

Revelation 6:2 (Paul Wilson) 5557

Christian Truth: Volume 4, Revived Roman Empire, The (6:2)

Last month we considered how the present world situation could easily, and on short notice, produce that rider on the white horse mentioned in Rev. 6:2. He could come out of the present rearmament program as the unifier and leader of combined Western military might waging conquests in the name of peace or holding other forces in check by balance of power so successfully that he is acclaimed a ruler in his own right—"a crown was given unto him." In some such manner "the beast"—the head of the revived Roman Empire—may rise. He will then champion the cause of the Jews, giving them their temple and religious rites as heretofore, according to Dan. 9:27. His agreement with them will be for seven years, but in the middle of that time, after three and one half years have run their course, he will break his word with them insofar as their worship is concerned. This is also mentioned in Dan. 7:25 where the laws given into his hand are the Jewish religious ones. At that point the revived Roman Empire will become diabolic in form, for Satan will give to its head "his power, and his seat, and great authority" (Rev. 13:2).

This will be the suitable time for Satan and his two willing agents, the Jewish leader (often referred to as the antichrist) and the beast (the empire's head), to seek to eradicate from the earth any semblance of the worship of the God of heaven, and to replace it with the deification and worship of man. This is foretold in Rev. 13 and 2 Thess. 2:4, and is seen in a historical event of a prophetic nature in Dan. 6 where Darius signed the decree that no man could ask any petition of any God or man for thirty days, except from this king.

Just as in Dan. 5 the fall of Babylon precedes the worship of man in the sixth chapter, so "Babylon the great" will likewise meet its doom at the hand of the kings of the Roman Empire and its wicked head before man is set up as above God. "Babylon the Great," the wicked and apostate ecclesiastical system that is left in Christendom after the true believers are taken home to the Father's house, will be consumed "in one hour." Read Rev. 17 and 18 for the details of the false church's condition and destruction. God will put it into the hearts of the world's rulers to fulfill His word in the utter destruction of that which has falsely named the name of Christ; the wicked system is described in those chapters as a wicked city and a corrupt woman.

How blessed it is to turn our eyes away from this distressing sight which caused the Apostle John to wonder with great wonder (not with any admiration), and to fix our gaze on the true

Church which at that time will be safely housed above, both with and like Christ. In great contrast to that hated and hateful thing, it will fully answer to Christ in all He desires and is, and because He has constituted it so.

"Christ... loved the church, and gave Himself for it" (Eph. 5:25)—the past—"that He might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word" (Eph. 5:26)—the present—"that He might present it to Himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing" (Eph. 5:27)—the future.

How blessed to know that love that caused Him to give Himself for the Church of which we are a part, and to know His present gracious offices of cleansing from defilement that for which He gave Himself, and to look forward to that blessed moment when He shall present us to Himself, fully and forever in accord with all His mind and heart.

The true Church is also described both as a city and as a woman, but oh, in what contrasts to the false! Instead of Babylon, which name means confusion, and which in principle has been, from Gen. 11 on through to Revelation, connected with evil, and has been the bane of the faithful in all ages, the true Church is the "holy city, Jerusalem" (Rev. 21:10; N. Trans.), or the holy city of peace.

Then instead of a corrupt woman we have the true Church presented as a spotless bride in all purity. Surely nothing less will ever satisfy the heart of Christ; it was for this purpose that He died, and for this cause that He is constantly engaged for her purification even now. And when we consider the purity and perfect spotlessness of the condition in which we shall be presented to Himself as His bride, shall we be careless about our walk down here now? Oh, surely not! shall it not rather increase our desire to answer even now more fully to that which His heart desires? Should we not hate "even the garment spotted by the flesh"? In that day of our being presented to Himself there will not be one spot of defilement; may we abhor spots even here.

In further contrast between the false and the true we see the corrupt woman "arrayed in purple and scarlet color"—that which is gaudy and calculated to allure the eye and heart of the unregenerate—but to the bride it is granted that she should be "clothed in fine linen, bright and pure; for the fine linen is the righteousnesses of the saints." Rev. 19:8; N. Trans. May we revel in the grace that picked us up in our defilement, put all our sins away through "the precious blood of Christ," cleanses us now by the water of the Word, and will yet have us white and pure in His own presence, forever and ever.

"And when Thou, Lord and Savior, Shalt come again in glory, There, by Thy side, Thy spotless bride Shall crown the wondrous story."