furnish the oil so the lamp may give light. Now, we read some peculiar things about these two witnesses. Revelation 11, verse 3: "... and they shall prophesy" ... (and by the way, that word translated prophesy, both the Hebrew word in the Old Testament and the Greek word in the New Testament, means "to teach" – to foretell future events is not an essential part of the meaning of the word. It's true that some who taught did foretell, but prophet and prophesy, as used in the Bible, in general means "teach.") "... and they shall prophesy a thousand two hundred *and* threescore days, clothed in sackcloth." [See note #1 at end of lesson.]

Sackcloth was a symbol of calamity and of mourning. In those days they made a great show of mourning for the dead and so on, and instead of wearing their normal, reasonably fine cloth garments, they put on coarse sackcloth. At funerals they had hired mourners to wail and yowl and put on a great show. Because sackcloth was a symbol of grief, you note that in many places where the people's continued rascality was bringing down upon them punishment – a judgment from Yahweh – they were told to put on sackcloth by way of showing mourning and grief for the wickedness in which they had engaged. Hence, sackcloth here is a symbol of sorrow and persecution. We know from history, that from the establishment of the power of the papacy in the Catholic "Church", which as near as you can fix a precise time for it would be 606 A.D., that anybody who objected to the paganism that was being made more and more a part of Catholic doctrine and Catholic ritual suffered terrible persecution, usually in the form of murder, often by horrible torture, burning alive and that sort of thing. These people who were witnessing to the truth in the early days, when there was as yet no Protestant movement, were just those individual people who objected to the destruction of true Christianity and the substitution of paganism for it. They were undergoing persecution continually.

The Pope, you remember, finally got considerable territory. I guess he had fully a third of the whole peninsula of Italy under his control as a king – not a religious leader, but a monarch with ordinary earthly political powers – and in 1866 that power was broken. You remember that the Italian people finally rebelled. Who was their leader? Oh, I'll think of the name in a minute; but they threw off the shackles of the corrupt rule of the papacy. They took away the Pope's rule over all territory except a few hundred acres, the Vatican City, and from that time on he called himself "the prisoner of the Vatican." He wouldn't set foot on soil of which he was not an earthly king, and he could only pretend *that* within the Vatican. Thus, you can say the power of the papacy lasted from 606 A.D. to 1866 A.D. You'll note that is exactly 1260 years. With the prophetic scale, that a day in prophesy represents a year in time, for a period of 1260 years anyone who gave witness to the truth of Yahweh, as written in the Bible, was subject to persecution. If you don't think it was persecution, you might take note of the fact that in the year 1866 some Protestants were burned alive by the Catholic "Church" in the city of Barletta, Italy. Therefore, this isn't just something out of the dark ages. Remember, our own Civil War was all over by that time.

It says some other things about them which obviously are, again, symbolic rather than literal. Speaking of the two witnesses: "these have the power to shut the heaven that it rain not during the days of their prophesy." The only thing that permits life to exist on earth is the rain that enables vegetation to grow, without which all forms of animal life would also die of starvation. Whenever you get a prolonged drought you get a famine following it, so rain is the essence of continued life, and the Bible, in a number of places, uses rain as symbolic of the word of Yahweh. For example, Moses, at the end of his career when he was finally summing up to the people what had happened and what they should do, said this at Deuteronomy 32, verse 2: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Hosea 6, verse 3, is another example: "And let us know, let us follow on to know Yahweh: his going forth is sure as the morning; and he will come unto us as the rain, as the latter rain that watereth the earth." [Compartet failed to identify what translation he was using here.]

You'll find the New Testament consistently carries on the established symbolism of the Old Testament. In James 5, verse 7, he says: "Be patient therefore, brethren, unto the coming of the Prince. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain." When Yahweh became sufficiently annoyed at His people's misconduct, He sometimes sent a drought, with the resulting famine as a punishment upon them. That's recorded several times in the Bible, and once, just to make sure that nobody missed the meaning of it, one of the greatest of the Old Testament prophets, Elijah, drives home the lesson firmly. He's talking to the wicked king Ahab of Israel. This is 1st Kings 17, verse 1: "And Elijah the Tishbite, *who was* of the sojourners of Gilead, said unto Ahab, As Yahweh Elohim of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years, but according to my word." And the Bible records he made good on it. Here was Yahweh's great representative trying to turn the people back from idolatry, back to the worship of the one true God. They wouldn't listen to him, and Yahweh gave him the power to say, "There shall be no rain except when I give the word", and for three years there was practically no rain. He brought on a terrific famine bringing the nation to its knees, and made them finally ready to listen to what he had to say.

Now here were these witnesses, not yet an organized Protestant "Church" but a few people in each generation who were disturbed by seeing what they knew was paganism brought in to corrupt the "church", and trying to object and bring back the purity of Yahweh's Word. Yet the people wouldn't heed them – most everybody went along with the hierarchy of

the Catholic “Church.” The Catholic “Church”, throughout all the centuries, has purposely kept its people ignorant of the Word of Yahweh, so that no one would be able to dare dispute what they say, because no one would know that what the priests taught was in any way inconsistent with what the Bible says. So, if they would not listen to the people who brought up these inconsistencies, the rain, the Word of Yahweh was withheld from that nation. It says that “they shall have power over the waters to turn them into blood and to smite the earth with every plague as often as they desire”, Revelation 11, verse 6. The Bible tells us that one of the plagues visited upon Egypt, when Moses was trying to persuade Pharaoh to let the people of Israel go, was that the waters of the Nile and the waters of their wells were literally turned into blood and became undrinkable. You notice where we were reading of the destruction of the Roman Empire, that several times the Bible used the symbolism of waters turned into blood. It spoke of “a great star falling upon the source of the waters, that they were turned into blood.” You saw that that symbolized a period when the Huns seized the area that was the headwaters of the rivers Po, Danube and Rhine. They indeed turned those areas into rivers of blood all right, with frightful slaughter. [See note #2 at end of lesson.]

In another place [Rev. 8:7-8] it said that “a star fell into the sea and turned a third of the sea to blood.” We saw that that spoke of the time when the so-called barbarians became a mighty sea power, from their North African possessions, and just swept the Roman navy off the sea. In fact, they even ravaged the coast of Greece and sailed up to Constantinople, and the emperor of the eastern part of the Roman Empire finally bought them off, recognizing their authority over the Mediterranean Sea. So turning the waters into blood is obviously here symbolic. Well, as time went on and there got to be more and more people who were objecting to the corruption that had taken over in the Catholic “Church”, you found in Middle Europe a rising – not well organized – but nevertheless, a rising tide of Protestantism. You found that in southeastern France, Switzerland and northern Italy. So, up here in places which were the headwaters of the Po and the Rhine, and places along the Danube, the Bohemians, “Czechs” as we call them today, you had rising Protestant movements, and you had the Catholic “Church” trying to stamp it out with the most frightful massacres in which they murdered men, women and children alike. They didn’t get away with it without some resistance, so there was terrific fighting going on here. In these principal river valleys of Europe you had the waters turned into blood – that is, terrific bloodshed along their course. [See note #3 at end of lesson.]

“And to smite the earth with plagues” – this came as a latter phase of it, but you will note that, beginning with the Communist revolution in France, which spread outward, and the Napoleonic wars following afterward, that the Catholic nations which had persecuted these Protestants found themselves undergoing the most frightful scourge of warfare. France, Spain, Italy, Austria, Poland, got themselves into some terrific periods of wars and revolutions. Practically everything in the Book of Revelation has been the source of puzzlement, argument and disagreement, because if you don’t understand the symbolism, it doesn’t make good sense.

The next part we come to, while seemingly hard to understand, yet we’ll see that history fulfills it to the exact letter. Revelation 11, verses 7 to 13: “And when they shall have finished their testimony, the beast that comes up out of the abyss shall make war with them, and overcome them, and kill them.” We are going to take up in more detail (as we get to later chapters) this matter of the beast that comes up out of the sea, but it will suffice to say right now that it represents a continuing system of religious, political and economic evil. The Babylonian succession of empires which have carried on the same set up: politically, they represented tyranny; economically, they represented greed, whereby some were enriched, but the great majority of the people impoverished; and religiously, you can trace right down to the same old paganism, the worship of Satan and his fallen angel followers. Some of you perhaps

noticed a couple of months ago – oh, more than that; three or four months, I guess – in the newspapers, the fact that the Pope had expressed doubts about certain of the Catholic saints who were worshipped as such, including among them, I think, some forty of them whom he had toppled from their thrones. It included Bacchus – Bacchus, the pagan God of drunken debauchery. I gave you a talk once on how Bacchus became a Saint. The Pope did so with a lot of the other [so-called] “saints”. [See note #4 at end of lesson.]

You can trace, behind much of Catholic doctrine and ritual; the old Babylonian religion. You can pick it up in the records of Babylon and you can follow it westward to the coastal settlements of the Greeks in Asia Minor. You can carry it on over through Greece and Rome, and you can follow it right down into the Catholic “Church.” The Pope calls himself “Supreme Pontiff”, or in Latin, as he uses it, “Pontifex Maximus.” You’ll remember, we saw that the supreme pontiff was the high priest of the pagan god Jupiter. We saw that the office of Pontifex Maximus was assumed by several of the Caesars in succession. Julius Caesar was one until finally, after nominal Christianity had been established in Rome, one of the emperors decided that it didn’t seem correct for him, if he was a Christian, to be the high priest of the pagan god Jupiter. So he refused to accept the title, and shortly thereafter the Pope assumed the title of Pontifex Maximus, the high priest of Jupiter. Thus, this beast that came up out of the abyss represented the continuing power of this organization. Sure, the ancient city of Babylon was destroyed, but we saw that the Babylonian banking system was not interrupted for a minute. [See note #5 at end of lesson. – Also see note #9 at Lesson #4.]

In fact, our whole banking system as it exists today in this country is organized exactly as it was in ancient Babylon. For centuries the nations of western Europe, and of course the United States, starting as a colony, have recognized a species of document called a bill of exchange. It started when merchants in widely separated cities were buying and selling. If you wanted to buy something in another city, but you also had sold goods in that same city to somebody else, you would draw up a document addressed to the man who owed you money for what he’d bought from you. After addressing it to this man, you wrote “pay to the order of John Doe so much money, and charge it to my account.” Out of the ruins of ancient Babylon they have dug up clay tablets in which that is exactly the language used. This didn’t originate with the merchants of medieval Europe. This was a going concern for 2,000 years, at least, in ancient Babylon before it ever came westward. Their political organization – you note how government goes through the cycles from anarchy to the establishment of order, and to the fact that there are always do-gooders who say, “Well I don’t like something, there ought to be a law against it. Everybody ought to be compelled to behave the way I think they should behave.” In a few instances they’re right; there should be laws against robbery and so on. But most of the time they’re wrong! And because the people who are not discontented don’t make any fuss, and the people who are discontented do, you get the power of government always increased till it becomes tyranny. You’re getting it increased till it has reached the stage of tyranny here in the United States. If you don’t think it’s tyranny, just you refuse to answer some of the questions on the questionnaire that’s coming out in connection with the census they’re taking this year. If you say how many people live in my home, or how many bathrooms I have, or how often I take a bath are my business and not the government’s, you may find yourself in jail. Free country? Don’t be silly! The whole thing – economic, political and religious – one empire is fallen, and the people who have exercised this power move on to the next.

Today we speak of them as international bankers because, while for convenience sake, they will claim citizenship in the country they’re temporarily in, they go hither and yon, and are as much at home anywhere else as they are here. When they have brought one empire to destruction and stolen everything they could get out of it, they move on to the next. Thus, the

symbolism was used that you had a beast with seven heads, representing seven successive stages of empires which were ruled according to this system, ruled until they had been bled white and destroyed, then abandoned, to take up another and do the same thing. They were all heads on the same beast. It was the same animal, and as we shall see, you had evidence here that the Catholic "Church" had become part of the Babylonian system. "The beast that comes up out of the abyss is going to make war with these witnesses, and overcome them, and kill them. And their dead bodies *shall lie* in the street of the great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt, where also our Sovereign was crucified."

That great city was obviously Rome. For a period of quite a number of centuries its moral conduct was such that it might very well be compared with Sodom. Because its religion had become corrupt, it was also well compared with Egypt, for there you had the multitude of animal headed gods. One of their gods had the head of an ibis bird, a bird-brained god for a bird-brained people. "Where also their Lord (sic. Master) was crucified." The power that caused the crucifixion of Yahshua the Christ was ruling just as effectively in Jerusalem as it later ruled in Rome. So here you see it's bringing out the fact that the same evil forces were going on century after century, in nation after nation, that had brought about the crucifixion of Christ. [See note #6 at end of lesson.]

Likewise, these same evil forces are going to bring about a period when the Protestant witnessing to the truth is silenced, and thus symbolically killed [Revelation 11:9]: "And from among the peoples and tribes and tongues and nations, do men look upon their dead bodies three days and a half, and suffer not their dead bodies to be laid in the tomb. And they that dwell on the earth rejoice over them, and make merry; and they shall send gifts to one another; because these two prophets tormented them that dwell on the earth. And after three days and a half the breath of life from Yahweh entered into them (that's these two witnesses), and they stood upon their feet; and great fear fell on them that beheld them. And they heard a great voice from heaven saying, Come up hither. And they went up into heaven in the cloud; and their enemies beheld them. And in that hour there was a great earthquake, and the tenth part of the city fell; and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons: and the rest became affrighted, and gave glory to the God of heaven." [Again, Comparet's translation unidentified. It may be his own paraphrase.]

All right now, let's look at the timing of this. From the papacy becoming established you had some persecution of all who were not willing to be ruled by it religiously. But that didn't become acute for a few centuries after that. The reason for it was this: Remember, the Book of Revelation points out this corruption that is coming, and points it out in a way that identifies the Catholic "Church" and its papacy as being "the man of sin", who is also called Antichrist, and so on. But it wasn't until the papacy had manifested these characteristics for some time that the people could recognize it, and some started to point it out. Therefore, they have not finished their testimony until they reach the point where they are showing that here is deep and terrible corruption within what passed for the Christian "Church". The identity of the papacy as the "man of sin" and "Antichrist", and one of the heads of the fourth beast, was not preached until the 12th century A.D., during the 1100s. When they started recognizing this thing they were reaching the point where they were finishing their testimony. [See note #7 at end of lesson.]

In southern France you had a considerable Protestant group, the Albigenses, who were finally hounded to extinction, massacred to the last man, woman and child by the 14th century. You ask "How did the Pope do this when he didn't have a standing army, at least other than in his dominions in Italy?" He did it because he claimed power over all kings. Remember, the peoples of all these European countries were basically Catholic. They had been taught that the Pope, or indeed any Catholic priest, could take any of these persons and condemn him to hell if

he saw fit, and there he was going. It didn't matter that Yahshua the Christ died on the cross to save him from that. If the Pope or the priest said: "You are going to hell", you went to hell. And they taught a very impressive idea of what hell was like. Remember, the Pope claimed the right to give the crown to any king, and likewise to depose any king. If the king said, "Well pooh-pooh to you – I'm here, and the head of my army, now what are you going to do?" The Pope could do something about it; he excommunicated the king and he put the whole kingdom under the interdict until that king either was removed or had made his peace with the Pope.

Under the interdict, no priest would perform any religious ceremony. You couldn't be married. If one of your relatives died, you could dig a hole in the ground, but not in a consecrated cemetery. You couldn't have any funeral ceremony for him. And remember that everybody believed that unless you bought his way out of purgatory, by paying a good sum of money to the "church", that he was going to burn in flames for thousands of years. Maybe this was your beloved mother that was just buried – she couldn't ever go to heaven – she hadn't been buried in a consecrated cemetery and no priest was going to say a Mass for her. Likewise, all Catholics, everywhere, were forbidden to carry on any kind of transaction with people who were under that interdict. If your country needed to import part of its food supply, that was shut off. Who was going to sell it to you? If you needed to sell your products abroad, who was going to buy from you? In other words, everything in a nation just simply came to a screeching halt. The people were told "now look, your relatives that have died in this period have all gone forever to hell, and you yourself are going there too because the 'Church' isn't going to get you out of it unless you get rid of this king." It didn't take long for that kingdom to have a very effective revolution for the king to deal with. Thus, when the Pope told the king of any country "There are heretics in your kingdom, and I command you to slaughter them all and stamp out heresy", that king was going to do it. And he did it.

Nobody kept exact statistics of the number of Protestants murdered during this twelve and a half century period, but the minimum estimate that anybody has made on it that's tried to dig out what statistics there are, runs to 40 million people. Pretty careful students, some of them have come to the conclusion that there were 50 million, or more, who were murdered by the Catholic "Church" over a period of twelve and a half centuries. The Albigenses, in southern France, were all murdered by the 14th century. The Waldenses of southeastern France were heavily persecuted from 1432 on. In 1488 the Pope declared a crusade against them. Under a crusade – suppose that for your many murders and thefts (and maybe you'd murdered a priest or two, and so the "church" had formally excommunicated you) you were definitely going to hell. But the Pope had declared a crusade. No matter what your past wickedness had been, if you enlisted in that crusade and went off and cut the throats of the Pope's enemies, you were absolutely certain to go to heaven. That's the way they sold it in those days. Hence, besides the ordinary soldiery of the particular vicinity, you had scoundrels from all over Europe flocking to get in on the chance to slaughter a few heretics and get back in the good graces of the "church."

The Waldenses finally merged with the Calvinists after the Reformation was established. You had the Wycliffeites, the poor preachers in England from 1350 and after; and the Hussites, the followers of John Huss in Bohemia, from 1420 and afterwards. You'll remember, that in Bohemia, where John Huss had brought the truth to the people, it was received so enthusiastically that when the Pope commanded the Holy Roman Emperor in Austria to massacre these people, the whole kingdom of Bohemia rose in revolt against it, and they raised their armies and they battled the armies of the emperor to a standstill. They kept them out, so you didn't have the slaughter in Bohemia. The most stubborn spot, refusing to submit to Catholic domination, was Bohemia. There, the followers of John Huss really held out against it.

But in 1499 these Bohemian brethren sent representatives throughout all the major nations of Europe, trying to find out if there were any other Protestant organizations there like their own. They couldn't find any. So, in the year 1513 the Pope put out a command, a bull as they call it, calling on these remaining Bohemian Protestants to appear before a "church" council; the 5th Lateran council in Rome, on May 5th, 1514. They'd already had experience with some people going to these "church" councils, relying in good faith upon a promise of safe conduct; yet with the invariable treachery of the Catholic "Church" being seized and murdered, and usually burned at the stake.

So the Bohemians weren't having any of it. The object of this Lateran council was to complete the extermination of heresy. Thus, their council met May 5th, 1514, and no one appeared to present any contrary doctrine. There was no witness to the word of Yahweh. All had been silenced and killed (you remember the two witnesses would be overcome and killed, and as I say, to the extent of a good many millions, that killing was literal). There was tremendous rejoicing by the Catholic "Church", as here was the end of all opposition. But the "church" wasn't content with that – you'll remember the Book of Revelation says that "after these witnesses are killed, their dead bodies would lie in the streets and were not allowed to be buried." The Catholic "Church" was not willing to forget the thing as a dead issue. They kept putting out proclamations, excommunicating the souls of any Protestants who had been killed and saying that they were condemned to burn forever in hell. They ordered the corpses of many of these long dead, murdered Protestants dug up and burned. It was done in many cases.

It was May 5th, 1514 that the witnesses were overcome and killed, completely silenced. Then October 31st, 1517, three and one-half years later (three years and five months if you want to be very exact), Martin Luther nailed on the door of the "church" at Wittenberg these 95 theses or propositions of corruption and false doctrines of the Catholic "Church" that he was prepared to debate with anybody. So for three and one-half years (the symbolic three and one half days of the prophesy), no one dared speak in opposition to the Catholic "Church" to witness to the truth of Yahweh. But at the end of three and one-half years, Protestantism took off like a skyrocket. Within a month after Martin Luther had nailed up these theses there, pointing out the corruption in the "Church" and the falsity of its doctrine, the news had spread all over Europe and things were really getting going. In a very brief period of time, practically all the Germanic and Scandinavian peoples were Lutheran, Protestant. The "church" no longer could get in and massacre them because here you found whole nations ready to resist.

The Catholic "Church" was in great fear. Remember, it said "when they received the breath of life, and stood upon their feet, great fear fell upon them that beheld them." This is the knowledge of the truth that the Catholic "Church" had been trying for centuries to stamp out. Now suddenly it was sweeping over a greater part of Europe. It's described in the Book of Revelation as a great earthquake. In the Book of Revelation, the use of "earthquake" is symbolic of tremendous disturbances, not something that shakes the ground, but something that shakes the existing institutions of society. Certainly nothing could be a bigger earthquake, in that sense, than the breaking of the grip of the Catholic "Church" upon the Israel people who were then living in Europe as the Anglo-Saxon, Germanic and Scandinavian peoples.

Then it says, "the tenth part of the city fell." Remember that the Catholic "Church" had been the ruling "church" ruling over the kings, even in England. Suddenly you had the whole grip of the Catholic "Church" on England broken. Now I will admit that the motives were not as noble in England as they were in Germany under Martin Luther, because the start of the Reformation, as an effective thing, (not the start of the first criticism of the Catholic "Church", but the start of breaking its power), was merely Henry the 8th's desire to get a divorce decree from the Pope so he could marry another wife. Indeed for some time after refusing to

acknowledge the power of the Pope, Henry the 8th actually had quite a number of Protestants burned at the stake as heretics. Nevertheless, he started the process and it continued.

Then it says: "The tenth part of the city fell, and there were killed in the earthquake seven thousand persons." The Bible, especially the Old Testament, has sometimes used that term "thousand", not literally as of just that many people, but as representing an organization such as a family, a sub-tribe. You take for example Micah 5, verse 2, one of the prophecies of the coming of Christ, where he was to be born: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, *though* thou be little among the thousands of Judah, *yet* out of thee shall he come forth unto me *that is* to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth *have been* from of old, from everlasting." The reference to thousands there is obviously a reference to a governmental subdivision. You'll find also, in the earlier books of the Old Testament, with reference to the men in command of certain tribal forces as head over thousands, where it probably represented not a literal thousand, but a family organization which might be larger or smaller than a thousand. Between the years 1579 and 1629, seven provinces in the Netherlands had been suffering from terrific tyranny and brutality under the combined Spanish and Catholic rule over them. Therefore, a Spanish king had to become king of the Netherlands. The Spanish are a people who do not take well to authority. All the examples in history show that when trusted with power they become tyrants of the worst sort, and this was no exception. Thus, between that and the Spanish ferocity, egged on by the Catholic "Church", Holland had been having quite a bad time. They had steady fighting and bitter warfare throughout this period of 1579 to 1629 in order to get their independence. But these seven provinces, or thousands, did break away. They were lost, killed, so far as the Catholic "Church" was concerned. [See note #8 at end of lesson.]

Now, let's look back over this thing. There is only one period in history, one set of events that can answer to the description given here in symbolism. The witnesses we have pretty well identified. You know many people have made many guesses, not based upon the Bible but upon what they thought it might logically be. But what the Bible identifies as witnesses would be the written witness of the Scripture and the spoken witness of the faithful who continued to preach this truth. You have a period where they were stamped out, silenced, and most of them literally killed. You have a period of three and a half years when that condition existed, the three and a half days of prophesy. You have the sudden revival of Protestantism on a scale never approached before. It just spread like wildfire after Martin Luther. So they were taken up, as it says, called up into heaven. Heaven is used symbolically in places in the Bible as representing the seat of power in the Israel nation. Here you had, among the Israel people – among the Bohemians, the Germans, the Scandinavians, the British – here you had them raised to power because the kings became Protestant and gave the authority of the government as backing for this. They weren't literally called into the spiritual heaven because the prophecy says their enemies saw them. Their enemy, the Catholic "Church", did see them in positions of favor among a number of very powerful nations. One more thing, as a final proof that the time is right. You had quite a lot of interruption, here in the 9th chapter, when we were dealing with the first and the second of these three woes. Then the tenth chapter was thrown in as a parenthesis and speaking of the coming Reformation as indicated by the angel offering the open book. We saw that it was borne out by the events of the Protestant Reformation.

In the 11th chapter, we've gone through this business of the two witnesses, and all this time nothing has been said about whether the second woe was still going on or whether it was over, or when the third woe is coming. After all this matter about the two witnesses, then Revelation 11, verse 14, says: "The second woe is past; *and*, behold, the third woe cometh quickly." That second woe was the great Turkish invasion, so let's see whether the end of the second, or Turkish woe, came after the revival of Protestantism. The Turks were still extending

their conquest of European territory through part of this. They conquered Macedonia and part of Greece in 1427 to 1444. They captured the city of Constantinople itself in 1453, extinguishing the last remaining trace of the Roman Empire. They annexed most of Serbia during the 1460s. The great fortified city, really fortress more than a city, of Belgrade, they took in 1521. [From] 1526 to 1530 the Turks, during much of this time, were besieging the city of Vienna, and they occupied nearly all of Hungary. In 1516, the Turks, while not reducing their attack upon Europe, turned southward also and conquered Syria in 1516 and Palestine and Egypt in 1517, which you remember is the date that Martin Luther nailed up his thesis.

The great sea battle of Lepanto in 1571 was a disastrous defeat for the Turks, and it really is the beginning of Turkish downfall. They didn't recognize it yet, as they thought they could still come back and keep making repeated wars of conquest, but from this time on the Turks were blundering into one disaster after another. They again besieged Vienna for two months, in 1683, but at the finish of that they suffered a terrific defeat. From then on, the Turks were always on the losing end. They kept trying to pick fights with Russia and got licked. Then Russia got tired of Turkish territory extending deep into European Russia and Russia began driving them out. But you can say that 1683 was the absolute end of any really successful attack, or any major attack by Turkey. So, the period of the two witnesses is completed to their resurrection. All that is finished. Then after that we're told the second woe is past. There remains, of course, a third woe, and we will be getting into that presumably the next time. [End of Comparet's Lesson #8.]

CRITICAL NOTES ON LESSON #8

Comments by William Finck initialed *W.R.F.*

Comments by Clifton A. Emahiser in brackets in lesson text as "your transcriber" or initialed *C.A.E.* in critical notes.

Note #1: The correlation of the two witnesses of Revelation 11 to the written Scriptures and to the spoken testimony is quite interesting, and Comparet makes a persuasive case for it; yet I am not convinced of it. The "two anointed ones" of Zechariah 4:14 are literally two "sons of oil", a different phrase from any other translated "anointed" in the A.V., as evident in *Strong's*, and the Greek of the *LXX* reads here, "sons of fatness" (metaphorically "sons of wealth"), which indicates to me that the two witnesses are people – or groups of people – and not inanimate objects, such as even the Scriptures are in written form. It occurs to me that the two witnesses are two olive trees: the House of Israel and the House of Judah. Revelation chapter 10 describes the (greater part of, at least) children of Israel in the Reformation, breaking away from the rule of the Catholic "Church", and so this may be correlated to the taking away of the Pope's dominion, described at Daniel 7, verse 26 – which will hopefully become evident later, and so Revelation 11:12 may be correlated to Daniel 7:27, for ever since the eclipse of Papal supremacy over Europe, for better or worse the Saxon peoples of England and America have had world hegemony (except that the children of Cain among us are another topic entirely). Comparet has done well to notice that Revelation chapter 11 is fulfilled by the time of the passing of the second woe – the woe of the Turkish aggression.

The two witnesses were to "prophesy a thousand two hundred and three score days", or 1260 years. By Comparet's own exposition, Scripture was not used by the Catholic "Church" at all before the Reformation, and so Scripture certainly couldn't have been prophesying during this period – except that I can identify one group of people who were prophesying (teaching) with Scripture during this period: The Celtic "Church" of Ireland and Scotland – which also brought Christianity to many in Britain and on the Continent, and which did fulfill a 1260-year

period of time. I know not enough about the history of the middle ages to comment further than I have here. *W.R.F.*

Note #2: The waters became blood at Rev. 8:7-8, speaking of the Goths and Vandals. At 8:11, speaking of the Huns, the waters became wormwood, and not blood. *W.R.F.*

Note #3: Here Comparet alludes to, but does not sufficiently cover, the 30 Years' War waged by the Catholics against Germany. *W.R.F.*

Note #4: Revelation 11:7 may be correlated with Daniel 7:25, and also alludes to both Rev. 13:11 (13:11-18 describing the Papacy) and Rev. 20:7 (which has not yet transpired at this point – although the process leading to it has well begun). *W.R.F.*

Note #5: The beast of the abyss represents the people behind the power which is perpetually being organized throughout all of our institutions – not just the “Church”, and its nature is political and religious as well as economic. *W.R.F.*

Note #6: The great city of Rev. 11:8 surely isn't Rome. The two witnesses didn't lie on the streets of Rome, and the great city is not a literal city (i.e. Rev. 14:8), but is rather an abstract conception representing the Babylonian political – economic – religious system which has long survived the actual city of Babylon. If the witnesses are indeed abstract – as Comparet suggests – or even if they represent groups of people rather than individuals (and there is no reason why they should be individuals), then why should the city be a literal city? Rather, Babylon in this age is our corrupted society in general. *W.R.F.*

Note #7: The “man of sin” is not the pope, or the papacy, or the Catholic “church.” As Comparet said already himself earlier in these sermons, the Catholic “church” is a symptom of the disease, not the disease itself. The “man of sin” collectively are the Adversary, the children of Satan in the world, and Paul uses the label to describe the Kenite-Edomite jews, the offspring of Satan, in 2 Thess. chapter 2: for it is the Edomites who had taken over the high-priesthood in Jerusalem, whom Paul was discussing. The jews and their kindred are those whom John was describing in his epistles: for it was the jews who were denying that Yahshua was the Christ, and none others! If the popes were anti-christs, it is only because many of the popes were not Israelites or Japhetites (as true Greeks and Romans were), but rather were “converted” jews or Arabs: who are all among the descendants of Cain, and so Satan. *W.R.F.*

Note #8: I would not liken the seven thousand of Rev. 11:13 to seven provinces in Holland which were “lost, killed so far as the Catholic ‘church’ was concerned.” Why would Yahweh care to record 7000 lost to the Catholic “church”? And when during the Reformation perhaps 50-100 million broke away from the Catholic “church”! Any Israelite lost to the Catholic “church” and reading the Bible (the little book) would rather be a gain to Yahweh, and to hell with the Catholic “church”! Rather, the Greek text says here in part: “And in that hour happened a great earthquake, and the tenth of the city fell, and perished in the earthquake seven thousand names of men ...” The names of men, 7000 of them, died in the earthquake. If these men died for the truth of Christ in opposition to the Catholic “church”, surely their names would not die (i.e. Rev. 3:5, 12, 21)! Why the A.V. does not render the word “names” here I know not, because the NA27 attests the word's appearance in all of the major manuscripts. I would rather suppose that this 7000 may represent the men who, after having an opportunity to learn – or perhaps having learnt – the truth of God from the Bible, rather than continue had chosen to rejoin the Catholic “church” during the so-called “counter-Reformation” of the mid-16th century, where large areas of southern Germany, Poland and Hungary were brought back into the “fold” of the pope. *W.R.F.*